THE HINDI PUBLIC SPHERE: 1920-1940

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ABSTRACT

The 1920s and 1930s were decades of momentous changes and expansion in the Hindi literary sphere. In this period Hindi became an established public language in print, education and politics and struggled successfully to become the future national language of India. A market for Hindi literature was first created, journals provided venues for debate and literary expression as well as professional employment, genres and styles were explored in many new directions, and new voices emerged, importantly those of women writers. The nationalist movement, too, entered a new phase which emphasized popular publics and vernacular institutions.

Through the concept of 'public sphere' as expounded by Jürgen Habermas and other political scientists, this thesis analyzes those changes at the levels of institutions, actors, discourses and, to a limited extent, of audiences in their proper context and in relation to each other.

Chapter 2 explores changes in the literary sphere, both its expansion chiefly through the medium of journals, and its institutionalization through a linguistic and literary agenda in the education system. Chapter 3 analyzes historical debates and narratives in order to trace the consolidation and diffusion of a nationalist historical consciousness. Chapter 4 examines the development of women's journals and the space they provided for a critique of discrimination against women and their public access, and for the exploration of women's roles and emotionality. Chapter 5 focuses on the making of Hindi's claim to be the 'national language', the strategies employed and the exclusions operated in the process of its political affirmation. Chapter 6 explores the relationship between the literary and the political spheres focusing on the role of Hindi intellectuals and political leaders. The institutional authority gained in one sphere underwrote that gained in the other, it shall be argued, and gave credence to an official nationalism that does not reflect the complexity and variety of cultural imagination and literary practices in that period.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

The 1920s and '30s are rightly considered the 'golden age' of modern Hindi. They were a period of extraordinary literary productivity and cultural and political change. Many exciting talents emerged in all literary genres. In poetry there was the strikingly innovative and imaginative current of Chāyāvād with poets like Jayśaṅkar Prasād (1889-1937), Sumitrānandan Pant (1900-1977), Sūryakānt Tripāṭhī Nirālā (1899-1962), Mahādevī Varmā (1902-1987), Rāmkumār Varmā, and with the phenomenal popularity of Harivaṃś Rāy 'Baccan' (1907-). New directions were brilliantly explored in Hindi fiction, first of all by Premcand (1880-1936), and also by Pratāpnārāyaṇ Śrīvāstava (1904-1978), Bhagavatīcaraṇ Varmā (1909-1981), Jainendra Kumār (1905-1988) and Vṛndāvanlāl Varmā (1899-1969), and by popular novelists like Pāṇḍey Becan Śarmā 'Ugra' (1900-1967), Dhanīrām Prem (1904-1971) and G.P. Śrīvāstava (1891-1976). Literary criticism came into its own with Rāmcandra Śukla (1884-1941), Dhīrendra Varmā (1897-1973), Nanddulāre Vājpeyī (1906-1967) and Hazārīprasād Dvivedī (1907-1979), so much so that much of the critical and historiographical apparatus of Hindi literature was formed in those decades and has remained heavily influential after half a century later, and a student in India still reads Hindi literature largely through the eyes of the critics of the 1930s. Powerful and sensitive women's voices emerged with poets like Mahādevī Varmā, Subhadrā Kumārī Cauhān (1904-1946), Rāmeśvarī Goyal (1911-1936), essayists like Mahādevī and Candrāvatī Lākhanpāl (1904-1969) and short story writers like Homvatī Devī (1906-1951), Kamlā Caudhurī (1908-) and Subhadrā Kumārī herself.

The remarkable growth of literary journals such as *Mādhurī* (est. 1922), *Cāṁd* (1922), *Sudhā* (1927), *Viśāl bhārat* (1928) and of course *Sarasvatī* (1900) to name but a few, and of political weeklies and dailies in every city, reveals vigorous and wide-ranging debates and an expanded and eager readership, presenting a striking contrast with the picture we have today. Finally, nationalism and the nationalist movement had a direct and varied impact on the Hindi literary sphere: in the case of literary people, it influenced their self-representation and moulded their political and cultural consciousness. For women, it was directly instrumental in giving them a public presence and in helping them to reframe their roles and spheres of activity. For subaltern groups like peasants and so-called untouchables, it provided an environment and a vocabulary in which to envisage and formulate their aspirations.

What is particularly remarkable about this period in Hindi is not only the number of talents but also the change from pre-1920 literature, and the many different directions in which writers moved. After the exciting enterprises of Bhārtendu Hariścandra (1850-1885) and his circle in the late nineteenth century, Hindi literature in the early twentieth century had remained limited in scope, in the number of its practitioners and publications and in its audience. It consisted of a few isolated poets and scholars who were individually trying their pens on a still new literary language and to whom Mahāvīr Prasād Dvivedī (1864-1941), the authoritative editor of the only influential literary journal, *Sarasvatī* gave guidance, instruction and encouragement. To scions of the older poetic language, Braj, it appeared clumsy and didactic, little more than a well-meant experiment. The contrast with post-1920 literature is striking indeed: : such wealth and diversity demand explanation.

The aim of the present research is to find the reasons of such change by exploring such literary output in the context of the institutional transformations in the literary and political spheres of the time. It also aims at exploring the agency of Hindi intellectuals in the nationalist movement, rather than conceiving them as regional clones of cultural and political agendas formulated elsewhere.[1] In the first aim, it follows in the footsteps of Karine Schomer's work on Mahādevī Varmā and her period, and of Vasudha Dalmia's work on Hariścandra and the making of a Hindi literary sphere in the late nineteenth century.[2] As far as the second aim is concerned, it follows up Sudhir Chandra's investigation of the cultural nationalism of nineteenth century Hindi writers, as well as the historical-political work of Gyanendra Pandey.[3] Whereas the intellectual history of modern Bengal and the contribution

[1] C.A. Bayly in his study of nationalist politics in Allahabad analysed with unmatched precision the agency of local notables and their clients but did not focus on the ideological agency of vernacular intellectuals; C.A. Bayly, *The Local Roots of Indian Politics, Allahabad 1880-1920*, Clarendon Press, Oxford 1975. Other local studies have focused on local politicians and patrons, e.g. Paul Brass, *Factional Politics in an Indian State: the Congress Party in Uttar Pradesh*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 1962; Douglas E. Haynes, *Rhetoric and Ritual in Colonial India: the Shaping of a Public Culture in Surat City, 1852-1928*, University of California Press, Berkeley 1991. Notable exceptions are works on Muslim politics, e.g. David Lelyveld, *Aligarh's First Generation*, Chicago University Press, Chicago 1975; Francis Robinson, *Separatism among Indian Muslims*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 1974; Barbara Metcalf, *Islamic Revival in British India: Deoband 1860-1900*, Princeton University Press, Princeton 1982; also works on Bengali intellectuals cited below in fn. 4.

[2] Karine Schomer, *Mahadevi Varma and the Chhayavad School of Modern Hindi Poetry*, University of California Press, Berkeley 1983; Vasudha Dalmia, 'Hariścandra of Banaras and the Consolidation of Hindu Traditions in the Late Nineteenth Century', unpublished post-doctoral thesis, Tübingen University, 1994.

[3] Sudhir Chandra, 'Communal Elements in Late Nineteenth Century Hindi Literature', in M. Hasan, ed., *Communal and Pan-Islamic Trends in Colonial India*, Manohar, Delhi 1986, and *The Oppressive Present. Literature and the Social Imagination*, Oxford University Press, Delhi 1992. Gyanendra Pandey, 'Mobilization in a Mass Movement: Congress 'Propaganda' in the United Provinces (India)', *Modern Asian Studies*, 9, 2, 1975, pp. 205-226; 'A Rural Base for Congress: The United Provinces 1920-1940', in D.A. Low, ed., *Congress and the Raj*, Heinemann, London 1977; *The Ascendancy of the Congress in Uttar Pradesh: 1936-34. A Study in Imperfect Mobilization*, Oxford University Press, Delhi 1978; *The Construction of Communalism in Colonial North India*, Oxford University Press, Delhi 1990; and 'The Congress and the Nation, c.1917-1947', Occasional paper No. 69, Centre for Studies in the Social Sciences, Calcutta, October 1984.

of Bengali intellectuals have been subjected to close and intense scrutiny in recent years,[4] virtually nothing, apart from Schomer's work, has appeared in English on the Hindi literary sphere of this period; this is the first comprehensive treatment of the subject.

In order to achieve the two aims we had to find a model that would allow and in fact value diversity, and would consider texts, authors, genres and concerns in correlation to each other and to their publics; that would place discourses and tastes in their institutional contexts and explain them acknowledging institutional changes; finally, a model that would connect the domains of literature and politics in a non-linear, non-deterministic fashion. The last point seemed particularly important in the case of Hindi, not only because nationalist literary history has tended to blur differentiation among the political beliefs of Hindi writers, but also because the trajectory of Hindi as a public language took place amidst great contestations.

For all these reasons Jürgen Habermas's notion of the 'public sphere' seemed appropriate, partly because his analysis of the making of a bourgeois public sphere in Europe in the eighteenth century discussed several phenomena taking place, at various levels, in Hindi in the early twentieth, and partly because the European 'public sphere' was one of the models Hindi intellectuals implicitly had while reflecting about their own role and the modern Hindi culture they were trying to fashion. The insistence of Hindi intellectuals from the nineteenth century onwards, like elsewhere in India, on 'reform' and 'progress' (*unnati*), on the 'public' - which several Hindi words were called in to translate - betray an attempt to bring into being an organised public that would turn India into a modern nation. In this attempt they tried to match foreign terms with Indian realities (both material and immaterial), and to fashion a modern Hindi culture that would be modern and Indian at the same time: this culture and cultural consciousness was one of the outcomes of the processes we shall describe in the course of the thesis.

In this thesis, then, we shall analyse institutional changes in the Hindi literary sphere and their implications, e.g. in shifting the loci of literary production, transmission and authority. We shall examine debates, historical and political discourses and their literary recreation; and we shall focus on the actors in the Hindi literary sphere, both established and emerging ones.[5] At all levels, especially in the sixth chapter, the relationship

[4] See e.g. T. Raychaudhuri, *Europe Reconsidered. Perceptions of the West in Nineteenth Century Bengal*, Oxford University Press, Delhi 1988; S. Kaviraj, *The Unhappy Consciousness. Bankimchandra Chattopadhyay and the formation of Nationalist Consciousness in India*, Oxford University Press, Delhi 1994; S. Banerjee, *The Parlour and the Street, Elite and Popular Culture in Nineteenth-Century Calcutta*, Seagull, Calcutta 1989.

[5] In the course of the thesis we shall speak of 'Hindi intellectuals', 'Hindi intelligentsia', 'Hindi literati', 'Hindi writers': the terms have been deliberately kept vague since this is not a sociological analysis. Still, by 'Hindi intelligentsia' we generally mean the quite close-knit group of intellectuals and scholars who worked together in Hindi associations and, later, in educational institutions, gaining cultural authority from such role and pursuing a cultural agenda. We have sometimes called 'independent intellectuals' those writers such as Premcand or Nirālā who, despite their importance in literary history, did not command that kind of institutional authority on policing.

between the literary and the political spheres will be highlighted. Journals will be our main sources: particularly numerous in the post-1920 period, Hindi literary journals - veritable miscellanies - were not only the main vehicle of literary expression and of public debate from a wide range of contributors. They also chronicled literary and political activities, events and public involvement in them. They showed which ideas, genres and idioms were more or less current and popular, and mirrored changes in taste and fashion over time. As such they offered a vantage point to feel the pulse of the cultural and political climate. Moreover, journals were integral part of the emerging market for literature, with several implications for the agenda of Hindi intellectuals and the position and status of writers. At the other end of the spectrum, text-books and examinations curricula will be equally valuable in order to investigate the agenda of the emerging literary intelligentsia and its attitude towards language, literature and the 'public'.

What we shall try to demonstrate is that whereas there were several potent efforts to homogenise Hindi and Hindu culture (connected most of all with institutions, associations, universities, examinations curricula), in effect, there were many forces at work and some processes, once set into motion, acquired their own dynamics. Most importantly, the literary journals which propagated early varieties of Hindutva and 'Bhārtīy saṃskṛti' also offered the opportunity for dissenting voices to articulate their claims. Thus for instance women's journals and popular literature allowed for their emotionality and possibly some greater mobility to be expressed, and the nationalist front eventually made more room for them than could have been foreseen originally.

In this introduction we shall first sketch Habermas's argument about the 'public sphere', also in the light of criticism following the English translation of his work on the subject, *Strukturwandel der Öffentlichkeit.*[6] We shall briefly point out similarities with phenomena in Hindi before turning to a lengthier discussion of the differences and of the way these differences - namely less widespread literacy, linguistic hierarchy, women's access, parallel literary and political developments, and a different public-private binomy - affected the general development of the Hindi public sphere. This will lead us to introducing our source material and the various chapters of the thesis.

Habermas's work examines the shift in seventeenth to eighteenth- century Europe from an aristocratic publicity of courtly-knightly representation ('Öffentichkeit der höfish-ritterlich Repräsentation') to a bourgeois public sphere in which 'private citizens come together as a public' as if they were peers in order to discuss matters of 'public concern' or

[6] Originally published in 1962, it was translated into English as *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*, MIT Press, Cambridge 1989; papers presented at a symposium to mark the occasion have been collected in Craig Calhoun, ed., *Habermas and the Public Sphere*, MIT Press, Cambridge and London, 1992.

'common interest'.[7] In the courtly arena the ruler *was* the public and represented his status and rights 'before' the people; the people partook of the spectacle from their place in the hierarchically ordered feudal structure. With the transition to an impersonal state and a bourgeois society, private citizens constituted as a public acquired a somewhat autonomous role and mediated between the absolutist state and the private spheres of bourgeois economy and of the newly emergent bourgeois family. This intermediate sphere took form in social institutions like the club, journals and periodicals and was, in principle, accessible to all. Its agents were private citizens who, in the free and rational exchange of ideas, formed public opinion.[8]

Through a comparative analysis of the English, French and German cases, Habermas showed how these places, media, publics and the critical function they expressed first developed around innocuous literary and cultural concerns, giving rise to a sort of 'republic of letters'.[9] Although the 'general public' they spoke of was actually quite limited and consisted mainly of bourgeois middle class and the titled gentry, in its self-understanding this literary sphere was 'the public' and was accessible to all. The spread of literacy no doubt helped the circulation of periodicals and literature and gave some basis to this impression. Also, the individual subjectivity nurtured in the bourgeois family could both produce and respond to a literature that valued individual endeavour, intelligence and feelings, such as, for example, the eighteenth century English novel.[10]

Soon enough, critical debates moved from questions of taste to questions of the state[11] i.e. to political matters, holding the absolutist state accountable via publicity. Habermas himself points out the connection between the development of a political public sphere and the lifting of censorship laws. Publicity in this perspective meant requiring that information about state functioning be made accessible so that state activities would be subject to critical scrutiny and to the influence of public opinion. It also meant expressing

[7] J. Habermas, *The Structural Transformation*, p. 27. The present exposition owes much to Nancy Fraser, 'Rethinking the Public Sphere: A Contribution to the Critique of Actually Existing Democracy', in C. Calhoun, ed., *Habermas and the Public Sphere*, pp. 109-142.

[8] Habermas traces the changes in the notion of 'public' and 'public opinion' to the present meaning in chapter 4 of his book.

[9] As Peter Uwe Hohendahl remarks, this literary public sphere was actually rooted in aristocratic court circles and only gradually freed itself from their influence; P.U. Hohendahl, *Institution of Criticism*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca 1982, p. 53. The essay contains also an interesting discussion over the debate over taste and the evaluation of literature between German Neo-classicists and Romantics, in which 'popularity' (Volkstümlichkeit, i.e. closer to popular lore) became an issue; cf. here below 2.4.

[10] The classic study is Ian Watt, *The Rise of the Novel*, Penguin, Harmondsworth 1979 (first ed. 1957).

[11] The literary and the political public sphere clearly differ in terms of specific agendas - since the political public sphere is concerned with the objects of the state - but nonetheless imply and often share a similar set of phenomena and relations. Namely, vocal members (what we called 'actors'), places of debate, meeting and organised activity, means for transmitting information and influencing those who receive it and a public to address. Literary journals, activities, campaigns, associations often have a hidden political agenda. Under the innocuous cover of petitions over language or culture, they might take political stands and lend manpower, discourses and constituencies to the political sphere.

'public opinion' and what were considered the 'general interests' of (bourgeois) society to the state via forms of legally guaranteed free speech, free press and free assembly, and eventually through parliamentary representation. These debates fostered a public discussion on the rules and functions of the state, a crystallising of citizenship ideals and also a more abstract idea that actions were rationally acceptable only after they were subjected to the process of public judgement. This held a great democratic potential: as a critic of Habermas has suggested, it implied that 'public concerns' were not necessarily an a priori set of concerns; rather 'what will count as a matter of common concern will be decided precisely through discursive contestation' among participants.[12]

Public opinion in this sense was the result of such discussions, a consensus about the common good.[13] Habermas could thus abstract a general definition of the 'public sphere':

> By the "public sphere" we mean first of all a realm of our social life in which something approaching public opinion can be formed. Access is guaranteed to all citizens. A portion of the public sphere comes into being in every conversation in which private individuals assemble to form a public body. They then behave neither like business of professional people transacting private affairs, nor like members of a constitutional order subject to the legal constraints of a state bureaucracy. Citizens behave as a public body when they confer in an unrestricted fashion - that is, with the guarantee of freedom of assembly and association and the freedom to express and publish their opinions - about matters of general interest. In a large public body this kind of communication requires specific means for transmitting information and influencing those who receive it.[14]

In this perspective, the public sphere appears constituted on one level by the vocal intelligentsia (conceiving itself as the 'general public') reflecting upon itself and its relations with the state. The impersonal state itself fosters such publicity by expecting all subjects to be accountable to the law in the same way - through common magistrates and courts of law - and to resort publicly to them with equal procedures for all. On another level, the public sphere is constituted by the means and institutions through which public opinion and will are expressed, be it the press, associations, demonstrations, etc. [15] On a third level, we could

[12] Nancy Fraser, 'Rethinking the Public Sphere', p. 129. In Eley's words: 'The virtue of *publicness* could materialize other than by the intellectual transactions of a polite and literate bourgeois milieu'. Despite bourgeois exclusive claims on the practice of reasons, 'the liberal desideratum of reasoned exchange also became available for nonbourgeois, subaltern groups, whether the radical intelligentsia of Jacobinism and its successors or wide sections of social classes like the peasantry or the working class. In both *literary* terms (the production and circulation/diffusion of ideas) and *political* terms (the adoption of constitutions and liberties under the law) the global ideological climate encouraged peasant and working-class voices to strive for the same *emancipatory language*. That is, the *positive values* of the liberal public sphere quickly acquired broader democratic resonance, with the resulting emergence of impressive popular movements, each with its own distinctive movement cultures (i.e., form of public sphere)'; G. Eley, 'Nations, Publics and Political Cultures', p. 304.

[13] Nancy Fraser, 'Rethinking the Public Sphere', pp. 112-3.

[14] Jürgen Habermas, 'The Public Sphere', *New German Critique*, 3 (1974), p. 49; quoted in Geoff Eley, 'Nations, Publics and Political Cultures', in C. Calhoun, ed., *Habermas and the Public Sphere*, p. 289.

[15] In the specific European case, the development of the public sphere 'was linked to the growth of urban culture - metropolitan and provincial - as the novel arena of a locally organized public life (meeting houses, concert halls, theaters, opera houses, lecture halls, museums), to a new

say with Habermas's critics, a public sphere, although theoretically open to all, in practice is also constituted by its exclusions and boundaries. In the case of the bourgeois public sphere described by Habermas, the most consistent exclusion was based on gender. As one critic put it:

> The constitutive moment of modern political understanding [the French Revolution] was itself constituted by newly conceived or rearranged assumptions about woman and man; this was not only registered in the practical achievements of constitutions, legal codes, and political mobilisation and their forms of justification; it also ordered the higher philosophical discourse around the universals of reason, law, and nature, grounding it in an ideologically constructed system of differences in gender.[16]

Yet it is one thing to say that the public sphere is gendered and another to explore the ways in which women confront gender-based discriminations, both vocally and in practice, once they too access the public sphere. We shall return to this issue later in the introduction and in the fourth chapter. As we shall see, when Hindi-educated women acquired a voice in the public sphere, they applied the language of the public sphere to issues generally considered particular or domestic, gave public access a radical edge, and struggled to accommodate normative ideals with personal aspirations.

Thus, the processes analysed by Habermas were part of the making of modern India, too. Despite continuing practices, beliefs and tastes, Hindi intellectuals from the nineteenth century onwards expressed a new representation of themselves and their audiences in terms of a 'general public'. This, as we shall see, made them look at language, literature, society, religion, history etc. in quite novel ways, sometimes privileging certain strands of indigenous knowledge and practice (e.g. Indian rationalist or historical traditions), sometimes treading new paths, as in literature.

This kind of publicity was first brought about by the fact that under colonial rule all Indian citizens - irrespective of status - were subjected to the same set of impersonal laws and public courts: thus, any complaint against the law or against other citizen would have to take the same form of public procedure through formal complaints and petitions, magistrates and courts of law. This had several implications; one of them was that intellectuals learnt the public idiom of the state and started using this publicity for their

infrastructure of social communication (the press, publishing companies, and other literary media; the rise of a reading public via reading and language societies; subscription publishing and lending libraries; improved transportation; and adapted centers of sociability like coffee houses, taverns, and clubs), and to a new universe of voluntary association'; *ibid.*, p. 291.

[16] *Ibid.*, p. 309. The consequences were 'a specific, highly gendered bourgeois male discourse that depended on women's domesticity and the silencing of public women, of the aristocratic and popular classes... The collapse of older patriarchy gave way to a more pervasive *gendering* of the public sphere'; Joan Landes, *Women and the Public Sphere in the Age of the French Revolution*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca 1988, p. 204

own ends, as the history of petitions, controversies and court cases in the nineteenth century amply demonstrate.[17]

Similarly, modified social relations under the effect of colonial rule condensed in new institutions such as voluntary associations, the press, educational institutions, etc. Typically, the 'public' of such endeavours was kept open-ended; sometimes, as was the case with certain publications, it was simply theoretical. New social, cultural and political discourses were produced and exchanged in such institutions: they concerned the changing environment and its challenges, with topics ranging from education, society, reforms of various kinds, literature and its role, the weaknesses and backwardness of the country, its history, etc.[18]

A number of factors, however, make the colonial example of Hindi peculiar in its own way. These include the reshuffling of notions imported into an different environment; the simultaneous presence and interaction of old and new tastes and genres; the conflation of emerging nationalist ideology and the emergent public sphere; the fact that Hindi intellectuals differed vastly from their European (or other Indian) counterparts in cultural and social standing, etc. Yet, since the English public sphere was so powerful and explicit a model of modernity for Hindi intellectuals, it still appears appropriate to keep it as a model of reference.

Following the underlining of common points between Habermas' model and the Hindi case, which will become even clearer in the course of the thesis, it is now time to turn to the differences. These partly fit into accepted criticisms of Habermas, and partly compel us to look at the peculiar processes of colonial North India. They include, to name the most prominent, a small 'modern' literate intelligentsia in the midst of prevailing illiteracy, a linguistic hierarchy and fragmentation that mirrored social, cultural and political fissures; the restrictions of the colonial context; the social position of Hindi intellectuals and a different public-private equation. Addressing such differences will also serve the purpose of placing the endeavours of the Hindi intelligentsia within the Indian context, itself regionally diversified. These differences may go a long way in explaining the gap between the declaration of intentions by Hindi writers and the actual impact of their enterprises, as well as the peculiar placing and fate of such intellectuals and enterprises in pre- and post-independence India. They may, in a word, explain why Hindi became the official national

[17] The sphere of law, however, falls outside the subject of this thesis. For the use of law and public petitions with regards to the language question, see C.S. King, *One Language, Two Scripts. The Hindi Movement in Nineteenth Century North India*, Oxford University Press, Bombay 1994.

[18] Significantly, they did not discuss as passionately and theoretically as European bourgeois intellectuals the rules of the state, for in an important sense it was not *their* state: thus, they concentrated either on delimiting its sphere of competence, finding spaces for themselves within the state, or with replacing it with an Indian state. How this Indian state would actually be, and in what ways its principles, norms and procedures would be different from the English one was not actually discussed.

language but not so in reality, and why the Hindi nationalist intelligentsia did not become a national intelligentsia.[19]

Let us first address the question of language, literacy and the impact of print: first of all, because the project of the Hindi intelligentsia was indissolubly tied to print; because the emergence of other public voices was also linked to print but often of a different variety, and finally because widespread illiteracy makes any generalisation about the effects of print-culture problematic.

This thesis focuses on the Hindi literary intelligentsia. Yet, in their advocacy of standard Khari Boli Hindi for *all* practical and non-practical purposes, this intelligentsia in fact propounded a view of literacy in their cultural project that was quite novel in the Indian context and, although extremely limited, apparently quite effective. Their espousal of such standard 'modern' literacy, and the fact that this is the literacy we are acquainted with, should not blind us to the fact that in the Hindi context of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries it carried several important implications. A brief discussion of the actual impact of print-technology and print-languages in nineteenth century North India may be in place here, in order to understand and situate their efforts.

Nineteenth century India did undergo a kind of 'print revolution', and the introduction of large-scale printing and of periodical journalism was germane to the large-scale project of Hindi intellectuals. However, the impact of this innovation and the break with traditional practices tend to be magnified in a misleading way by certain mistaken assumptions derived from earlier scholarship about orality and writing and about the consequences of print and print-literacy. These assumptions may be summarised, following an argument made by Stuart Blackburn[20] in relation to Tamil, as a notion of a pure oral culture later polluted by print, and the idea that print not only disrupts but replaces orality. Recent scholarship, on the contrary, has pointed to the fact that oral traditions are 'rarely innocent of writing, and even print' (p. 8); that 'print and writing do not replace but supplement orality' (p. 10), and that the two coexist because they are not equivalent phenomena, since they fulfil different functions and follow different channels of transmission and reception. Thus, rather than looking for general and constant consequences of literacy, and taking literacy and illiteracy as two opposite and self-contained blocks,[21] scholars now favour a context-based attitude that analyses the specific

[19] Thus, although the Hindi movement shows all the marks of the making of a national language in a nationalist movement along the lines of Benedict Anderson's argument, the outcome was sensibly different; cf. Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities. Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, Verso, London 1991.
[20] S. Blackburn, 'The Tale of the Book: Print and Storytelling in 19th Century Tamil', paper presented at the conference on 'The Consumption of Popular Culture in India', School of Oriental and African Studies, June 1995.
[21] Cf. J. Goody and I. Watt, 'The consequences of Literacy', in J. Goody, ed., *Literacy in Traditional Societies*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 1968.

forms and interrelations between writing and orality in a particular society, and changes and continuities in the transmission and reception of literature and knowledge under the impact of print under particular circumstances.[22] In nineteenth century India, the most substantial changes seem to have concerned the notion of literacy and language and the transmission of literature, while changes in genres and in their fruition seem to have been much later and slower.

Several scholars have pointed out how literacy, or rather literacies, in pre-colonial India were plural, vocational and related to specific groups; instruction in them depended on local patronage (one-teacher schools) and was not inter-connected.[23] As a consequence, one had linguistic repertoires, literacy skills and literary tastes, but there was no unified linguistic field and no strict or univocal determinism between language and script, or between literacy and literature.[24] Pre-print literary transmission and transmission of knowledge in North India seem to conform to the mixed oral-written pattern suggested by Stuart Blackburn.[25] Transmission and fruition of literary and literary-religious forms was chiefly oral, but manuscript copies of texts were acquired and kept as precious commodity in courts, temples, *maṭhs* and by private scholars and connoisseurs.

The question now arises of what happened when print established unified fields of language, the print-vernaculars, and what impact print had on literary transmission and transmission of knowledge. Hindi in its modern Khari Boli form was, as we know, one such print-vernacular, the direct product of the print-induced notion of a unified linguistic field. Yet, it soon staked the claim to be the mother-tongue of all the people in the area and to exclusive and unitary literacy. As Benedict Anderson has argued, print-vernaculars acquire

[22] Taking issue with the fundamental changes Elizabeth Eisenstein attributes to print in her monumental study of the print revolution in Europe (*The Printing Revolution in Early Modern Europe*, 2 vols., Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 1983), Rosalind Thomas points out that many of them were attributed to writing in ancient Greece by Goody and Watt: 'Literacy is [seen as] the universal catalyst: the economist links it with economic advancement, the historian of ideas with intellectual preeminence, the anthropologist with the transition from primitive to advanced society, the historian of nationalism with the development of the nation state... [But] One need not search long to find counter-examples when writing produces anything but rationality and analytic thought'; Rosalind Thomas, *Literacy and Orality in Ancient Greece*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 1992, p. 19. She follows Brian Street (*Literacy in Theory and Practice*, 1984) in distinguishing approaches to literacy between those that look for *general* effects of literacy as such, in a kind of 'technological determinism', and those which see literacy as much more fluid, where 'its uses, implications and effects are largely determined by the habits and beliefs (i.e. 'ideology' or mentality) of the society already there'; R. Thomas, *ibid.*, p. 24.

[23] See David Lelyveld, 'The Fate of Hindustani', in C. Breckenridge and P. van de Veer, eds., *Orientalism and the Postcolonial Predicament*, University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia 1993; Krishna Kumar, *The Political Agenda of Education*, Sage, New Delhi 1991.

[24] The same texts were copied in Kaithi, Devanagari, Gurumukhi and Perso-Arabic scripts. In the specific case of Khari Boli in Devanagari or Kaithi scripts, it seems it was used for medical or other vocational material and, apart from a few exceptions, it was not until the nineteenth century that it started to be used for self-consciously literary purposes.

[25] S. Blackburn, 'The Tale of the Book'.

fixity (a standardised form) and authority over other linguistic and literary repertoires.[26] In the colonial Indian context, Krishna Kumar has shown how this notion of standard vernacular received great support through the agency of the colonial education system, which argued (more than implemented) that one literacy and one education for all were the key to progress and modernity.[27]

Hindi intellectuals readily and enthusiastically embraced this argument, but they did so with a difference: they supported one literacy, one education in the mother-tongue, *and* they urged control over the cultural content of the curriculum. Their view of a unified language and literacy was heavily dependent on the model of English, which the vernacular was supposed to imitate, and on this universalising view of education. At the same time it invested them (and not colonial authorities) with the task of providing that literacy with cultural content.[28]

These notions of one literacy and one education, crucial for the identification between language and identity (chapter 5) delegitimised existing transmissions of knowledge, literacy skills and literary practices. To what extent they actually displaced them is still a question of speculation; contemporary accounts suggest a varied picture that defies generalisation.[29] To recapitulate this point, literacy was certainly not new in colonial India - certain scholars suggest in fact that in various forms it was *more* widespread before colonial times - but the idea of one literacy and one language was. And it was this idea that would provide the basis for the cultural project of the vernacular reformist intelligentsia, a project that was, as we shall see, inherently educational.

A look at the actual print-production in Hindi in the nineteenth century coincides largely with that of the Tamil print-industry sketched by Stuart Blackburn, in that the first

[26] Although as the prolonged controversy between Braj and Khari Boli as poetic languages shows, it does not follow 'naturally' that a print-vernacular should become *the* language of literary production.
[27] K. Kumar, *The Political Agenda of Education.* He shows that the grand colonial education project was actually severely constrained by financial and other practical strictures, and yet it was highly successful in delegitimising and destroying the indigenous system; see below 2.5.
[28] Nita Kumar shows that whatever attempts were made at 'Indianizing' the system without opting out of it altogether, as 'national' (i.e. autonomous nationalist) schools did around 1920, did so simply by *adding* subjects like religion, art, etc. as optional subjects; Nita Kumar, 'Religion and Ritual in Indian Schools: Banaras from the 1880s to the 1940s', in N. Crook, ed., *The Transmission of Knowledge in South Asia*, Oxford University Press, Delhi 1996.
[29] While it appears that both Brahminical, Islamic and Urdu and Hindi education were affected by colonial educational institutions at least at the level of legitimacy and, in most cases, of funding, English or Anglo-vernacular schools generally formed only part of the school curriculum of Indian students, who generally *also* learnt either Sanskrit or Persian, Arabic or Urdu with local tutors. What was often a brief spell in formal education institutions provided, however, a kind of unified *saṃskāra*, a common experience that supplied the basis for Indian reformist notions of literacy and education. For e.g. the impact of the Sanskrit College on Banaras pandits see N. Kumar, 'Sanskrit pandits and the modernization of Sanskrit education in the 19th-20th centuries', paper presented at the conference on 'Vivekananda and the modernisation of Hinduism', School of Oriental and African Studies, London 1993; and Vasudha Dalmia, 'Hariścandra of Banaras and the Consolidation of Hindu Traditions'.

books to be printed were largely the same that were thus far copied manually:[30] hence print seems to have supplemented orality rather than brought about a sudden change. Also, the kind of material and the small amount of literature meant for private reading suggest little change in literary production (as far as genres are concerned) and fruition.[31] At the same time, and this concerns us more closely, we may also see *in nuce* the processes that were to characterise the Hindi literary sphere. While chapbook and *dāstān* production points at a nascent literary market, text-books and useful books point towards the beginning of an agenda for the new language and the new literacy that was to develop in the following decades through the agency of literary associations and in symbiosis with the education department.

This bifurcation is of considerable relevance to the development of the Hindi literary and public sphere: Hindi reformist intellectuals after Bhārtendu chose to overlook the considerable production of popular and religious literature as unfit for their aim. Instead, they pursued their Hindi agenda against all odds, i.e. in absence of an educated Hindi public that would read and buy their useful books, and exploiting the crevices of colonial administration and its underdeveloped education system. In doing so, they shut out much of the existing print-public and the more fluid and plural literacies. It was in fact only in the 1920s that a substantial market and public for 'high' and useful literature would grow in Hindi, finally realising the expectations of reformist intellectuals.

Thus, paradoxically, at the very time when Hindi intellectuals made theirs the universalising claim of the new language and literacy they actually turned their backs on much of the existing public and forms of literature, introducing a hierarchy of value-based

[30] A cursory glance at the material printed in Hindi during the nineteenth century (mostly in the second half) shows: (a) an overlapping of manuscript material like tracts, treatises and commentaries of philosophical, medical, scientific, astrological or rhetoric nature, and a few caste histories and genealogies; (b) vulgarisations of Sanskrit texts of philosophical or sectarian nature, and of Puranas, Upanishads, the epics and the *Bhagavadgītā* (in Persian, Gurumukhi and Devanagari...); also translations of law of inheritance; (c) tracts of religious propaganda and instruction - Christian, Jain, Ārya Samājī and Vaiṣṇava - as well as for ritual and religious practice (editions of Tulsī's *Rāmcaritmānas* were particularly numerous); (d) educational material (text-books, especially primers) and the first 'useful' books on history, electricity, geography, etc., translated from Bengali and English. As far as material aimed expressly at a literary market is concerned, we find only small collections of songs and poems, exclusively in Braj or other literary languages, a few traditional collections of tales and a substantial number of chapbooks of popular drama and printed editions of *dāstāns* in Urdu and Hindi. Because of the restrictive notion of 'literature' that has governed library acquisition and scholarly research in the Hindi area, there is actually no detailed study of print-production in the nineteenth century, the few studies concentrating only on 'high' texts or Fort William College text-books, and much of the other material has not been preserved. Ironically, it seems that the collection in the British Museum and India Office Library was less selective of popular books, chapbooks and pamphlets, and might therefore provide a more faithful picture. See J.F. Blumhardt, *Catalogues of the Hindi, Panjabi, Sindhi and Pushtu Printed Books in the Library of the British Museum*, Asher, Kegan and Longmans, London 1893. A study of the Nawalkishore Press of Lucknow is long overdue and would go a long way in telling us more about the pattern of print production and the publishing market in Hindi and Urdu in the nineteenth century.

[31] E.g. the popular drama chapbooks studied by Kathryn Hansen fit into the pattern of interface between aural/visual and written consumption. K. Hansen, *Grounds for Play. The Nautanki Theatre of North India*, University of California Press, Berkeley 1992.

distinction. In other words, rather than valuing and appraising what was there, e.g. the actual popularity of Hindi and of its various literary forms, the new standardised print-vernacular became the only authoritative *saṃskāra*. Entertainment was devalued, and all the rich production of booklets, chapbooks and songs had to be sifted through 'useful' and moral filters before being accepted as 'literature'. Implied in this choice was an aspiration to *control* and *educate* the public that we shall encounter again and again.[32]

As a result, we may argue, the 'print revolution' in Hindi under colonial rule resulted mainly in a change of mindset, in a number of goals and of potential spaces for activity for Hindi intellectuals, and in the growth of an independent print-market. Although specialist linguistic skills and old literary practices remained, the first generations of Hindi intellectuals started to view language and literature as a single, unified field (2.1, 5.1 and 5.2). Also, we find them struggling, individually and in public debate, to accommodate their own diverse literary tastes into one overarching concept of literature. Finally, despite the existence of illiterate audiences and of audiences at various levels of literacy, they envisaged their public as a unified, 'virgin' and anonymous potential audience they had to reach, educate and bring up to their own standards. Literature, in this perspective, began to be considered not a set of aesthetic traditions but, Romantically, the expression of the common treasure of 'the people'.

Besides, print did not so much disrupt oral transmission of poetry, story-telling and drama, as it initiated a process by which oral literature was printed and collected in a store (*bhaṇḍār*) that needed filling, inventorying and classifying, something scholars in literary associations would start doing with great fervour.[33] Two were the main directories of activity they had to concretise this idea. One, as we just mentioned, turned to the past and included searching and inventorying manuscripts, turning them into printed editions of 'classics' and ordering them chronologically into a literary lineage along the guidelines of the emerging nationalist history of India (see 3.1 and 5.2.2). In doing so, scholars and literary associations advocated to themselves the authority of selecting, preserving and interpreting the Hindi literary tradition.

The second directory concerned the present, and included filling the *bhaṇḍār* of Hindi literature with appropriate books, scrutinising the popular publishing market and

[32] Also paradoxically, the fact that Khari Boli Hindi had little written and literary tradition to boast of gave reformist intellectuals a freer hand in creating, expanding and fixing the boundaries of the language and of the new literature in the direction they desired. In Urdu, by contrast, the urban-literate refinement and literary tradition were already strong and could hardly be transcended in order to make Urdu more of a 'popular' language.
[33] See the long-drawn search and inventory of Hindi manuscripts undertaken from 1899 onwards by the Nāgarī Pracāriṇī Sabhā of Banaras (est. 1893), and the concomitant production of literary histories, starting from Śivsiṃh Seṅgar's *Śivsiṃh saroj* (1878), to the *Miśrabandhu vinod* (1913) etc.; see C.S. King, 'The Nagari Pracharini Sabha of Banaras, 1893-1914: A Study of the Social and Political History of the Hindi Language', unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Wisconsin 1974, pp. 328 ff. For literary histories before Rāmcandra Śukla's, see Baccan Siṃh, *Ācārya śukla kā itihās paṛhte hue*, National Publishing House, New Delhi 1989.

providing guidelines, evaluation and prizes for current authors (see 2.4). Once again, literary associations emerged as the chief cultural organisers in this respect, too. Such autonomous institutions, along with the periodical press and networks of individuals, provided an environment conducive to this sense of common purpose. Writers were thus subjected to great expectations: not only of self-consciously restructuring knowledge and tradition for modern needs, but also of winning over to such 'useful literature' what was felt to be a recalcitrant public.

Thus the making of a public sphere in Hindi happened under the sign of the exclusion of large sections of the public at the hands of a small intelligentsia, which nonetheless claimed to represent and address the 'general public', and which placed a disproportionate (under such circumstances) expectation on literature to effect cultural and political change; however, voices from those excluded sections would find their way onto the pages of journals and in the booming market for popular literature.

As we shall see, such grand agendas were undermined by severe limitations. Firstly, both government patronage and public support proved to be inadequate. Although every reader and purchaser of a Hindi book was wooed with the appellative of 'benefactor of Hindi' (*hindīhitaiṣī*), traditional patronage was sporadic and the educated reading public was too small. Publishers had to rely on school- and public libraries and courses to ensure even a small print-run. In addition, the reformist agenda had to face an unruly popular market and experimental writing, both of which undermined what was perceived as a necessary unity of purpose.

To recapitulate this point, the changed mind-set had momentous consequences for the Hindi literary sphere. Firstly, it produced a shift in the locus of literary and intellectual authority. This came to be vested in the scholar and in literary associations, looking up to English as a model, legitimised and supported by the provincial government but ultimately autonomous in initiatives and goals. In fact, although the government played only a minor and indirect role - patronising initiatives by associations and subscribing to journals and books - it did select interlocutors, thus underwriting their authority in the public sphere.[34] Thus, those who were creating publicity were also those who could exercise exclusive judgements. Secondly, Hindi literature and Hindi writers were given an importance that was quite disproportionate to their real powers and means. Thirdly it engendered a tension between the goals of the reformist agenda and both the actual strictures of the Hindi public

[34] For this kind of indirect support see e.g. the report of the Hindi survey of the Hindustani Academy in 1930 for the promotion of good books in Hindi: it was a minor initiative, but it signals a process of institutionalisation, by which intellectuals linked to autonomous associations acquired authority from the colonial state; as in other instances, the part played by literary figures in the administration, in this case Lala Sītārām, who was by this time a retired government servant, was crucial; see his *Hindī sarve kameṭī kā riporṭ*, Hindustani Academy, Allahabad 1930.

sphere as well as all other forms of language and of literary production that did not fit into the mould.[35]

Thus, although Hindi literature in this period did fulfil an important imaginative - rather that realistic-representative - function,[36] grand aspirations were undercut by a series of constraints and difficulties, and the discourse of one language, one literature and one linguistic community that Hindi literature was supposed to implement clashed with a more fragmented and hierarchical reality. Difficulties included, among others, the size of the reading public espousing the new literacy, the low economic and social position of Hindi writers, often precarious and subordinate, and the low status of Hindi literature in colonial society - subordinate to English, 'backward' in respect to Bengali and less entrenched than Urdu among the cultured elite. These different orders of constraints undercut the authority of Hindi intellectuals and further differentiate the Hindi case from Habermas's description. As such, they deserve a few more words.

The first constraint had to do with the nature of the state the Hindi public sphere was partly shaped by. The colonial state late nineteenth and early twentieth century Hindi intellectuals faced was an ostensibly benevolent and liberal state which appeared amenable to reasonable arguments and claimed to be equally neutral to all its Indian subjects. Needless to say, this state which swore by liberal principles pursued interests that were different from those of the colonial subjects and subordinate to that of the mother-country; it also had much more unrestrained coercive powers than the British state and was hardly constrained by parliamentarism or public opinion (see 6.1). Still, the post-1857 policy of appeasement of Indian elites and of co-optation of vernacular intellectuals did actually provide the latter with some space where to express their cultural aspirations, e.g. in education. This fostered a culture of confidence, petition and direct or indirect patronage for administrative privileges that was a direct consequence of state publicity(2.4.1): if the state claimed that its laws were applied to all, and that subjects could and should appeal by public means, colonial intellectuals believed that changing the letter of the law would bring about actual change. This is not to say that Hindi intellectuals did not realise early the need not to rely exclusively on government support and to undertake autonomous initiatives. In fact, much of Hindi cultural and political activism developed outside constitutional spaces, in the press and in non-constitutional politics. However, Hindi institutions and scholars posing as language and literary experts vis-à-vis colonial administrators tended to believe in

[35] To call it a tension between the reformist agenda and the market is improper, for the market was perceived in ambivalent terms and bore ambivalent results in the Hindi literary sphere; see below 2.4.2.

[36] Hindi literature in this period did perform an educating and inspiring role. Even more importantly, it worked as a space for historical imagination (3.1 and 3.2) and it introduced and popularised - through individual characters and relations - notions of individual subjectivity as a locus of authenticity from which to reconsider and assess social norms and behaviours (4.3).

rule by committees and decrees, something they would attempt even later with the Congress.

The second constraint had to do with the nature of the Hindi intelligentsia and of their place in North Indian culture and society. In fact, it is the combination of a contested linguistic terrain with high expectations that makes the case of Hindi a peculiar one. Compared with Marathi and Bengali in fact, the terrain Hindi intellectuals operated on was not only constrained by the common colonial subjecthood, it was a contested one from the start. Thus, there was not only a colonial hierarchy symbolised by language, according to which the Indian vernacular was backward in relation to English just as Indians were backwards in relation to Englishmen.[37] Hindi moved also from a subordinate position with Urdu, and competed horizontally with it.

Urdu was directly related to Persian, the Mughal court-language and became itself the provincial court-language in 1831: it was already the language of public administration, and also of common urbane and literary intercourse for the North Indian service elite - thus nearer to the new idea of a unified and cultivated language. In the nineteenth century Hindi, by contrast, had still to establish a unified literary form, to win over the appreciation of Sanskrit pandits and had only, broadly speaking, the support of mercantile classes, which had little inclination, barring few exceptions, to push self-assertion to the point of 'disloyalty' or of social unrest. Hence, Hindi was not backed by a unified, metropolitan service middle class and landed elite that was fully bi-lingual[38] and which patronised and supported the vernacular as in Bengal, or by the assertive bourgeoisie of eighteenth century Europe.

The scholars, teachers, lawyers-publicists and merchants with literary passion who constituted the Hindi intelligentsia were not usually 'men of influence' in the locality nor men of independent means: on the contrary, they often did service (*naukrī*) or were clients of the English or Indian elites.[39] Although they were in fact quite successful in creating their own momentum - exploiting the possibilities opened by the colonial education system and the fledgling press and book-industry, and creating their own institutions - their economic and social position remained very uncertain. Under such circumstances, and with the

[37] And the ambivalent attitude of admiration, emulation and distaste for colonial rule are mirrored in the attitude towards English.

[38] By fully bi-lingual we mean a class well-acquainted and conversant with the English language and knowledge (*naī vidyā*) and fully proficient and at ease in the standard print-vernacular, which it values as mother-tongue and expression of cultural identity: only such a class can successfully undertake the role of translating from English into the vernacular (and eventually viceversa) and stake the claim for equal status of the vernacular.

[39] Potentially these relationships could turn into 'impersonal' administrative service or professions, but they also retained personal ties of defence and solidarity; cf. C.A. Bayly, *The Local Roots of Indian Politics*. One again may compare their position with that of pre-independent Italian intellectuals of great status and adequate means like Manzoni, or of landed gentlemen like in nineteenth century Russia. In India, one may compare their uncertain professionalism with the leisured seriousness of a Bankimchandra or a Tagore.

concomitant rise of political leaders, the (self-) appointed role of Hindi intellectuals as guides and leaders of the nation remained an abstraction and was belied by a reality of obscurity or very limited recognition and subordination. Although the blows of government censorship and the high expectations of selfless literary *sevā* were, in nationalist terms, proof enough of the stature of Hindi intellectuals and, in their own eyes, lent them moral and cultural authority, the question for them became: why wasn't this authority recognised? (6.4)

Despite the development of the Hindi public sphere over the two decades following 1920, this basic hierarchy did not radically change. True, both Hindi institutions and a political and literary press consolidated, institutions like schools fuelled their own expansion, and with the growing need for Hindi jobs in education and the administration Hindi became an attractive proposition for a wider section of old and new service classes. Largely thanks to this new schooled public, readership widened and a public for modern literature was also created - though circulation still took place mostly through libraries since the new reading public was not an affluent one. The popular public, too, was partly assimilated through nationalist literature and the political press, which greatly expanded after 1920. However, despite the legitimising emphasis of the new Gandhian Congress on Hindi as the language of the people that should replace English, and the breach into Urdu's entrenched position as court- and administrative vernacular, Hindi cut little ice with the old Indo-Persian and anglicised elites of North India. Partly because of Hindi's exasperated drive toward linguistic purification and cultural exclusion, partly because of its image as 'backward' and conservative language and partly for other reasons, the North Indian elite did not became fully bi-lingual in English and Hindi. This disregard left Hindi intellectuals, already in an unsteady economic and social standing, in a weak position vis-à-vis English and the prospective take-over; it also belied their own self-importance as vernacular intelligentsia.

At the other end of the spectrum, the popularisation and mass political mobilisation of the 1920s did not translate into greater authority for Hindi intellectuals either. First of all, under circumstances of still limited 'new' literacy, the number of actual readers (especially for the more experimental writers) remained too small. Secondly, popularisation took place under the aegis of political nationalism, crossing literacy boundaries: thus it was political leaders rather than intellectuals who tended to become the new figures of authority. Thirdly, the enlargement of the Hindi public did not bring about a substantial change in the Hindi reformist agenda, which remained still high-brow and deeply suspicious of inner diversification and of separate needs and voices from the popular public. As a result, the very notion of guidance of 'the people' became fraught with tensions: if, in nationalist terms, the people were 'one', all conflict or dissent appeared suspicious, for how would these fit into the harmonious whole? Thus, was the role of the intellectual, and of

literature generally, to educate the masses or to awaken them? And finally, how could the intellectual awaken or educate the masses if what he wrote was not what they read?

To recapitulate the ground covered so far, at the end of the twenty years under study an autonomous and lively Hindi public sphere was in place, with its institutions, intellectual debates and a literary and political public opinion. It had also staked a well-placed claim for Hindi to become the new national language. This growth coexisted, rather than dismantled, persisting geographical and social limitations, both because of certain cultural choices and of independent circumstances. Such limitations included, at the higher end of the social hierarchy, the English-speaking elites, which did not become fully bi-lingual and did not recognise the role and authority of vernacular intellectuals; at the lower end of the spectrum, the Hindi sphere chose to include the 'common people' (*sarvasādhāraṇ*) only in order to educate and impose upon them what was ultimately a uniform middle-class culture. It did open to other voices and claims in the press, but when policies were decided it was a homogenous leadership which decided. Hindi intellectuals were thus somewhat caught in-between: some became part of the intellectual establishment entrenched in public institutions, others relied on autonomous media such as the press. However, despite their success in forming a Hindi historical and cultural consciousness, as we shall see in the course of this research, their 'national' role and importance remained unrealised: though with larger claims, they became just one more Indian regional intelligentsia, subordinate to the pan-Indian one of English.

The question of gender exclusion, too, requires a few more words. We have mentioned already how critics of Habermas pointed out his inadvertent equation of unrestrictedness with equality: the fact that access to the public sphere was not formally restricted to some groups does not mean that all had equal access. Nancy Fraser e.g. has contested not only the actual exclusions from the potentially open access to the bourgeois public sphere, something even Habermas conceded was never fully realized in practice,[40] but also the more subtle discriminations that this ostensibly equal discursive interaction implied. She argues that the strategy of bracketing status ('as if' it did not exist or count) protocols of style and decorum in public interaction 'that were themselves correlates and markers of status inequality' worked as informal strategies to marginalise women and members of plebeian classes.[41] Fraser also suggests that the language of political deliberation itself can, by imposing an overarching (and seemingly consensual) 'we', mark subtle forms of control.[42]

Again, the Hindi public sphere shows some peculiarities. While in fact, in India as well as in Europe, bourgeois efforts at a public sphere took place at the same time with

[40] Nancy Fraser, 'Rethinking the Public Sphere', p. 113.
[41] *Ibid.*, p. 119.
[42] 'Subordinate groups sometimes cannot find the right voice or words to express their thoughts, and when they do, they discover they are not heard'; or else they might feel that the overarching 'we' does not really represent them'; *ibid.*

recasting a new patriarchy,[43] in Indian nationalist discourse women were called upon to be part of the march towards national progress. To this aim Indian reformers envisaged for respectable women first a very controlled access to the public sphere, as discussions on role-based education exemplify at length (4.1). The wealth and strong emphasis on prescriptive literature for women and the negative example of the free westernised woman amply express male reformers' anxiety about the changes they were advocating.

Yet, and this will become clearer from the analysis of women's journals in the fourth chapter, early in this century women's journals started using the nationalist discourse of progress to critique the exclusion of women from the public sphere, the limitation of women's sphere of activity (*kāryakṣetra*) as well as male control. Bolder journals internalised the notion, inherent to the language of the public sphere, that points of view could differ and that norms had to be negotiated among participants, and especially with the consent of the parts involved! In doing so, they questioned the boundaries of the 'public' by raising issues of domestic and caste practice to public scrutiny and judgement. In this way they forced the potential openness and pluralism of the notion of public to envelop also women in the household. By circulating news previously not considered of womanly concern and asking women to speak up about their domestic problems, they tried to effect women's access to the Hindi public sphere in more than a symbolic way, organising women into a counter-public.[44]

By legitimising the language of feelings and the idea that norms concerning women could be self-defined,[45] such journals and women's literature managed also to introduce a notion of subjectivity that was, perhaps, the peculiar form of 'private' of the Hindi context (see 4.3). Thus, the limited and controlled involvement of women in the public sphere of nationalism became, in their hands, a powerful means to explore other boundaries and possibilities within existing women's roles and in newly-emerging ones. This does not imply the existence of an organised feminist movement, but rather the opening of spaces for reflection and exploration.[46]

[43] See the essays in K. Sangari and S. Vaid, eds., *Recasting Women. Essays in Indian Colonial History*, Kali for Women, Delhi 1989.

[44] In this, we shall argue, journals were much more effective than women's associations, intrinsically restricted to elite and 'emancipated' women who could take part freely in their proceedings; see below 4.2.

[45] Even the notion of *maryādā* came to be reinterpreted as something a woman could define for herself, a *lakṣmaṇrekhā* she would know where to draw in the new public situations. 'Every woman has a *lakṣmaṇ-rekhā*, which is usually a line men draw for women. For Subhadrā [Kumārī Cauhān, a leading poet and Congress activist in Jabalpur] this *lakṣmaṇ-rekhā* was a line she drew herself'; Sudhā Cauhān, *Milā tej se tej*, Hans Prakasan, Allahabad 1975, p. 86.

[46] Because of its exploratory and compromising nature, fraught with tensions, exclusions and setbacks, this participation can hardly be called a feminist movement, as V.B. Talwar and Radha Kumar would like to imply; cf. V.B. Talwar, 'Women's Journals in Hindi, 1910-29', in Sangari and Vaid, eds., *Recasting Women*; and R. Kumar, *The History of Doing*.

In this perspective, we may once again point to the imaginative, rather than representative function of Hindi literature: for instance, the realm of the 'private', expressed e.g. in companionate marriage, seems to have anticipated the reality of those times, when conjugality was discouraged upto a point as a possible source of family tension, where women in the household had their own hierarchy and were subjected to other women's 'public' scrutiny and where children belonged to the family at large. Moreover, even in literature the acknowledgement of individual subjectivity and feelings, especially in the case of women, was intertwined with preoccupations about propriety and the fabric of the family and society.[47] In fact, women's access to the Hindi public sphere, which thanks to nationalist campaigns encompassed a much larger number than that of educated women, seems to have taken place under the aegis of this compromise, often covertly espousing the language of patriarchy which assigned women a specific spiritual nature.[48] Only under such circumstances was their participation in the public sphere not frowned upon. According to Partha Chatterjee:

> Once the essential femininity of women was fixed in terms of certain culturally visible spiritual qualities, they could go to schools, travel in public conveyances, watch public entertainment programs, and in time even take up employment outside the home. But the "spiritual" signs of her femininity were now clearly marked - in her dress, her eating habits, her social demeanour, her religiosity... This spirituality did not... impede the chances of the woman moving out of the physical confines of the home; on the contrary, it facilitated it, making it possible for her to go into the world under conditions that would not threaten her femininity. In fact, the image of woman as goddess or mother served to erase her sexuality in the world outside the home.[49]

While Chatterjee's observation seems true, and this prescriptive insistence on womanly qualities and values that should translate visibly into dress-code and body-

[47] We may well suggest, on the basis of literature on women and family relations examined in this chapter, that in Hindi it was only in the late 1920s-early 1930s a notion of 'private' realm of the family where individual development and affective relations was introduced. Although this was linked to a redefinition of the role of the housewife (*gṛhiṇī*), it was not unconnected, we shall see, to debates on public access and women's *kāryakṣetra*.

[48] Partha Chatterjee has recently suggested that nationalist discourse divided the world into two complementary spheres: an "outside" realm of social institutions, politics, economics etc., and an "inner" one of spiritual essence and cultural identity that was vested particularly in women. While the former was dominated by the encounter and clash with the colonial state and its modern culture, it is argued, the latter could be the protected site of an autonomous elaboration of a '"modern" national culture that is nevertheless not Western. It is here that the nation is imagined and brought into being' even before political independence was actually achieved. In this process, Partha Chatterjee argues, women became the repositories of the essential spiritual qualities of Indian culture and the symbol of India's superiority over the (materially and politically) more powerful West. As a consequence, however, the nature and role of Indian women were fixed and women became the objects of a new, reformist and nationalist patriarchy. This pushed them into a mould and into the household according to what was essentially a kind of middle-class idea of conjugal family and respectability, exemplified in Bengal by the new figure of the *bhadramahilā*, the respectable gentlewoman. P. Chatterjee, *The Nation and its Fragments*, Princeton University Press, Princeton 1993, p. 6. See also See I. Chatterjee, 'The Bengali Bhadramahila 1930-1934', M. Phil. thesis, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi 1986.

[49] P. Chatterjee, *The Nation and its Fragments*, pp. 130-31.

language can hardly be denied in the Hindi area, too, such an account erases the ambiguity and the actual impact that women's access to the public sphere had. It overlooks the indeterminacy and tensions of such roles, and the pressures women put on them, touching for instance upon 'dangerous' areas of sexuality and emotions. It also overlooks the ongoing creative effort in accommodating personal aspirations and cultural ideals and role-models, which every woman had to negotiate anew. Finally, it belittles the radical fact that women activists, teachers and crowds did acquire certain spaces and a certain agency, even under a conciliatory ideology. Possibly this was a case of greater practical change than what the ideology reflects. Doors were open, whose implications would become apparent only with time. For instance, once 'socially useful' employment for women was legitimised under the seemingly subordinating notion of *sevā*, the earning power of girls and women was bound to effect social change, and not always in their favour.

As women's access to the Hindi public sphere was legitimised under the aegis of respectability, it also exercised a lot of inner control. As a consequence, we do not find the same variety of opinions as in the general Hindi press and find a great deal more of self-censorship. Respectability, along with a similar 'as if' bracketing of inequalities of status and differences among women (no doubt to enhance the strength of their claims), produced its own subtle exclusion of lower class, irregular and working women (4.2).[50] At the same time, it opened for all a model and vocabulary of self-empowerment and positive self-representation; it also opened subtle avenues of practical exploration. All in all, women's access to the public sphere reveals a tension between the open-endedness, pluralism and empowerment inherent in the notion of the 'public sphere', and the preoccupation with control and containment.

On a smaller scale, we find a similar process in the Hindi literary sphere, where the journals' openness fostered a plurality of contesting voices, while at the same time aesthetic and poetic values that smacked of individual creative freedom were strongly resisted. This resistance involved the principle that norms should be negotiated, as well the legitimacy of dissent and the idea that there could be more than one set of aesthetic tastes. (see 2.2). This, we may well imagine, became all the more problematic in the case of norms concerning women, which were thought to sustain the whole social fabric. Women's access to education, employment or other public activity remained fraught with potential danger, which had to be counteracted with an obsessive insistence on sexual purity, selflessness and subordination (to male mentors, to the good of the family, etc.).

[50] Sumanta Banerjee has read this process in nineteenth century Bengal as a marginalisation and exclusion of women's own segregated culture, the culture of the *zenānā* and the *antaḥpur*, and of low-caste, lower-class women. Sumanta Banerjee, *The Parlour and the Street. Elite and Popular Culture in Nineteenth Century Calcutta,* Seagull, Calcutta 1989.

Where do these points lead to in trying to understand the notion and domain of the 'public' in early twentieth century Hindi? Unlike the bourgeois public sphere in Europe, in the Hindi sphere the notion of public did not develop as a domain correlated to the private one of private business or the private family. Rather, Hindi intellectuals ultimately conceived of 'the public' as an overarching, homogeneous and inclusive space, expressed through the notion of *jāti*, community. Although accessible to all and concerning itself with the interests of the general public of common people (*sarvasādhāraṇ*), the public as *jāti* included, rather than transcended, particular groups; these groups kept the right to follow their own interests and customs. In fact, the protection of particular community interests could very well be expressed in the same language of the public sphere and was deemed compatible, indeed part of, the overall public interest. Thus, particular interests and customs would occasionally be subjected to public criticism, but in order to reform them, not to dispense with them altogether: their existence was not challenged, and no common rule of conduct was envisaged in what was already conceived of as an harmonious whole. Individually, one's right to publicly express one's opinions was underwritten only as far as it did not go against this principle of compatibility of interests and of an ultimately harmonious whole. Thus, inner dissent in associations was inevitably hushed and hardly leaked to the press. Individual writers could be publicly reprimanded for not showing characters compatible with Indian 'ideals', and conflict was viewed as a circumscribed, transient phenomenon that could be solved by mutual consent and had ultimately no *raison d'être* in the overall logic of the Indian social and political universe. Thus, conflict was hardly ever thematised in debates and writing if not against the British. As a consequence, a kind of stultified official 'Indian' culture was produced even before power was actually handed over; in it, other subjects were confined and disempowered in specific (subordinate) roles. The case of women has shown how hollow, constrictive and fraught with tensions this notion of publicity could be, and how in order for it to be truly liberating they had to introduce their own agendas. The case of peasants similarly shows how little they were actually represented by the overarching 'we' of which they were made a symbol.

How the combination of *jāti* as a unifying political concept and public participatory activities worked in the political arena has been the object of several studies.[51] Public participatory activities, which so far could be considered indigenous forms of 'courtly-knightly representational public sphere' (or of its carnivalesque or protest subversion) intermingled from the second half of the nineteenth century with the other, discursive model of public sphere and with nationalist ideas. Thus, religious festivals came to be viewed, at least by the vernacular intelligentsia, as *jātīy tyohār*, festivals of the community in the new, unifying sense. Ceremonials might remain the same, but their significance

[51] See e.g. Sandria Freitag's work, especially *Collective Action and Community Public Arenas and the Emergence of Communalism in North India*, Oxford University Press, Delhi 1990.

changed. Also, when popular classes became increasingly involved in public religious and political activities through shared symbols and idioms, they did so nevertheless within specific contexts and for very different reasons; their common participation should not necessarily suggest that a common religious or political identity was formed, nor that it was welcome *tout court*.[52] In fact, as the dilemmas of Hindu *saṅgaṭhan* ideology and programmes would show, it was very difficult to engender a political and religious unity of Hindus beyond occasional or dramatic circumstances (see 3.3).

Thus, in the two decades under survey we see two parallel process that constitute the particular nature of the public sphere in Hindi. On the one side, publicity clearly resulted in the participation in literary and political debates and activities of new and diverse publics, and partly, in the case of women and peasants, in the emergence of counter-publics, who produced their own critical voices and fashioned specific agendas. It also resulted in exciting literary explorations in many different directions. At the same time, the normal institutionalisation of such public sphere activities brought along with it the formation of new hierarchies of authority and assimilated or marginalised dissent. Thus, whereas the public sphere in Habermas's model implied and valued plurality of opinions, in the case of Hindi plurality was admitted only insofar as it expressed particular groups within the whole. Dissent on the principle of compatibility and of the harmonious whole was devalued and suspected as threatening chaos. In the literary sphere, discordant intellectual voices were not listened to by political leaders, who expected Hindi intellectuals only to reflect their own views or have compatible ones.

Moreover, because the intelligentsia which in Hindi captured formal institutions and official recognition was a culturally conservative one, the stronghold it maintained over cultural transmission even after Independence led to the crystallising of a conservative Hindi culture in the canon, in which other voices that were present in the public sphere were systematically devalued or neutralised. The analysis of Hindi journals and Hindi literature undertaken in this thesis points, on the contrary, to a vibrant debate over the forms and content of nationalism, with a variety oppositions and a strong sense of the peculiar and independent role of Hindi intellectuals. The tension between these two processes can be observed within the literary and the political sphere, as well as in their mutual relationship.

To summarise this point, in order to analyse the emergence and the peculiar nature of the public sphere in Hindi, one has to first of all trace the discourse of *jāti* unity, the ways and media through which it was pursued and popularised - e.g. as historical discourse - as well as the exclusions it operated and the conflicts it defused. Secondly, one has to examine the impact of modern publicity in Hindi literature, at both levels of ideas and of institutions,

[52] See Nandini Gooptu, 'The Political Culture of the Urban Poor: the United Provinces between the two World Wars', unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Cambridge University, Cambridge 1991, p. 140n. For a contrary view, see Sandria Freitag, *Collective Action and Community.*

and follow the development of public sphere institutions, chiefly the press and associations, as well as their agendas, the debates around the, the attitudes toward the general public and political power. One has to observe the emergence of new voices, the issues they raise, the momentum they acquire and the space and hearing they manage to obtain in the overall public sphere. Thirdly, one has to analyse the changes in literary authority under the impact of publicity and of public sphere activities. This includes listening to critical debates in order to ascertain who held authoritative opinions and could exercise excluding judgements; it involves observing the status of the independent writer and of institutions; it involves, most importantly, scrutinising the people and choices involved in the making of a literary canon in the education system, for there cultural values were crystallised and enshrined in a lasting and authoritative form.

In order to do so, we have made use of a number of literary and non-strictly literary sources, namely journals, reports of associations, educational material and popular literature.[53] The five chapters that form the body of the thesis will show their use.

The second chapter explores the changes in the Hindi literary sphere under the impact of publicity. It seeks to understand the reasons behind, and the implications of, these changes in order to provide an appropriate context and historical horizon in which individual texts, writers and discourses can be placed. It is only in the interaction of writers among themselves and with this changing environment that we may understand literary trends and other processes - such as the making of a literary canon, or the role of intellectuals in the nationalist movement - taking place in this period. Only such an approach can highlight correspondences and nuances that would otherwise escape attention if trends and writers were taken in isolation. Also, because of the overpowering influence of the literary canon and the logic behind it, much of the Hindi literary production of this period has remained outside the pale of literary history. By retrieving some of it - e.g. popular fiction or 'minor' authors - to critical consideration, we hope to have gained a better understanding of the literary sphere of the time, as well as of the process behind their critical exclusion.

Accordingly, the chapter first thematises the issue of diversity, disentangling different and overlapping trends and tastes in the literary sphere, in literary people and in audiences themselves. The second section turns to journals in order to show how, for instance, the debate on literary norms and the social function of literature reveals at work

[53] Overall we have made very little use of statistical data because of intrinsic problems in interpreting them: different census reports used different categories of classification each time, and language statistics were equally subject to change and seem to reflect more the choices of census officers than anything else, and data on literacy would hardly illuminate us on the plural and complex literacies we have discussed above; all in all, to untangle these knots was beyond the scope of this thesis. For problems with census classifications as regarding caste, see e.g. Rashmi Pant, 'The Cognitive Status of Caste in Colonial Ethnography: A Review of Some Literature of the North Western Provinces and Oudh', *Indian Economic and Social History Review*, 24, 2, 1987.

basic issues about publicity, i.e. the end of universally accepted norms, the presence and interrelation of different tastes and values within a unified discursive space, and the crisis of authority they both implied. Journals and text-books form the two poles of the chapter, and they will orient and lead us in recognising the two conflicting process of openness and crystallisation of values in the Hindi literary sphere. Text-books, anthologies, manuals, exam-papers and 'key' (*kuñjīs*) were useful because they provided insight in the chief way in which Hindi intellectuals were able to actively crystallise the values they believed were crucial to 'Indian culture', since education was their most important and successful area of activity and influence. Through developments in the education system we could follow the institutionalisation of Hindi activists and scholars, for whom educational institutions became the main platform of authority. Textbooks also revealed some of the ways in which these scholars and compilers negotiated 'western knowledge' and 'Indian values', and there we could also see most clearly at work the cultural choices and exclusions prompted upon pupils during the learning process. Through readers and manuals we could see how a certain way of reading literature - what Krishna Kumar has aptly called 'text-book culture' - came into being that was to have great influence in the future of the Hindi literary market. Finally text-books were also the expression of the way critics and lecturers viewed, selected and interpreted Hindi literary tradition and contemporary literature, and created a hierarchy between themselves and writers.

The third chapter examines the making and popularising of nationalist historical consciousness in Hindi. We turn once again to journals as the main forum for debates on history: they show the range of opinions and the conceptual horizon in which Hindi intellectuals moved when thinking about it. We also examined some narratives that exemplify the use of literature in forming historical consciousness, since history writing was considered a personal quest and a community effort, both in contestation with European historians. Finally, articles and debates on the shape of society showed the impact of this historical vision on reflections on contemporary Indian society and also some of the key concepts that would express their social and political understanding.

The fourth chapter on women and women's journals examines, as anticipated, the conditions under which their limited participation was first deemed suitable to the progress of the country, and how then they used that space to raise powerful critical voices and reframe issues concerning their own roles within and outside the household. The enquiry was at all made possible by the new generation of educated women who in the 1920s claimed public access both in writing and in action. Women's journals, and *Cāṁd* in particular (Allahabad, 1922-), again provided very rich material. The new openness and publicity resulted, especially in *Cāṁd*, not only in prescriptive and abstract argumentative material. Women's voices came across vividly in women's letters, while the remarkable success of a different kind of popular literature, that of social romances, pointed to the use

of literature to explore new emotional worlds. Finally, narratives on women by both male and female writers revealed the wealth of tensions that underscored the recreation and exploration through literature of old and new women's roles.

Language was a crucial element in the self-definition and definition of others by Hindi intellectuals, consistently with the historical consciousness outlined in the third chapter. Moving from this premise, the fifth chapter examines the language question as a way to highlight the clash between openness and crystallisation in the Hindi literary sphere, and also the relationship between literary and political actors in the nationalist movement. Journals and reports of Hindi associations provided a bountiful source of information, since they rigorously scrutinised every initiative, policy and opinion on the subject. Language was both a crucial element in the nationalist discourse of Hindi intellectuals, the core of their claim to be the future national intelligentsia, and also their main avenue of co-operation with colonial administration. This chapter will analyse the strategies in building the Hindi claim and gradually mustering public and political support for it while at the same time conquering institutional spaces. Once again, despite a vibrant debate within Hindi, it was finally the Hindi establishment that was able to impose its particular, rigid line thanks to its institutional strength.

In the final chapter we shall examine more directly the relationship between Hindi intellectuals and the changing political sphere of the period. The rich output of political papers, pamphlets and articles, the participation with which intellectuals followed and took themselves part in nationalist campaigns, the rich historical imagination and the high critical awareness of their role, all point to their very active and very political role in the public sphere. Then why, this chapter asks, was their creative role so little acknowledged in the political sphere, and why were they so little recognised by political leaders? Why was only the more culturally conservative voice recognised (that of 'text-books', to use the catch-word), and that too through its sheer obstinacy? Accordingly, we shall use both historical studies, articles and recollections to assess the extent to which Hindi intellectuals gained a foothold the political sphere. By taking the constitutional and non-constitutional (civic) arenas as two related but not identical domains, we shall see that while Hindi intellectuals were very active in the latter, they gained only limited access to the former. In addition, the relationship between them and Hindi politicians, their natural interlocutors, was strained, barring a few exceptions. Hindi politicians in fact, despite their different political persuasion, were culturally quite an homogeneous group, and were hardly likely to appreciate, and interact with, the more independent-minded Hindi intellectuals. In fact, communication between them seems to have been minimal. When Hindi writers lamented the 'ignorance' of nationalist politicians about contemporary Hindi literature, they were pointing at this lack of communication and recognition. Even the direct encounters recorded show that Congress politicians failed to acknowledge the authority and role of independent

intellectuals; instead, their political patronage underwrote the authority of the culturally more conservative literary establishment.

In the light of recent studies on the Congress and subordinate groups this seems hardly surprising. Again, while many Hindi intellectuals welcomed the emergence in the non-constitutional political sphere of subordinate voices such as that of peasant leaders - and in fact some were actively involved in peasant campaigns- generally their voices were little heard. The harmonic (and implicitly hierarchical) view of Indian society that viewed 'the public' as a harmonious whole, in which conflict and dissent could only be circumstantial and political dissent could only be directed against the British, may certainly go some way in explaining why this was so.

By roughly the end of the period under study, the season in which Hindi intellectuals believed they did have a crucial hand in making the new nation-state was over. For some, entrenched in institutional positions, Hindi culture was finally established, and they cared little about whether it would be popular or not. Others, independent intellectuals, found the authority they commanded sharply delimited. In the 1940s Hindi Experimentalist (*prayogvādī*) writers would delve into the exploration of a subjectivity independent of social and political pressures, while Progressives (*pragativādī*) would take a clear anti-establishment stance and become a critical opposition. Yet, many of the cultural and literary *saṃskāras* that were formed in the two decades, as well as the perception of the nationalist movement, would however continue to be transmitted through education and the literary canon, and stand uncriticised for generations to come.

Chapter 2

The Hindi literary sphere

2.1 Diversity in the Hindi literary sphere: literary *saṃskāras,* literary publics

In the 1902s and '30s literary production and the institutional spaces in which it was transmitted - the press, the publishing industry and the education system - expanded considerably in Hindi. In order first of all to take cognisance of such an expansion, this chapter presents an overview of the Hindi literary sphere. This will allow us to map the ground and the horizon within which the Hindi intelligentsia moved, thought and operated. As mentioned in the introduction, it is only in the interaction between writers and this changing environment that we may understand the processes in action.

Accordingly, the first section takes stock of the simultaneous presence of old and new literary tastes and forms in the literary sphere as well as in individuals, revealing an intense process of exploration and reassessment of identities (2.1). The second section shows how new notions of literature competing in public debate provoked a discussion over norms and guidelines for modern literature that reveals an emerging crisis of authority: could really everyone be a writer now? And could everyone be a critic? (2.2). Section 2.3 explores the institutional changes in the literary sphere, in order get a sense of the avenues and possibilities a Hindi writer in the 1920s and '30s had access to, and of how the growth of a literary industry made the figure of the professional writer and intellectual historically possible. Not only debates, but also the literary industry, however, raised new questions concerning the evaluation of literature. These found expression in anxious interrogations over the value of the literary market, of popularity and of criticism (2.4). The final section of the chapter turns to the parallel process of the making of a Hindi literary canon in the education system; literary education in fact provided the most appropriate avenue for the agenda of Hindi intellectuals, which was an intrinsically educational project (2.5). The picture that emerges is one of vibrant experimentation and debate in the public sphere on the one side, and of a parallel institutionalisation, with a rise of the 'Hindi expert' and of a Hindi establishment in literary and educational institutions on the other side. The following

chapters will dwell on the implications of these two processes of expansion and institutionalisation with regard to historical reflection, gender and political participation.

The present section first gives an overview of the literary sphere of the 1920s, takes stock of the variety of literary production and taste, and highlights changes and continuities. Examples from the main urban centres will be juxtaposed with the semi-rural literary sphere of a small town in the Central Provinces. Here the interplay between printed and oral forms and their respective fruition will lead us to the question of literary *saṃskāras*. These in turn will help us unravel the layered tastes and manifold experimentations of writers of this period, who almost unexceptionally wrote in different genres and styles.

The public sphere approach leads us to explore and explain the existing variety at the three-fold level of institutions and forms, of discourse, and of literary imagination and texts. At the end of the process, we may be able to put forward a hypothesis of cultural change which acknowledges the fact that the encounter with English education and western knowledge did not take place in an intellectual vacuum and cannot be explained in terms of a theory of plain influence.

There are two theoretical pitfalls one has to avoid in order to reconstruct a faithful picture of the literary scene of the period. The first is that typical of literary history when viewed as a linear succession of trends and texts. Although the search for a "dominant" or new trend in a particular period is legitimate, it should not be to the detriment of other existing forms or discordant voices. There is much more to our period than the poetry of Chāyāvād, Premcand and Rāmcandra Śukla. By the same length, it must be affirmed that the nationalist faith of Hindi writers was not uncritical or without nuances. Chāyāvād poetry was by no means the only practised or even prevalent kind of poetry - indeed Braj Bhasa poetry hardly disappeared from the scene.[1] In the field of fiction, "realistic" novels of Premcand's kind were only a few among a score of contemporary romances and melodramas (see 4.3). In overlooking the 'remnants' of previous literary tastes and forms and the existence of popular literature, the Hindi canon has reduced the varied production of this period to few towering classics. In doing so, Hindi critics have but assumed the moralising and nation-building role of the great literary critics of the beginning of the century, primarily Mahāvīr Prasād Dvivedī (1864-1938) and Rāmcandra Śukla (1884-1941). It is time however to revise their exclusive notion of literature and escape the second pitfall, too. Because the dominant literary (as well as social and political) discourse of the time valued consensus and aimed at establishing one set of values and rules for all, opinions and

[1] Nor indeed was it so in the case of individual poets: true, poets like Jayśankar Prasād did switch from Braj to Khari Boli, but poets like Ayodhyāsiṃh Upādhyāy 'Harioudh' (1865-1947) or Lala Bhagvān Dīn (1876-1947) composed both in Braj and Khari Boli throughout their careers.

literary forms inconsistent with it were either assimilated into the mainstream or ignored.[2] The extreme variety of the Hindi literary scene of this time instead carries a particular historical poignancy, poised as it was between oral and literate traditions, the new print-culture and the nationalist call, the exigencies of canon-building and the lures of the market, and its proper appreciation is long overdue.

2.1.1 The literary sphere

The example of the Hindi literary sphere of Banaras at the turn of the century will prove our point. If viewed synchronically it comprised: firstly, a major group of *rīti* poets collected around Jagannāth Dās Ratnākar (1866-1932), the last great representative of the genre, and loosely organised in a "society of poets" (*kavi-samāj*) by Jīvanlāl Gosvāmī of the Vallabhite Gopal Temple.[3] The main activity of this unofficial group of *rasiks* (connoisseurs) were poetic riddles (*samasyā-pūrtis*) (see below 2.3.3). Ratnākar's regular and informal circle of friends included also Bālmukund Gupta (1865-1907) and Kiśorīlāl Gosvāmī (1865-1932), survivors of Bhārtendu's circle, and popular novelists like Harikṛṣṇa Jauhar and Devkīnandan Khatrī (1861-1922).[4] Another younger group of poets collected around Lala Bhagvān Dīn (1876-1930), also a master of *samasyā-pūrtis*, a connoisseur of Urdu poetry and the author of a very popular book of patriotic poems in Khari Boli, *Vīr pañcaratna* (1918).[5] Among his disciples were Viśvanāth Prasād Miśra, the future scholar, and Murārelāl Keḍiyā, treasurer of the Nāgarī Pracāriṇī Sabhā, amateur archaeologist and collectionist, and organiser of *ex tempore* Braj poetry sessions (*Paṛhant kavi sammelan*) in the streets of Benares that lasted all night. Younger poets assembled at the informal Chāyāvād haven of Jayśaṅkar Prasād (1889-1937) in Gobardhan Sarai,[6] while at the grander *salon* of Rāykṛṣṇadās (1892-1980) at Ramghat poets, scholars, painters, musicians, art dealers etc. met for almost half a century.[7] The Carmicheal Library, the Nāgarī Pracāriṇī

[2] On the one hand literary forms one did not approve of were dismissed as relics of the past, unfit for the needs of the hour (progress). On the other hand, literature in every age was said to have only one function, which in the age of nationalism was to provide patriotic ideals of courage and action and awaken a national consciousness in the people. Strength, it was said, lies in unity, and differences in purpose, language or style would weaken the body of literature and, consequently, of the nation.

[3] See Rāykṛṣṇadās, *Prasād kī yād*, unpubl. manuscript, p. 33.

[4] See Madhureś, *Devkīnandan Khatrī*, Sahitya Akademi, New Delhi, 1980, p. 13.

[5] Whereas Ratnākar belonged to the old service class, and was secretary to the Maharani of Ayodhya, Bhagvān Dīn, though informally trained in literature, became a professional intellectual. He taught Persian at Annie Besant's Central Hindu School and later became Hindi lecturer at Benares Hindu University in 1924. He also edited old Hindi texts for the Nāgarī Pracāriṇī Sabhā, wrote texts on *alaṃkārās* and ran a free Hindi literature school to prepare candidates for the Hindī Sāhitya Sammelan examinations. See below 2.5 and Appendix.

[6] Among them Kṛṣṇadev Prasād Gauṛ ('Beḍhab Banārsī'), who wrote satirical poems, edited satirical journals and taught English literature; Vinodśaṅkar Vyās, Rāmnāthlāl 'Suman' and Śāntipriy Dvivedī: they would write positive criticism of Chāyāvād in the controversy and contribute to the journal *Jāgaraṇ*. Rāmvilās Śarmā, *Nirālā kī sāhitya sādhnā*, vol. I, Rajkamal Prakasan, Delhi 1969, p. 122.

[7] Interview with Dr. Ananda Krishna, Rāykṛṣṇadās's son, Banaras, August 1992.

Sabhā and later B.H.U. provided venues for regular literary (or general) conversation and for learned talks, poetry sessions, grand annual meetings and other literary events. Banaras's role as an education centre, for Sanskrit as well as for Hindi and for western education, ensured the presence of a young literate audience for books and for literary events. Rāmlīlās, Rāmkathās, music and poetry programmes at temples or at *raīses*' houses marked the festive calendar around the city, while a few local amateur drama groups, travelling Parsi and folk theatre companies - and the first films - provided entertainment to a wide spectrum of townsmen, usually at the esplanade in front of the Town Hall.[8] Although each genre of entertainment - literary or otherwise - had its own aesthetic world, rules and audience, traditional and modern forms coexisted, oral and printed literature circulated side by side, and publics often overlapped. Not only we find all "elite" intellectuals taking part freely in so-called popular forms of entertainment but also, especially in the most experimental writers of this period like Prasād, we find a cultivated eclecticism (see below 2.1.2).

By comparison, the Hindi literary scene in Allahabad - of which Bālkṛṣṇa Bhaṭṭ (1844-1914) had been a brave pioneer with the journal *Hindī pradīp* (1877-1910) - was strongly influenced by the growth of the city as a centre of modern education, of journalism and publishing, of provincial administration and of nationalist politics.[9] The presence of the University, the High Court, government offices and the Civil Lines gave the city a genteel outlook, while the 'Town' resounded with the usual bustle and the area near the *saṅgam*, Daraganj, had a strong presence of river *paṇḍās* and small publishers. The University,[10] with its imposing buildings and hostels, its professors and students, was a stronghold of English and only slowly made some allowance for vernaculars. Indeed, even when Hindi literature was first introduced as a subject in 1923, it was taught in English like all other subjects! The Hindi lecturers, Dhīrendra Varmā (1897-1973), Rāmśaṅkar Śukla 'Rasāl' (1898-1980) and Rāmkumār Varmā (1905-?), played an active role in the literary life of the city, whether in the Hindī Sāhitya Sammelan or in the Hindustani Academy or in Hindi journals. *Kavi-sammelans* (poetry meetings) became a regular feature at colleges and hostels, and the Sukavi Samāj encouraged young talents and provided them with a weekly forum for recitation and discussion. Sumitrānandan Pant, Rāmkumār Varmā, Mahādevī Varmā, Ānandīprasād Śrīvāstava: many new poets flourished in the protected atmosphere of the University. In the late 1930s and 1940s the University became a centre of Progressive and

[8] The amateur Nāgarī Nāṭak Maṇḍalī, established in 1909 by relatives of Bhārtendu Hariścandra, produced either his or other historical plays much in the style of Parsi companies. A split gave birth to the Bhārtendu Nāṭak Maṇḍalī; see Introduction to Dhīrendranāth Siṃh, ed., *Jānakīmaṅgal, nāṭak* Nagari Pracharini Sabha, Banaras, 1966.

[9] Karine Schomer, *Mahadevi Varma*, pp. 135 ff.

[10] Among the oldest and most prestigious institutions of the province, Muir Central College (1872) and the Kayastha Pathshala (1873) were merged into Allahabad University in 1922, when it became a residential teaching institution rather than just an examination board.

Marxist writers and critics.[11] Another literary circle, the Rasik Maṇḍal, preserved the taste for Braj in a more private form.[12]

The role and development of publishing houses will be discussed in a later section (2.3.2). With the Indian Press and Rāmnārāyaṇ Lāl taking the lion's share of text-book production, Allahabad was one of the main centres of Hindi publishing in the province. Smaller publishers like Rāmnareś Tripāṭhī's Hindi Mandir or the Hindi Press, too, took advantage of the growth of higher literary studies in Hindi and produced readers and anthologies. Allahabad had also the biggest concentration of newspapers in the province, both in English and in Hindi.[13] In Hindi these were *Abhyuday* and *Maryādā*, launched and managed first by Madan Mohan Mālavīya and the by his nephew Kṛṣṇakānt Mālavīya. The Leader group brought out *Bhārat*, the Indian Press *Sarasvatī*, the famed literary journal, and *Bālsakhā* for children.[14] One text-book publisher, Rāmjīlāl Śarmā, (1876-1931) published two children's magazines, *Vidyārthī* (1913) and *Khilaunā* (1924). Allahabad had been a pioneer of women's journals with *Gṛhlakṣmī* and *Strī-darpaṇ*, established in 1909, while the Chand Press brought out *Cāṁd* (see 4.2) and the political weekly *Bhaviṣya*.

Allahabad therefore provided plenty of opportunities for employment and interaction for the Hindi literati. Though geographically divided between the University area, the Town and Daraganj, the Hindī Sāhitya Sammelan and newspaper offices supplied meeting-places for genteel academicians, educated students, enterprising writers-publishers, salaried intellectuals and traditional literati. In fact Allahabad highlights the paradox of Hindi: even though it was one of the main centres of the Hindi press and literature, and of Hindi politics with Madan Mohan Mālavīya (1861-1941) and P.D. Ṭaṇḍon (1882-1962), the Hindi literary sphere remained quite separate from the English one, and in the main centre of nationalist politics - Anand Bhavan - Hindi remained an alien and slighted presence.

Lucknow by contrast had long been an Urdu stronghold.[15] Though early Hindi scholars and writers such as the Miśra brothers (Śyāmbihārī, Sukhdevbihārī and Gaṇeśbihārī) and Rūpnārāyaṇ Pāṇḍey (1884-1958) lived there, they had to work with

[11] Progressive critics, all university graduates, centred around the Progressive Writers' Association (1936) and included Śivdānsiṃh Cauhān, Amṛt Rāi, Prakāścandra Gupta and Rāmvilās Śarmā. Amṛt Rāi and Ś.S. Cauhān had taken over Premcand's journal *Hans* after his death; Gupta edited *Nayā sāhitya*, and Pant's journal *Rūpābh* (1938-39, from Kalakankar) provided a space for Progressive criticism. Most of them belonged to Allahabad.

[12] Once a week the group of *rasiks* - including Rāmprasād Tripāṭhī, 'Rasāl' and Rāmnārāyaṇ Caturvedī would meet in a private room near the Chowk and delight in *samasyā-pūrtis*; Śrīnārāyaṇ Caturvedī, *Manorañjak saṃsamaraṇ*, Indian Press, Allahabad 1965, p. 96.

[13] Apart from the anglo-indian *Pioneer*, there was the *Leader*, launched by M.M. Mālavīya and edited by C.Y. Chintamani (later a Birla concern), Motilal Nehru's *Independent* and Sacchidananda Sinha's *Hindustan Review* (printed at the Indian Press).

[14] There were attempts at other journals, too, but rather short-lived; see Mushtaq Ali, 'Hindī sāhitya ke itihās meṁ ilāhābād kā yogdān, iṇḍiyan pres ke viśiṣṭ sandarbh meṁ', unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Allahabad, 1989.

[15] Apart from the Nawab court, Lucknow had also become a centre for the Urdu press and publishing, with *Hamdam* and the Nawalkishore Press.

journals and publishers of Allahabad. Only in the 1920s did Hindi acquire public space, i.e. when the Nawalkishore Press branched out in Hindi: Dulārelāl and Biṣṇunārāyaṇ Bhārgava started *Mādhurī* (1922), *Sudhā* (1927) and the literary publishing house Ganga Pustak Mala (see 2.3). These attracted editors such as Premcand (1880-1936), Kṛṣṇabihārī Miśra, Rūpnārāyaṇ Pāṇḍey, Nirālā, Ilācandra Jośī (1902-1982), Mātādīn Śukla and Badrīnāth Bhaṭṭ (1891-1934). The latter (more on him in 2.1.2) became the first Hindi lecturer at the newly-established Lucknow University (1922).[16] Among the new writers who assembled around Nirālā were Amṛtlāl Nāgar and Rāmvilās Śarmā, a student at the University.

An industrial and business city, Kanpur was hardly a literary centre, despite the presence of Pratāpnārāyaṇ Miśra (1856-95), prolific editor and novelist of Bhārtendu's time, and Rāy Devīprasād 'Pūrṇa' (1868-1915).[17] As Bhagavatīcaraṇ Varmā recalled:

> In those days, the whole culture in Kanpur was dominated by Kanaujiya Brahmins. Business was mostly in Kanaujiya Brahmins' hands, and they were everywhere - in the cloth-market, in banking, in the grain-market. Besides, most zamindars of Kanpur district were Kanaujiya Brahmins. They went hunting, robbed and masterminded highway robberies. After the Brahmins came the Khatris, who were purely businessmen. They were not many in number but controlled very big business firms. Marwaris had just started then to establish their position as industrialists.[18]

Viśvambharnāth Śarmā 'Kauśik' (1891-1942), one of the leading short-story writers of the period with Premcand and Sudarśan, was one such Kanaujiya absentee zamindar, the nephew of a famous advocate of Kanpur and a connoisseur of literature, music, *bhaṅg* and humorous conversation.[19] His informal circle of literary friends included among others young Varmā, who left Kanpur in 1930, Ramāśaṅkar Avasthī and the poet Bālkṛṣna Śarmā 'Navīn' (1897-1960). Varmā, Avasthī and Navīn became attracted to the publicist and activist Gaṇeś Śaṅkar Vidyārthī (1891-1931) and worked for his journals *Pratāp* (1913) and *Prabhā* (1920) (see 6.3). The Pratāp office became an important literary and political meeting-place, and Vidyārthī the centre of a widespread network of Hindi writers, both within Kanpur (Mākhanlāl Caturvedī, Gayāprasād Śukla 'Sanehī') and outside it (Vṛnadāvanlāl Varmā, Maithilīśaraṇ Gupta).[20] In the 1920s, with the growth of denominational schools, Kanpur became also a sizeable educational centre, and colleges would hold literary events.[21] Kanpur had no local theatre company, but Parsi touring

[16] Created out of Canning College (1864) - the taluqdars' college - King George's Medical College and Isabella Thoburn College for girls.
[17] A famous advocate, strong supporter of *sanātan dharma*, Moderate Congressman and Braj poet, he edited several *rasik* journals with *samasyā-pūrtis*, like *Rasikmitra*.
[18] Bhagavatīcaraṇ Varmā, *Atīt ke gart se*, Rajkamal Prakasan, Delhi 1979, p. 19.
[19] *Ibid.*, p. 26.
[20] See Appendix for biographies.
[21] Apart from the government Christ Church College and the Technological Institute, a Dayanand Anglo-Vedic school and college was established in 1919, and a Sanatan Dharma Commerce College in 1921; see editorial note in *Mādhurī*, II, pt. 1, 3, October 1923, pp. 384-388.

companies would often come to perform.[22] In the 1920s a Kanpur style of popular *Nauṭaṅkī* theatre was developed by Śrīkṛṣna Khatrī, a former wrestler and tailor. He made it into a more commercial performance, introduced modern or overtly nationalist historical plots, and changed its musical culture. The chapbooks of his plays were printed locally and sold widely.[23] Although there was no organised or sponsored cultural life as such, temples would host all-night musical events attended not only by the educated public but also the *hoi polloi*.

By contrast, if we look now at the literary sphere of a small town in Central India at roughly the same time, we find another kind of diversity, which again spans from the oral to the written and the printed. Since many Hindi intellectuals came from such backgrounds and underwent such cultural experiences, the recollections of Khairagarh by Padumlāl Punnālāl Bakhśī (1894-1971), teacher, editor and writer, can be taken as a fairly typical example.

First of all, the court was at the centre of the life of the town: every inhabitant depended on the Raja in one way or another for his or her livelihood. Since the Raja was a lover and a patron of Hindi literature and music, the atmosphere of the place mirrored his tastes. There were three groups of literature-lovers.[24] The first was one of illiterates, who provided aesthetic enjoyment to common people through *bhajans* and songs several times a year. During the rainy season they would sing, accompanied by a *ḍholak*, *padas* of the popular epic *Ālhā,* resounding with *vīr-rasa*. Another group of illiterate or semi-literate *bhajan*-singers sang songs which carried the signatures of Sūrdās, Tulsīdās and Kabīr but were really the creation of anonymous poets. A third educated group of literature-lovers included some *vyākhyātās* (orators) and poets. In his childhood days, Bakhśī recalled listening to recitations of the *Rāmcaritmānas*, *Rāmrasāyan*, *Rāmcandrikā* and of Bihārī's *Satsaī* in the local temple. The Raja himself composed poetry or "had it composed" by various poets: a couple of poetry-collections were published in his name. The local Victoria School and Danteśvarī temple also hosted performances by visiting scholars and poets. Some of the headmasters of the school were respected scholars, and the school provided a new forum for literary activities. The meetings of its Debating Society involved not only teachers and students, but many cultured people of the town, and would last whole afternoons; among the audience impressed by the seriousness and dignity of the speakers was young Bakhśī.[25] Ārya Samāj *śastrārthas* by visiting preachers would also take place.

[22] The resident playwright of Calcutta's Alfred Theatre, Rādheśyām 'Kathāvācak', was a friend of Kauśik's, and whenever they were in Kanpur Kauśik and his friends would go and see the plays; B. Varmā, *Atīt ke gart se*, p. 19.
[23] See Kathryn Hansen, *Grounds for Play*, p. 247.
[24] P.P. Bakhśī *'Smṛti'*, in *Merī apnī kathā*, Indian Press, Allahabad 1972, pp. 19 ff.
[25] Young Bakhśī, who did not understand the content of the debates, wondered 'इन वक्ताओं में ज्ञान की वह कैसी गरिमा होगी जिसके कारण इतने लोग यहां मन्त्रमुग्ध बैठे हैं।' [God knows what prestige the knowledge of these speakers must have for so many people to listen to them so enraptured.] *Ibid.*, p. 23.

Over these oral forms of literary entertainment and apprenticeship, literate children like Bakhśī superimposed literary tastes acquired at school or through contact with the printed word. Bakhśī's main source of Hindi literary education was, as for many others, the literary magazine *Sarasvatī*, while popular novels like Devkīnandan Khatrī's *Candrakāntā* (1891) and *Candrakāntā Santati* (1894-1905) bridged for him the chasm between the world of the *Ālhā* and that of private reading.[26]

To summarize this point, we may say that a map of the poetic genres practised in the Hindi literary sphere of the time would include: first of all, Braj poetry, kept alive in the traditional (*rīti*) literary education, informal circles, specialized journals, the literary curriculum, prizes and *kavi-sammelans*.[27] Devotional poetry in Braj and Avadhi circulated orally through *bhajan-maṇḍalīs*, in temples, and in public and private ritual singing.

Secondly, Khari Boli poets of the Dvivedī generation, still all active and well established: of them, Maithilīśaraṇ Gupta (1886-1964, cf. 3.1) became the first *rāṣṭrakavi* in these decades.

Thirdly, a large production of patriotic poetry in Khari Boli and Braj: recited at poetry meetings and printed in newspapers, journals, chapbooks, text-books, etc., it bridged the gap between printed and aural poetry, and literate and illiterate audiences (see 2.3.3).

Finally, a new poetic diction in Khari Boli with Chāyāvād, which expressed a new refined poetic sensibility and individual voice. Many young poets - among them many women - enthusiastically followed in the pages of journals the sophisticated writings of Prasād, Pant, Nirālā and Mahādevī.[28]

Despite the centrality of print, oral kinds of poetry and aural literary transmission did not disappear; large numbers of pamphlets of *bhajans*, religious or patriotic songs, theatre chapbooks meant for oral recitation bear witness to their continued existence, in fact possibly to their parallel growth. Rather, aural forms of literature lost some of their earlier prominence in the system of literature and of literary transmission and were compelled to adapt themselves to, or try and make use of, the new print-technology. When "literature" came to mean something in printed form, oral literature came to have for the

[26] Another important book for Bakhśī was the translation of Bankim's essays, published in Hindi by the Hindi Grantha-Mala of Bombay, while journals like *Bhāratmitra* and the *Hindī kesarī* brought him political awareness and the urge to contribute himself. While a student at Allahabad University he became acquainted with contemporary European and Bengali literatures, which he introduced into *Sarasvatī* when he became its editor (1921-1928); *ibid.*, p. 43.

[27] Apart from manuscripts and manuals of poetic compositions (on metre, figures of word and of speech), printed editions of "old" (i.e. from 14th to 18th century) Hindi texts made Braj poetry visible even in print. For the ongoing popularity of Braj, despite Mahāvīr Prasād Dvivedī's earlier aversion, see below 2.2 and 2.3. Published Braj poets after 1900 include Ratnākar, Nāthūrām Śankar Śarmā, Rāy Devīprasād 'Pūrṇa', Śrīdhar Pāṭhak, Lala Bhagvān Dīn, Ayodhyāsiṃh Upādhyāy 'Harioudh', Gayāprasād Śukla 'Sanehī', Satyanārāyaṇ 'Kaviratna', Viyogī Hari, Rāmśankar Śukla 'Rasāl' etc. About half of them wrote in Khari Boli, too; see Appendix. Many other amateur poets, whose verses appeared from time to time on Hindi journals and who took part in poetry meetings, testify the ongoing popularity of Braj poetry even in the 1920s and 1930s.

[28] Other early experiments included Rāykṛṣṇadās's prose poems (*Sādhnā*, 1919, and *Praval*, 1928).

new literate and mostly urban intelligentsia a nostalgic and almost ethnographic meaning, as the voice of the "simple village folk".[29] Oral poetry also continued to work as an oral *saṃskāra* in literary figures, and a substratum in their work. Such is the deliberate use of folk-song forms in Mahādevī Varmā's *Nīrjā* (1934) and in Nirālā's *Gītikā* (1936),[30] or the almost universal presence of Tulsī's *Mānas* in the form of quotations, references or allusions.

At the same time, the growth of Banaras, Allahabad, Lucknow and Kanpur as centres of education and the press points towards an unmistakeable process of urban concentration, which did not begin but rather increased in this period. This, together with the growth of institutions like journals and publishing houses, and the widening impact of formal education, contributed to the making of a unified linguistic and literary field, which old and new literati from a variety of backgrounds would inhabit together.

2.1.2 Literary *saṃskāras*

The same diversity and coexistence of old and new tastes we find in the literary scene and in the literary public can be discerned in individual writers and readers as well. E.g. poets like Prasād, Harioudh, etc. wrote both in Braj and in Khari Boli, and extensive reading and proficiency in Braj versification was the rule rather than the exception for Khari Boli poets - whether they chose to publish their Braj verse or not. How is one to pick up the threads and explain this diversity in its different forms? Rather than see it as a passive process of influence, or a simple linear evolution (e.g. from Braj to Khari Boli, from non-realism to realism), the concept of *saṃskāra* can be fruitfully used to explain how different tastes coalesced. The word *saṃskāra* itself has several layers of meaning in Sanskrit and Hindi. It means primarily (a) to polish, refine; (b) refinement of the mind and behaviour; hence the making of culture; (c) rite of passage; (d) the effect of previous actions on the mind and behaviour; (e) influence; (f) idea.[31] Generally *saṃskāra* indicates thus an active change of state without a drastic change of context, and an aspect of an already layered mind. The expression 'literary *saṃskāra*', current in Hindi, suggests then a taste, an inclination which is either given by the family, local traditions and tastes, or is acquired through education or contact with the outer world, and which deposits itself along with other tastes formed by one's individual experience of life.[32] Especially in times of great

[29] Note e.g. Rāmnareś Tripāṭhī's search for Hindi folk-songs; R. Tripāṭhī, *Grām-gīt*, 3 vols., Hindi Mandir, Allahabad 1930.
[30] K. Schomer, *Mahadevi Varma*, p. 243.
[31] According to *Bṛhat Hindī Koś*, Jnanmandal, Banaras 1989, p. 1178.
[32] It is in the first sense that the word *saṃskāra* is used e.g. by Sumitrānand Pant in his Introduction to the poetry collection *Pallav* to connotate negatively the stultified taste for Braj; S. Pant, *Pallav*, Rajkamal Prakasan, Delhi 1963 (first ed. 1926), p. 21 ; cf. below 2.2. The *saṃskāras* of the traditionally literate were, for Kayasthas and service families belonging to other castes, Persian and then English - often with a taste for Urdu poetry or novels. For pandits, they were Sanskrit and Sanskrit and Hindi classical (*rīti*) poetry. Appreciation for Braj poetry was learnt through direct

cultural change like the one under scrutiny, each writer, reader, audience underwent a series of changes, came in contact with new literary realities and new forms of knowledge and education - as the example of P. P. Bakhśī summarily showed.

At the same time, as we said, print, schooling, meetings and networks brought together men and women from remarkably different backgrounds, each with different family *saṃskāras*; they also produced new, common ones, such as that acquired through western education and the press. Although it is these common *saṃskāras*, this shared Hindi cultural ethos which this thesis focuses on, it must be remembered that differences persisted at other levels. For example, even while a common Hindi identity was created, differences between Brahmin, Kayastha and merchant *saṃskāras* persisted; Hindi university departments e.g. witnessed a fierce Brahmin-Kayastha competition.

The variety of tastes and expressions both within the literary sphere and within individual actors and audiences can be explained, we would argue, by examining the interplay between inherited family *saṃskāras* and the ones each person acquired during his/her particular experience. This helps us not to see the acquisition of 'modern' or alien *saṃskāras* as a passive process of influence, and can avoid misleading simplifications such as "traditional" and "modern": not all that was inherited was traditional, and not all that was acquired was modern. Each of the biographies in the Appendix can be read along these lines.

In fact, it is important to remember that Khari Boli was an acquired linguistic *saṃskāra* for the great majority of writers and readers of the period. Both for the traditionally and the newly educated, it came via formal education, through contact with the printed word and its genres, and it was the means of identifying with a wider community (both a real provincial community and the imagined national one). But writing in or reading Hindi also meant different things for people with different backgrounds: for pandits it meant entering a modern public sphere and accepting of a wider medium.[33] For

contact with a master and flourished in small circles of connoisseurs across caste lines. Thus we find that several Hindi poets were sons of amateur poets, or were trained by uncles, grandfathers, family friends, etc. See Appendix.

[33] The example of the Bhaṭṭ family of Gokulpura (Agra district) will exemplify the change from Sanskrit to Hindi *saṃskāras* and what it entailed. Rāmeśvar Bhaṭṭ, a famous Hindi and Sanskrit scholar, was one of the major *Mānas* commentators of his time. From the village of Gokulpura, he made the first step in the new public sphere by becoming professor of Sanskrit and Hindi at Agra College and by establishing his own Press in Agra. In an interesting overlap of public and private roles, it is said that he used to bring the Press proofs to school and correct them himself; M. Ali, 'Hindī sāhitya', p. 120. He also took active part in the spate of critical editions of Hindi classics: for the Indian Press of Allahabad he produced a commentary on Tulsī's *Vinay patrikā* (1913) and on the *Mānas*, (*Amṛtalahirī*,1926). After retirement, however, he went back to the village. Possibly through his contacts, his sons became instead fully part of the new Hindi public sphere: Kedārnāth Bhaṭṭ wrote regularly children's books for the Indian Press. Badrīnāth Bhaṭṭ, after a brief spell at the Indian Press in 1916-1918 - where he edited the children's journal *Bālsakhā* and contributed regularly to *Sarasvatī* - moved further away to Lucknow. There he became the first Hindi lecturer of Lucknow University. He also published several humorous plays for the best Hindi publishers and became a stable figure in the Hindi establishment; see Appendix.

the Urdu-educated it meant accessing a larger and growing public and espousing a sense of belonging to a broad Hindi-Hindu community. For those educated in English or who had continued their education in English, it could mean adhering to the nationalist project, the desire to communicate with a more popular public and possibly to act as interpreters between the local and the outside world. For women it was a public voice. It is important to emphasise, however, that Hindi was in any case an acquired, sometimes a chosen, voice which required a rearticulation of identity.

Of course English, but also Bengali, were important literary *saṃskāras* of the period for Hindi literati. Both gave access to literatures with different styles, aesthetic sensibilities and a differently articulated sense of the self, all of which spurred Hindi writers into finding also in Hindi ways to express those exciting discoveries. Thus, Hindi poets like Pant, Prasād and Nirālā copied entire verses from Tagore;[34] plots from Bengali and English novels, articles and short stories were translated without credits, and for many contemporaries, Hindi literature in the 1920s seemed a literature of translation. But each translation, especially when not a declared one, signalled an experiment, an active process of change.

2.1.3 Literary publics

The diversity of literary genres and forms present in the Hindi landscape already attest to a diversified Hindi public. Although the subject is vast and requires separate study, the literary *saṃskāras* mentioned above and the available data on literary production justify us to first of all distinguish between traditionally literate and newly-literate publics. As said before, the traditionally literate public was composed mainly of pandits, munshis or literary-minded merchants. Apart from their traditional education (veering towards either Sanskrit or Persian-Urdu), they had been exposed to the first spate of Hindi publications and translations (mostly from Bengali) by the end of the 19th century. Thus they combined a traditional literary education with the strong moralistic and reformist ethos of early modern Hindi literature.

By contrast, the early 20th century saw the spread of new literate publics, comprising mainly students of various social backgrounds and women. Whole branches of

[34] Nirālā was at the centre of a long controversy in 1924, carried on the pages of the journals *Manormā* (Allahabad), *Prabhā* and *Matvālā*. When Pant, in the introduction to his collection of poems *Pallav* (1926), criticised Nirālā's use of Bengali blank verse, Nirālā accused Pant (whose friend he was, after all, and whose poetic talent he acknowledged), of the same 'sin' he had been accused of, i.e. with scores of examples he showed how Pant had freely drawn upon Tagore himself. Here are just a few: गन्ध-मुग्ध हो अन्ध-समीरण। लगा थिरकने विविध प्रकार (Pant) and तोमार मदिर गन्ध अन्ध वायु बहे चारि भिते (Tagore); नीरव-घोष भरे शंखों में (Pant) and नीरव सुरेर शंख बाजे (Tagore); मेरे आंसू गूंथ (Pant) and गेंथेछि अश्रुमालिका (Tagore); गाओ गाओ विहग-बालिके। तरवर से मृदु-मंगल गान (Pant) from Wordsworth's 'Then sing ye birds, sing, sing a joyous song'; Nirālā, 'Pantjī aur pallav', in *Mādhurī*, September 1927, now in *Nirālā racnāvalī*, vol. 5, Rajkamal Prakasan, Delhi 1992, pp. 176-77.

literature catered specifically to them, such as children's books and journals, textbooks and anthologies, women's books and cheap religious publications for ritual use at home (cf. 2.3), chapbooks and popular papers. These new literate publics had received little or no traditional literary education, and were therefore more inclined to turn to literature for mere entertainment, or to respond to the different appeal of modern experiments in fiction and poetry. The audience of Chāyāvād, for example, comprised mostly college students (both boys and girls) who might have come into contact with the English Romantics and with Tagore, and who could relate to the intensely personal tone and invocations to the sublime.[35] Popular social novels are another case in point (see below 4.3): their peculiar appeal blended the new values of social reform and respect for human dignity with appeals to women's *dharma,* while at the same time providing emotional nurture and excitement through melodramatic plots that were mostly about love. The boom of 'social romances' in this period can be in fact directly connected to the emergence of this newly-literate public, for whom literature was more entertainment than a serious cultural or academic pursuit. We shall see in section 2.4 how the popularity of this kind of literature posed serious problems to the traditional system of literary evaluation.

We have already mentioned through the examples of Banaras and Khairagarh how the literate public could still partake of, and enjoy, traditional forms of poetry, popular theatre etc., and how *padas, bhajans, kavittas, Mānas* recitations and expositions formed the first literary experiences. More study however is required on the tastes of contemporary illiterate audiences, on *kavi-sammelans,* changing theatrical performances and other public festivals, and on how chapbooks of *bhajans* and songs provided also new literary tastes.[36] It is important to note that 'historicals' and 'socials' on the popular stage contributed, by way of entertainment, to bringing national history and modernity into these popular forms. The great demand for fiery patriotic poems and songs at *kavi-sammelans,* and the bourgeoning market for popular nationalist publications such as nationalist songs, *bhajans,* leaflets with translated speeches of national leaders, all point to the expansion and politicization of the popular public.

It is beyond the scope of the present study to analyse the overlap in readership and appreciation in Urdu and Hindi. Briefly, we may suggest that Urdu poetry was appreciated by three sections of the Hindi public. The first comprise primarily the traditionally Urdu-

[35] The intensely involving poems on 'Tum aur maiṁ' (You and me) by Nirālā, Gulāb Rāi, etc. were turned into parodic doggerels by critics, e.g. in 'Tū tū maiṁ maiṁ' [the verse of the parrot] by Rāmcarit Upādhyāy, in *Cāṁd*, IX, pt. 2, 3, July 1931, p. 337.

[36] Kathryn Hansen for instance has studied the development of the popular theatre called Nauṭaṅkī, and has observed the changes toward commercialisation in the period under study; also, new topics on modern themes brought Nauṭaṅkī nearer to social dramas of the Parsi theatre; the music also changed, with the introduction of western instruments; *Grounds for Play*, p. 247. See also her article 'The Birth of Hindi Drama in Banaras, 1868-1885', in S. Freitag, ed., *Culture and Power in Banaras,* University of California Press, Berkeley 1989, pp. 62-92

and Persian-educated literate service classes of Kayasthas, Khatris, Kashmiri Brahmins and Brahmins in government service.[37]

Secondly, snippets of Urdu poetry, in the form of "garlands" or selections of verses, started to figure in Devanagari script on the pages of Hindi journals from the early 1920s (e.g. in *Cāṁd* and *Mādhurī*), transmitting the taste for Urdu poetry to the wider public of new Hindi literates.[38] Single verses, *sher*, were part of the cultivated individual's repertoire of verses put to memory and to be recited at the right occasion, and as such they appear also occasionally in Hindi novels.[39] A single couplet managed to evoke the whole ethos inherent to Urdu poetry (e.g. love, disenchantment about the present world - *zamānā*, etc.), just as the mere use of Braj evoked the *nāyak-nāyikā* ethos. As a whole, the taste for Urdu poetry pertained to a secular and sophisticated world, and the public for Urdu poetry-meetings - the *mushairas* - was considered more sophisticated and urbane than the contemporary Hindi one of *kavi-sammelans* (see 2.3.3).

On a more popular level, the *ghazal* form started to appear in records, popular theatres (e.g. the Kanpur school of *Nauṭaṅkī*[40]) and in films or the variety programmes that preceded them. Even poets like Nirālā experimented with the *ghazal* in Hindi in *Belā* (1943). This is again to point out that traditional and modern tastes of different kinds were not exclusive. Although they required different kinds of literary participation (*rasāsvādan*, to use the traditional term), writers and readers were eclectic enough to switch - so to speak - between modes of response. This is partly true even now, though occasions for oral transmission of traditional poetry are fewer.

To summarize, Hindi literature in the early twentieth century was not something one learnt at school, nor was it as clear and well-defined an entity as it is now. It was something one heard from other poets, at poetry meetings, or learnt from manuals. It was *bhajans* and religious verses one heard at home, in temples and at special recitations and performances - although it was to become, increasingly, something one read in journals, in libraries, or, in books and text-books.

The account of the Hindi literary sphere given in this section, which mapped the persistence of different and layered literary tastes in urban and rural centres, shows nonetheless the emergence of two processes which will be taken up in the following sections, and which were to alter the existing picture quite drastically.

[37] Most of the Hindi intelligentsia well into the first decades of the twentieth century belonged to these classes (e.g. Miśra brothers, Harioudh, Śyāmsundar Dās, Premcand, etc.). One of the foremost Urdu literary monthlies, *Zamānā* from Kanpur, was edited by one such Kayastha, Munshi Dayānārāyaṇ Nigam.

[38] This practice gave also ground to the notion that Urdu poetry was but a branch of Hindi literature. As a result of the same tendency, writers like Rajinder Singh Bedi, Krishan Chander, Khwaja Ahmad Abbas etc. are considered to be Hindi writers. In the 1960s again Balvant Siṃh used to edit a magazine called *Urdū sāhitya* which published Urdu works in Devanagari.

[39] E.g. Pāṇḍey Becan Śarmā Ugra's *Cand hasīnoṁ ke khutūt* (1927).

[40] See Kathryn Hansen, *Grounds for Play*, chapter 7.

The first was a re-alignment of earlier literary styles under the impact of print and the activity of Hindi associations (see below 2.5) - as well as the creation of new styles. In the print-media, certain genres, as well as linguistic styles, became prominent, while other became marginal or changed nature. The process will be evident quite clear in journals, for example (see 2.3.1), where different styles coexisted, but where essays, Khari Boli poems and short stories became central, while old Braj poets become objects of study ('classics'), and popular forms like seasonal songs - so popular with Bhārtendu - almost disappeared. Along with them, new *saṃskāras* changed the existing configuration and hierarchy. While those connected with print became central and acquired a wider (potentially universal) currency, it is important to keep in mind that others did not disappear but remained, so to speak, in the background, in the personal and private rather than the public domain. A similar re-alignment took place within the audience: since print circumscribes literature as that which appears in printed form, it also circumscribes more sharply the audience into a literate one, despite being potentially open to all through formal and self-education. In practice, oral literary forms survived and there were still avenues through which new literature could reach the illiterate public (see below 2.3.3). Yet, as Aijaz Ahmad argues:

> because of this privileging of print in a predominantly non-literate society, the social weight in the very process of literary production has shifted towards the leisured class and the professional petty bourgeoisie, away from the alternative modes of preservation and transmission which do not involve print and are then involved also in modes of evaluation rather differently from those of print culture.[41]

Implied in this process of re-alignment was in fact, and this is the second process, a selection. As we shall see in the following section, with new notions of what modern Hindi language and literature should be like, and of what constituted the Hindi linguistic and literary tradition, certain features, values and styles became more fitting than others. This is particularly clear in the Dvivedī age, where only *śuddha* (pure) Khari Boli and reformist or patriotic subjects were accepted, while all other tastes were deemed unfit for public consumption. A similar process of selection was carried on by literary associations and by critical debates in journals, which culminated in the literary curriculum for schools.

What these two processes produced, especially the second one, was a perceptible tension within writers and intellectuals, who had to accommodate old and new tastes and notions of literature; between intellectuals and popular genres - both folk and commercial ones -; and between critics and the more daring, experimentative writers. All this, while education, associations and print were shifting the foci of literary authority.

[41] Aijaz Ahmad, 'Indian Literature', in *In Theory. Classes, Nations, Literatures*, Verso, London 1992, pp. 254-55. Sections 2.3 and 2.4 will address these issues in detail.

To conclude, if the discourse of unity we find in Hindi literary histories is a very powerful one and dismissive of diversity and conflict both, a closer observation of the literary domain reveals in fact an unprecedented variety of old and new tastes, both within writers and within publics. Writers and public came from different backgrounds and experiences to the new Hindi literary sphere, and we can recognise in it these different paths and the many original ways of negotiating one's old notions and tastes for literature with new forms and concerns. We shall start doing so by examining how new notions and new literary *saṃskāras* influenced ideas about literature and set the terms of the critical debate, the agenda and evaluation of Hindi.

2.2 Changing Concepts of Literature

This section explores how the impact of colonial views on education, knowledge and literature influenced Hindi intellectuals and scholars in rethinking the nature, aim and language of literature. Although the concerns and concepts were new, the following examples will show how Hindi intellectuals felt the need to link them to at least some trend of Indian tradition. This involved a selective exchange with Western criticism and a selective view of Indian traditions of criticism.[1] It has recently been argued that orientalists working on India consistently used an all-inclusive Enlightenment conception of literature which included all the works in all branches of knowledge. At the same time they operated with European concepts and the developing tools of philology, which led them to concentrate on Sanskrit and its early textual tradition. Moreover, orientalists also used Romantic notions of literature as expression of the national spirit of a people.[2] Echoes of all these conceptions are present in the debate on the nature and function of literature that started to take place in Hindi journals from the end of the 19th century. Furthermore, such debates highlighted the fact that once accepted norms were questioned in the light of what were perceived as the needs of the time, new guidelines and concepts could emerge only after public contestation. This, in turn, raised a question of authority, for if everyone could question them, who was going to set the new norms?

What was new about these debates was first of all the perspective. As we shall see, it was one of *lokruci* (interest of the people) and *lokdharma*: the 'people' were put firmly on centrestage, although this posited several problems in interpreting the earlier literary tradition.[3] Secondly, it was also a debate on 'what literature should be like': in place of the earlier different tastes, the aim was to establish *one* common literary standard suited to the

[1] In an article, 'Bāṇa' placed the Sanskrit definition of *satyaṃ śivaṃ sundaraṃ* side by side with aesthetics in ancient Greece, and with Shaftesbury, Burke, Hume, Winckelmann, Lessing, Herder, Kant *sāhab* and Hegel *sāhab*; he then concluded that aesthetics did exist in Indian philosophy, too, but not under a specific name; 'Bāṇa', 'Saundarya-śāstra', *Mādhurī*, II, pt. 2, 1, Feb. 1924, p. 9. See also 'Kavitā, sadācār aur nīti', *Mādhurī*, IV, pt. 1, 3, September 1925.

[2] See Vinay Dharwadker, 'Orientalism and the Study of Indian Literatures', in C. A. Breckenridge and P. van der Veer, eds., *Orientalism and the Postcolonial Predicament*, pp. 158-185.

[3] "The earliest modern book to be written about the medieval Hindi poets, the Mishra brothers' *Hindī navaratna* [1911], reveals a certain uneasiness about presenting *bhakti* and *rīti* poets together in one volume. In the introduction, the *bhakti* poets are characterized as 'poets with a message', while the *rīti* poets 'had no important message, but expressed themselves beautifully'. Furthermore, while *rīti* poets are all referred to simply as *kavis*, the *bhakti* poets are called '*Gosvāmī* Tulsidas', '*Mahātmā* Kabir', etc. Miśrabandhu, *Hindī-navaratna*, pp. 5-6." K. Schomer, *Mahadevi Varma*, p. 57 n.

needs of the time. This meant that the view one held in public did not necessarily mirror or exhaust one's various tastes. Different views often corresponded to different kinds of intellectuals: after all, they came to the public venue of the journal from different backgrounds, and the same layered complexity of *saṃskāras* was at play here as well. Thirdly, the debate reveals the need to put some order in the eclectic and changing literary scene, especially with the new experimentations and the impact of the market. The emphasis on rules vs. the writer's individual freedom is a case in point. Discussions on the nature of literature centred around poetry, where the heritage from the past was most significant and challenging.

For the sake of clarity, we can reduce the discussion on literature to broadly three positions: that of rationalist reformers like Mahāvīr Prasād Dvivedī, that of upholders of tradition (i.e. Braj) such as Padmasiṃh Śarmā (1877-1932), and that of modernists such as Ilācandra Jośī. It was a sort of compromise synthesis that was to form mainstream Hindi criticism. This section will help identifying its various sources.

Once again, literary *saṃskāras* assist in understanding the genealogy of each view. Traditional literary education in Sanskrit and Braj involved training on texts and manuals of rhetoric and poetics - and analysing literature in terms of *rasa, alaṃkāra, dhvani, chand* etc.[4] But scholars like Mahāvīr Prasād Dvivedī, Śyāmsundar Dās and Rāmcandra Śukla had also come in contact with western rationalist and utilitaran thinkers, and found there a concept of the social function of literature which suited their reformist attitudes.[5] What they would then do is try to accomodate both Sanskrit and utilitarian poetics.

Dvivedī's public stance on literature first appeared in *Sarasvatī* with a radical critique of Braj ('Nāyikā bhed', June 1901), and with new rules for the poet ('Kavi kartavya', July 1901). Like many contemporaries, Dvivedī believed that traditional poetry in Braj, the poetry of *samasyā-pūrti, ālaṃkāra* and *śṛṅgāra rasa,* was outdated and mostly immoral. He rejected Braj as a poetic language arguing - like the Romantics and the Education Department - that the language of poetry should not be different from that of normal speech and prose. He rejected the erotic content of *rīti* poetry and encouraged, instead, poems on history and on great figures of the Indian past, and didactic or descriptive

[4] For a discussion of these terms see Edwin Gerow, *A Glossary of Indian Figures of Speech*, Mouton, Le Hague 1971, and by the same author *Indian Poetics. A History of Indian Literature*, vol. 5, fasc. 3, Wiesbaden 1977.

[5] Rāmcandra Śukla translated Edison's *Essay on Imagination* in *Nāgarī pracāriṇī patrikā*, IX, 1905, and J.H. Newman's 'Literature', from *The idea of a university*, in *Sarasvatī*, June 1904. M.P. Dvivedī translated Herbert Spencer's *Education* (1861) as *Śikṣā* (Indian Press, 1910) as well as J.S. Mill's essay on Liberty; cf. Baijnāth Siṃh, ed., *Dvivedīyug ke sāhityakāroṁ ke kuch patr*, Hindustani Academy, Allahabad, 1958. The exact nature and extent of the impact of western rationalist thinkers on these great Hindi literary reformists is yet to be reassessed, after the enthusiastic appraisal by Rāmvilās Śarmā in *Mahāvīr prasād dvivedī aur hindī navjāgaraṇ*, Rajkamal Prakasan, New Delhi 1977, and *Rāmcandra śukla aur hindī ālocnā*, Rajkamal Prakasan, New Delhi 1973.

compositions on nature and on moral values. Literature to Dvivedī meant all kinds of useful knowledge; its aim was not only or not primarily to entertain, but to inform and to educate. The shift was not only in *taste*, but in the whole idea of poetry. For that, Dvivedī rejected the more recent tradition of Braj and looked further back at Sanskrit: its treasure of literature (in the wide sense) was to be a model for Hindi.

Taking this view one step further, Veṅkateś Nārāyaṇ Tivārī (1890-1965), one of Dvivedī's early contributors, himself an editor and a Congress politician, would later tie the question of literature with that of the nation in a series of articles by the same name.[6] In them, Tivārī linked the high textual tradition of Sanskrit to modern concerns over the function of literature, with the help of European theorists.[7] Setting himself the task to put some order in the anarchic situation in Hindi, Tivārī distinguished two meanings of the word literature: a broad one, which included anything serious written in one language, and a more specific one, 'which arises from the unbroken power of imagination and charms humanity, adorned by the jewels of language'.[8] While Sanskrit literature developed both, Hindi had followed only the second one; but in considering literature only an 'aesthetic utterance' (*rasātmakaṃ vākyaṃ*) it had killed its soul. Since nationalism meant self-sacrifice and putting the nation's interests above one's own, argued Tivārī, literature had to inspire such noble sentiments. Moreover, since every nation expressed its own literature, each literature expressed the essence of its nationality.[9] That was the task before contemporary Hindi writers.

Sāhityālocan (1922) by Śyāmsundar Dās (1875-1945) became the standard manual of literary criticism of the time and presents a similar utilitarian attitude towards literature.[10] Despite the traditional title, it was more or less a translation of William Hudson's *Introduction to the Study of Literature.*[11] It attempted to blend Sanskrit poetics with modern preoccupations with the social and nationalist function of literature. An example will clarify this: although literary categories in the book followed closely Hudson's,[12] on one telling point Śyāmsundar Dās modified the original. And what for a

[6] V.N. Tivārī, 'Sāhitya aur rāṣṭrīytā', *Sammelan patrikā*, V, 8-9, March-May 1918.

[7] Tivārī quoted definitions of literature by western critics like Saint-Beuve, Matthew Arnold, Carlyle to show the link between literature life, and literature and society. Interestingly enough, Saint-Beuve's definition of a classic was cited asthe definition for the writer tout court.

[8] *Ibid.*

[9] V.N. Tivārī, 'Sāhitya aur rāṣṭrīytā', part 2, *Sammelan patrikā*, V, 10, May-June 1918, pp. 220-223.

[10] Published by Rāmcandra Varmā for Sahitya-Ratna-Mala-Karyalay, Banaras, the book was compiled especially as a course-book for M.A. students. A revised edition is still in print and used in the University syllabus.

[11] W. Hudson, *Introduction to the Study of Literature*, Harrap, London 1910. In his Introduction, Ś. Dās admitted using ideas and materials from other works, refashioned in Hindi in his own words.

[12] For instance, the second chapter on 'Sāhitya kā vivecan', 'The study of literature', followed Hudson closely in discussing *uddeśya* (aim), *sāhitya-darśan* (poetics), *sāhitya aur vijñān* (literature and science), etc. Ś. Dās, *Sāhityalocan*, chapter 2.

sarcastic reviewer was an incorrect translation is, in our opinion, a voluntary adaptation to the Indian concept of *rasa*. Whereas Hudson put the writer's feelings (*bhāva*) at the centre of the creative process, the Hindi professor of Benares Hindu University put the focus on the reader's feelings, according to the *rasa* theory.[13]

What this reformist stance shows is first of all a creative attempt to combine new (western) notions about the meaning and function of literature with terms and analytical categories of Indian poetics, and to provide an agenda and new standards for literature; secondly, western philosophers were upheld as authorities along with Sanskrit texts, while care was taken to ensure that the former should not belittle the latter. The product was a new high critical discourse.

However, a whole poetic tradition and sensibility like that of Braj could not be swept away single-handedly. Although even sympathetic critics could not help deploring the fact that modern Braj poets seemed to disregard contemporaneity altogether (they were deemed incapable of representing it and of introducing new themes into their poetry), Braj poets and connoisseurs nevertheless defended a tradition polished for centuries.[14] Compared to it, contemporary literature appeared clumsy and chaotic.[15]

The reaction of Braj supporters centred around the notion of rules and literary authority. It expressed anxiety at the impossibly wide notion of literature, and perplexity about who would now set standards for and assess literary works. The speech of the noted critic and scholar Padmasiṃh Śarmā at the 6th U.P. Hindī Sāhitya Sammelan in Muradabad (October 1921) can best express this view and the bewilderment of a traditionally trained critic vis-à-vis contemporary trends.[16] The joy at the swift progress of Hindi was spoilt by

[13] '... a piece of literature appeals to us only when it calls into activity in us, the same powers of sympathy and imagination as went into its making', which Ś. Dās translated as: 'काव्य मनुष्य के हृदय को तभी अपनी ओर खींच सकता है जब उसमें अनुरागजनक और कल्पना की वही सामग्री विद्यमान हो जो पाठक श्रोता या द्रष्टा के हृदय में विशेष रूप से जागृत रहती है।' S. Dās, *Sāhityālocan*, quoted by Hemcandra Jośī in *Mādhurī*, IV, pt. 2, 3, April 1926, p. 292.

[14] See editorial on 'Brajbhāṣā aur samay kā pravāh', in *Mādhurī*, IV, pt. 1, 3, Sept. 1925, pp. 414-415. For a passionate defence of Braj and critique of contemporary Hindi, see 'Sāhitya meṁ sannipāt' by Kaviratna Pandit Ramāśankar Miśra 'Śripati', a poet who often appeared in *Mādhurī*; *ibid.*, X, pt. 1, 1, Aug. 1931, pp. 96-100. Interesting, much of the blame is put on the market, where literary people have sold their souls, principles and strength of character; *ibid.*, p. 97.

[15] See Pandit Govind Nārāyaṇ Miśra's speech on 'Hindī sāhitya kī vartamān daśā' at the 10th Hindī Sāhitya Sammelan meeting in Patna in 1920: under the influence of English education 'we have abandoned the main definition of Literature, i.e. *vākyaṃ rasātmakaṃ kāvyaṃ* [from the *Sāhityadarpaṇa*]. We have forgotten it, we have forgotten *rasa* and all the other [elements of poetry]. And this is the reason of the decay of our literature. People have forgotten the old poetry and love the new poetry in Khari Boli, and this is the reason of the ruin (*satyanāś*) of our literature'. Quoted in *Sammelan patrikā*, VII, 8, December 1920, p. 225.

[16] Padmasiṃh Śarmā, author of the famous *Sañjīvan bhāṣya* (1922), a commentary on Bihārī's *Satsaī* which was awarded the prestigious Maṅglāprasād award, was first an Ārya Samāj preacher and taught for several years at Jvalapur Mahāvidyālay; see below 2.5.3. A close friend of Dvivedī's, he contributed regularly to *Sarasvatī*.; see biography in the Appendix.

seeing the language corrupted and the elegance (*sauṣṭhava*) of its literature destroyed, Śarmā said. He objected to the new meaning of the word 'literature' which included Ayurveda, mathematics, geography etc. and said:

> Earlier by literature one meant a particular code (*śāstra*) related to the art of *kāvya* containing *alaṃkāras, rasa, dhvani* etc., which discriminated between its qualities and errors - like in the *Sāhityadarpaṇa*. Moreover, earlier literature used to rule over language, poetry over grammar and the literary scholar was the highest authority in deciding if a word was correct. But now since Bolshevism, like the sweep of time, has turned literature into a unified democracy, a rebellion (*gadar*) has erupted in the realm of language! Anything which anyone may write in any style on any subject is called 'Literature'. Every writer is completely free to write the way he wants. There is no obligation (*pābandī*) to follow any rule (*qāydā-qānūn*), in fact there is no rule to follow![17]

The 'law-and-order' metaphor expresses well the disconcert and exasperation of the traditional literati with the new 'democracy of literature', which upset the hierarchy of authorities and genres (cf. 2.4).

> उन्हें शौके इबादत भी है और गाने की आदत भी।
> निकलती है ऋचाएँ उनके मुँह से ठुमरियाँ होकर ।।[18]
> They are religious and they like to sing:
> spouting Vedic *ṛcās* like *ṭhumrīs*.

Whereas 'ancient literary scholars set special metres for each particular *rasa*, nowadays everyone makes fun of the rules and uses whatever metre for whatever *rasa*' - Śarmā remarked. As a scholar educated to a strict poetic code, he had little sympathy for the experiments with metre that Khari Boli poets were conducting all the time.[19] In fact, Padmasiṃh Śarmā - who was after all a close associate of Mahāvīr Prasād Dvivedī - was ready to make allowance for Khari Boli poetry, but only if it established new rules, and then kept to them.[20]

[17] P. Śarmā, speech quoted in *Sammelan patrikā*, VIII, 6, October 1921, p. 100.
[18] *Ibid.*, p. 106.
[19] For metric experiments in Khari Boli and Chāyāvād's 'liberties' with grammar and metre, see K. Schomer, *Mahadevi Varma*, chapter 3; cf. Raykṛṣṇadās, *Prasād kī yād*, pp. 44 ff. P. Śarmā's reaction instead was: 'कोई फ़ारसी बहरों की लहरों में पडा बह रहा है, कोई बंगला से पयाल और मराठी से अभंग मांगा जा रहा है मानों हिन्दी छन्दों का दिवाला निकल गया है!' [Some are flowing away along with Persian *bahars*, others are borrowing *pāyal* from Bengali and *abhaṅga* from Marathi, as if Hindi metres had gone bankrupt!]. *Sammelan patrikā*, VIII, 6, Oct. 1921, p. 106.
[20] With his authority as literary scholar and the editor of *Sarasvatī*, Dvivedī encouraged poetry in Khari Boli within set parameters, which he offered himself in 'Ādhunik kavitā' (*Sarasvatī*, March 1912), quoted in Ramratan Bhatnagar, *The Rise and Growth of Hindi Journalism*, Kitab Mahal, Allahabad 1951, p. 332.

What the new Chāyāvād poets vindicated instead was the poet's individual right to experiment and break existing norms. But what to them was the justified expression of a poet's genius appeared to the traditional literati as unacceptable presumption and a prelude to anarchy. That the sense of wonder and of sublime inspiration from within that a young Chāyāvād poet like Bhagavatīcaraṇ Varmā expressed could be enough qualification for poetic status was unprecedented:

कौन हो तुम अग्नि-शिखा की ज्वाल ?
तुम्हारा सुधा - पूर्ण गायन -
मधुर, कोमल शिशु-का-सा हास -
कल्पना के सुख का सागर !
तुम्हारा है अनुपम उल्लास !
Who are you, light of a flame?
Your sweet singing
like a baby's soft laughter -
a joyful ocean of the imagination!
Your delight is incomparable![21]

Hence, it was not only the notion of poetry as a criticism of life that questioned Braj aesthetics. New ideas flowing in either through Rabindranath Tagore or from the European continent attacked both the Braj tradition and the uninspiring poetry of Dvivedī's generation. From the mid-Twenties onwards, Ilācandra Jośī, Sumitrānandan Pant, Kṛṣṇadev Prasād Gauṛ ('Beḍhab Banārsī') (1895-1965) quoted Maeterlinck, Yeats, Croce to question the stronghold of English literature and English criticism on the mind of Indian critics, and to uphold notions of individual genius, originality and mysticism in literature.[22] In a highly metaphorical language, Pant criticised Braj for having narrowed down the world of poetry, which now had to be open and receptive.[23] With Chāyāvād, the public and social relevance of literature and anti-British feelings met in the new terrain of the poet's individual imagination. New authorities were upheld:

> English is a language of traders and selfish scientists. It has produced Shakespeare and Wordsworth, but could not produce Rousseau. It produced a Salisbury, but not a Saint-Beuve. It lacks that purity and truthfulness of soul... What I mean is that mad genius (*paglī pratibhā*), which is the soul of literature, could not prosper on the English soil...

[21] Bhagavatīcaraṇ Varmā, 'Kavi', in *Mādhurī*, V, pt. 2, 2, March 1926, p. 179.

[22] We use mysticism (*rahasyavād*) here in the ambivalent sense it has in Hindi, where *rahasyavādī* means both mystical and mysterious.

[23] Pant used the region of Braj as a metaphor: most Bhakti poets in Braj had gradually restricted themselves to that area; some had stayed on the banks of the Yamuna, some had drowned in it; some had crossed it with great difficulty but could not reach further than Dvarka: for them the whole world ended there! While Braj poetry had not explored other regions and other *rasas*, Khari Boli was open and spacious, as it was required by the 'open market', which valued novelties, modernity, etc. S. Pant, 'Praveś', to *Pallav*, Rajakamal Prakasan, Delhi 1963 (first ed. 1926), pp. 9-18.

wrote Hemcandra Jośī in 1926.[24] He further eulogised art for art's sake - exactly what Hudson, Dvivedī, Śyāmsundar Dās and Rāmcandra Śukla all despised.[25] However, Jośī was careful to translate the concept into a suitable Sanskrit definition: *L'Art pour l'Art* was a higher concept than (Arnold's) 'Art as criticism of Life' because it translated *niṣkāma kalādharma* - practising art with no expectation of reward. *L'art pour la vie, jīvanopyogī kalā*, was a lowlier form. If Hudson had been Kṛṣṇa, continued Jośī, he would have told Arjun:

> बेटा, कौरवें को मारो-काटो, उनका राज्य जीतो। उसके बाद हम और तुम मिलकर मजा करेंगे। जिन्दगी का उद्देश्य Almighty dollar अर्थात सर्वशक्तिमान डालर जोडना है, जिससे मनुष्य छोटी उमर में भोग-विलास से छक जाय ।
> Son, kill the Kauravas and win their kingdom. After that we shall have fun together. The aim of life is to amass the 'Almighty dollar', so that a young man will enjoy sensual pleasures to the full. (p. 300).

What this parody shows is how the colonial and reformist notion of useful literature could be ridiculed and exposed as materialistic, hence as a lowlier ideal. In the domain of the spiritual, India's tradition of selfless art mirrored India's spiritual superiority over Britain. Secondly, it showed a receptivity to a different kind of modernity, a modernity which valued individual freedom and originality.[26]

This was the kind of modernity Chāyāvād embraced. From the criticism it drew it is clear that it represented not just one more poetic trend, but a concept of poetry and of poetic order, so to speak, deeply subversive of both Braj poets and Khari Boli reformist critics.[27] Chāyāvād poetry was deemed to be useless because it did not adhere to the notion of socially useful and didactic poetry. And Chāyāvād poets were generally accused of destroying the planned development of Hindi with their eclectic, unrestrained, unmetred poetry.[28] Looming behind such criticism was the fear, one that Padmasiṃh Śarmā echoed

[24] H. Jośī Reviewing *Sāhityālocan* in *Mādhurī*, IV, pt. 2, 3, April 1926, p. 291.

[25] Ś. Dās had quoted Hudson saying: 'From time to time we hear more than enough of 'art for art's sake'. But this vague and shadowy doctrine is, so far as the art of poetry is concerned, brought into contempt by the rank and standing of those, who inculcate it; for it is for the most part associated with minor poets and dilettante critics'; Hudson, *Introduction*, p. 120. To them Jośī replied that *l'Art pour l'Art* was an important concept, of which Hudson and the like of him could not understand the greatness precisely because they were English; H. Jośī, 'Sāhityālocan', p. 291.

[26] See an article by Ilācandra Jośī on literary talent, in which genius is placed well above society and its norms, whereas talent opens the way to wordly success and fame (e.g. the talent of political leaders); I. Jośī, 'Pratibhā aur uskā vikās' in *Mādhurī*, VI, pt. 2, 6, July 1928, pp. 773-780.

[27] For a discussion of the criticism of Chāyāvād, see Govarddhandās Tripāṭhī, 'Āj kī Hindī aur uskī kavitā', *Cāṁd*, XV, pt. 1, 3, Jan. 1937; also K. Schomer, *Mahadevi Varma*, chapter 4.

[28] Śyāmsundar Dās said in a speech, when he was already the Head of the Hindi department at B.H.U.: 'आजकाल जो हिन्दी-कविता की भयंकर बाढ़ आ रही. उसमें न जाने कहाँ-कहाँ का कूड़ा-करकट चला आ रहा है। अंगरेज़ी और बंगला में जब मनमाने छन्दों में कविता ढाली जाती है, तब हिन्दी में क्यों न बेसुरीं रागीनी छेड़ी जाय । ऊँची कविताएँ आजकल वही कही जाती हैं जिनकी वर्णन शैली बड़े पेचीदा हो. साधारण-सी बात कहने के लिए जिनमें ब्रहमाण्ड की छान-बीन कर डाली गई हो, या जिनमें अलौकिक और

above, that a new kind of anarchy might be setting in: with their eccentric behaviour and declaration of individual freedom, Chāyāvād poets were ushering in a dangerous disrespect for all norms and authority.[29] The popularity of Chāyāvād among the young generation of educated Hindi readers proved the existence of a widespread new sensibility. They had opened up a space for imagination and an inner world, and introduced a new subjectivity, a poetic "I" with which the young generation could identify.[30] Literature, we may argue, provided just that - an emotional and intellectual space that was not necessarily there in real life. In time Chāyāvād as a sophisticated poetic trend would be accommodated in the canon as one more literary tendency.

In this section we have focussed on debates over poetry because they were more numerous and touched more deeply on engrained tastes and critical attitudes. Debates over fiction, as we shall see in the section about criticism, lacked a substantial critical background and critical categories (2.4.3). Premcand's towering example showed how social or political aims could be combined with entertainment and with literary and imaginative value; these remained the terms of the critical debate.[31] We shall come back in a later section to the 'alarming' popularity of cheap sensational fiction, and the threat it posed to the reformist agenda.[32]

अनिर्वचनीय भावों की दुहाई दी गई हो। छायावाद और समस्यापूर्ति से हिन्दी कविता को बडी हानि पहुँच रही है। छायावाद की ओर नवयुवकों का झुकाव है और ये जहाँ गुनगुनाने लगे कि चट दो-चार पद जोड़कर कवि बनने का साहस कर बैठते हैं। इनकी कविता का अर्थ समझना कोई सरल काम नहीं।... पूज्य रवीन्द्रनाथ का अनुकरण करके ही यह अत्याचार हिन्दी में हो रहा है।' [God knows what horrible rubbish is entering the kind of Hindi poetry which deluges us today. If poetry in English and Bengali can be moulded in arbitrary metres, why shouldn't graceless *rāginīs* start in Hindi, too? Nowadays high poetry is only that which has a very contorted descriptive style, which searches the whole universe to say the simplest thing, and which worships supernatural feelings that defy description. Chāyāvād and *samasyāpūrtis* are doing great harm to Hindi poetry. Our youth favours Chāyāvād, and they only have to hum something and they jot down a couple of verses straight away, and then consider themselves to be poets! To understand their poems is not an easy task... This is the disgrace happening in Hindi by following the venerable Rabindranath.] Quoted in Kṛṣṇadev Prasād Gaur, 'Chāyāvād kī chānbīn', *Mādhurī*, V, pt. 2, 6, July 1927, p. 791. In his humoristic column 'Ḍubejī kī ciṭṭhī', short story writer Viśvambharnāth Śarmā 'Kauśik' wrote several parodies of Chāyāvād poetry. Once he wrote that to compose a Chāyāvād poem was as easy as to cook *khicṛī*: all you needed was to open a dictionary, choose 5-10 kg. of words, add some verbs without caring for metre or rhyme - and there was your poem ready; in *Cāṁd*, IX, pt. 1, 1, Nov. 1930, p. 155.

[29] Much of the critical vocabulary of Chāyāvād poets and critical espousers refers to 'breaking' norms and conventions and bringing about a revolution; see Nāmvar Siṃh, *Chāyāvād*, Rajkamal Prakasan, New Delhi 1955.

[30] See K. Schomer, *Mahadevi Varma*, pp. 57-65.

[31] Pre-empting the criticism of the 'rasik samāj', Premcand observed: 'यह भी मानना पड़ेगा कि गत शताब्दियों में पाश्चत्य देशों में जितने सुधार हुए हैं, उनमें अधिकांश का बीजारोपण उपन्यासों ही द्वारा किया गया है।' [We have to admit that whatever reforms have taken place in western countries in the last few centuries have been sowed by novels]; Premcand, 'Upanyās racnā', in *Mādhurī*, I, 4, Oct. 1922, p. 358.

[32] For an attack on cheap sentimental literature, see Śivrānī Devī's speech at the 1st All-India Galpa-Sammelan in Meerut, April 1937: 'Strangers reading our stories wil think that people here have nothing else to do but love-dalliances (*prem-krīṛā*). The country is deep into all kinds of crises, and here we are happily inebriated with sensuality'; quoted in an editorial note in *Cāṁd*, XV, pt. 2, 2, June 1937, pp. 209-11.

Theoretical debates on the nature of literature reveal a new system of values, a shift in perspective and authority, and the attempt to defend either a tradition under attack (Braj) or a new subjective sensibility (Chāyāvād). Although they involved scholars, poets, connoisseurs and students in the public venues of journals, literary associations and university departments, ultimately it was university professors - the new experts and authorities - who synthesized the three positions of Braj supporters, Khari Boli reformist intellectuals and modernists into a set of theoretical assumptions (*sthāpnāeṁ*). Here is a synthesis by the quintessential critic-professor, Rāmcandra Śukla.[33]

First of all, the crucial relevance of literature for society and of society for literature was now an established fact. Literature was responsible to the people and aimed at changing and improving their taste (*lok-ruci*). Secondly, each period had a peculiar, pervasive *yug-dharma*, 'the ideal distillation of people's taste',[34] which both literature and society had to grasp. Thirdly, literature was a mirror which opened the eyes of society, thanks to the divine sight each poet is endowed with, something testified by the almost magical hold poetry can have on human beings. This power, which is a power of the heart over the mind, was partly a gift and partly the result of the poet's selfless asceticism (*sādhnā*).[35] Implied in the notion of the artist as a *sāhitya-* and *samāj-sevī* (dedicated to literature and to society), who incarnated the virtues both of a *tapasvīn* (ascetic) and of a *karmayogī* (selfless worker), was a notion of self-control that tempered the individualism of the Chāyāvādīs. Thus, the poet's discipline consisted of studious reading, cultivation of a wide intelligence, reflection on contemporary society and its problems, and the company and advice of older, more experienced scholars. Only then he could enter the field of literature, and even then with no freedom to burst into a 'reckless and arbitrary wailing' (*bedhaṛak manmānā vilāp*).[36]

What we see here is a peculiar tension between the crystallizing of a notion of the writer as the vanguard and moral leader of his society, which bestowed great authority upon him, and a subtle form of control, as if only a restrained, norm-abiding and selfless individual had the moral right to be called a writer. This, indirectly, bestowed even greater authority on the critic, who became the appointed judge of a writer's behaviour and would discriminate between those who wrote good poetry and those who burst into 'reckless and arbitrary wailings'.

[33] Rāmcandra Śukla, *Cintāmaṇi*, 1st part, Indian Press, Allahabad 1939.
[34] Sāgar Prasād Rāy 'Sāhityālaṃkār', 'Sāhitya meṁ lok-ruci tathā yug-dharma', *Cāṁd*, XVII, pt. 1, 1, June 1939, p. 52.
[35] R. Śukla, *Cintāmaṇi*, p. 227.
[36] *Ibid.*

Both (expurgated) *rīti* texts and Chāyāvād compositions would figure in the canon, fitted somehow in the 'useful literature' framework. The academic synthesis made criticism a mixture of text-based analysis of the few representative authors of each epoch and a simplified historical context. In textual analysis once again the traditional tools of Sanskrit poetics would be used - *rasa, alaṃkāras*, etc. They would perpetuate the deeply embedded notion of trained poetry stemming from the Braj tradition in another idiom and in a different context. The reformist view - with its stress on the social utility of literature - received new impetus and a Marxist ideological basis with Progressive criticism, active from the late 1930s to the 1940s and 1950s - especially with Rāmvilās Śarmā, Śivdānsiṃh Cauhān and others. The modernist view was carried forward by the Prayogvād (Experimentalist) group of writers.

The debates examined in this section were directly spurred by structural changes in the field of literature, which had placed writers, scholars and connoisseurs in a direct relationship with the new, anonymous and global public of printed literature (cf. 2.4.2). The centrality of 'collective taste' on the one hand, and of 'individual freedom' (to write and to criticize) on the other bears witness to this new perspective. Some critics, the moral reformists, claimed for themselves the authority to establish new rules and guide people's tastes. Others, the old *rasiks*, claimed the strength of the customary and attempted to keep up the existing order. The new generation tried to collapse old norms and authorities, and claimed instead for the poets the right to lead the age thanks to their visionary power. All three were affected by the new places and media in which literature was produced, transmitted and consumed in the 1920s and 1930s. The next section will examine how.

2.3 Arenas of literature: journals, *kavi-sammelans* and the publishing industry

Most, if not all, Hindi literature of the 1920s and 30s appeared first in journals, and most Hindi writers were, at least partly and at some time in their lives, professional editors. The three following sections analyse the institutional changes in the Hindi literary sphere, trying to answer the questions: how much was Hindi literature of the 1920s and 1930s shaped by changes in literary production, transmission and evaluation? And how did literary people take to those changes? In particular, this section examines the development of the three main media - journals, books and poetry-meetings (*kavi-sammelans*) - through which writers, poets and scholars expressed themselves and came face to face with publicity, with Hindi literati of different tastes and persuasions, and with the varied Hindi public. The first two were a direct product of modern print-culture, while poetry-meetings were a traditional form of literary entertainment which acquired new dimensions with the spread of nationalism and Hindi activism. This section explores how these three arenas changed over the two decades and how they affected writers and the literature produced in this period.

2.3.1 Journals

It is hard to underestimate the centrality journals acquired in Hindi literary life in these decades. Already the nineteenth century pioneers of Hindi had grasped their importance as a medium to circulate ideas, initiate discussion, run a cultural agenda through literature and create a Hindi public.[1] The purpose of those often one-man efforts was not commercial but to 'serve Hindi', and although they were of high literary quality they languished for lack of readership. Similarly, Hindi associations in the late nineteenth century did manage to weave a network of scholars and cultured notables across the whole Hindi area, but the journal of the most important of them, the *Nāgarī pracāriṇī patrikā* (Benares, 1896 as tri-monthly, monthly from 1907 to 1920), remained a scholarly enterprise, appeared sporadically, and its very limited circulation mirrored the limited appeal of such activism.[2] It was only at the turn of the century, with *Sarasvatī* under

[1] In fact all writers of Bhārtendu Hariścandra's circle - from Bhārtendu himself to Bālkṛṣṇa Bhaṭṭ, from Pratāpnārāyaṇ Miśra to Bālmukund Gupta - had founded at least one journal; see Brajratna Dās, *Bhārtendu maṇḍal*, Sri Kamalmani-Granthamala-Karyalay, Banaras 1949.

[2] Its importance lies rather in the fact that essays concerning mostly the pre- or non-Muslim heritage, and scientific and literary traditions of the West were published in Hindi for the first time. Regarding the language to be used in the journal, a meeting in August 1896 reached the following conclusions:

Mahāvīr Prasād Dvivedī's editorship (Allahabad, 1903-1920), that a commercially viable miscellaneous journal appeared in Hindi. Backed by a powerful publisher-owner, *Sarasvatī* ushered a new era in Hindi literature and helped the centre of Hindi journalism move from Calcutta to the United Provinces.[3] Its main features exemplify some of the consequences the journal-form had on Hindi literature. First of all, and this was central to Dvivedī's agenda, it established a grammatically fixed, standard print-language. Secondly, it reflected the wider sense of literature by including historical and contemporary issues of public interest. Yet, Dvivedī's rigid screening and censorship of the material to be published, both in terms of language and of content, severely limited the potential openness of such forum.

By contrast, when *Mādhurī* came out from Lucknow in July 1922 under the editorship of Dulārelāl Bhārgava, 'adorned with varied topics, related to literature, illustrated' (*vividh viṣay-vibhūṣit, sāhitya-sambandhī, sacitra*), it marked a significant change in the history of the Hindi literary sphere. In the words of a competitor: it 'created a sort of revolution in Hindi journalism: ... until then nobody knew that such a large magazine could be brought out in Hindi'.[4] It was not only the size and the magnificent get-up - it was over a hundred pages long, with plenty of colour plates, several columns and all the most famous Hindi writers and poets as contributors - *Mādhurī* differed from *Sarasvatī* in one crucial respect. It did not have the moralist and reformist mould Mahāvīr Prasād Dvivedī had cast *Sarasvatī* in, and also less of a definite agenda. Thus, it could open its pages to a much greater variety of voices and styles and to contemporary public opinion. Although in outlook

'Articles, reports, etc., written and published by the Sabha itself will use pure Hindi words, i.e., neither big Sanskrit words nor words from the Arabic and Persian languages. Essays coming to the Sabha for publication from elsewhere will not be accepted by the reviewing committee if they are filled with Persian and Arabic words'. Quoted in C.S. King, 'The Nagari Pracharini Sabha', p. 318.

[3] The concentration of Marvari capital and of Bengali publications had made Calcutta the early centre of Hindi publications, and attracted a sizeable community of 'expatriate' Hindi literary people, with a high turn-over. *Viśvamitra, Hindī baṅgvāsī, Bhārat mitra, Mārvāṛī sudhārak* were among the most popular periodicals, with eminent editors like Lakṣmīnārāyaṇ Garde, Ambikāprasād Vājpeyī, B.V. Parāṛkar, etc.; see Kṛṣṇabihārī Miśra, *Hindī patrakāritā*, Bhartiy Jnanpith, Delhi 1985 (1968). Apart from *Sarasvatī*, the main miscellaneous journals in the United Provinces were: *Cāṁd* (1922) in Allahabad; *Mādhurī* (1922) and *Sudhā* (1927) in Lucknow; *Indu* (1909) and *Hans* (1930) in Banaras; *Prabhā* (1920) in Kanpur. Weeklies, much before dailies could be ventured, had contributed most to political awakening and propaganda: in Allahabad *Abhyuday* (1907) and *Bhārat* (1928, Leader press, turned into a daily in 1933) provided news and serious political debate; in Kanpur *Pratāp* (1913, also daily in 1920) and *Vartamān* (1920) earned a popular edge; *Hindī Kesarī* in Benares was an old Tilakite paper, *Arjun* and *Āryamitra* came out from Ārya Samāj circles in Delhi, *Sainik* (1925) from Agra. In the 1920s, once popular demand for news had grown enough, several dailies or daily versions of weeklies sprung up: *Āj* (1920, Benares), *Sainik* (1935), both *Pratāp* and *Vartamān* in Kanpur, *Arjun* and *Navyug* in Delhi, *Bhārat mitra* in Calcutta, *Bhārat* in Allahabad, etc. However none of them had province-wide distribution like weeklies and monthlies.

[4] Devīdatt Śukla, at the time assistant editor of *Sarasvatī*, admits that his own journal had to increase the number of pages, plates and columns in order to keep apace. D. Śukla, *Sampādak ke paccīs varṣ*, Allahabad, Kalyan Mandir, 1953, p. 20.

Mādhurī did not differ substantially from its predecessor,[5] it certainly embraced a new kind of openness and publicity which made it a central forum for discussion and literary production in Hindi.

Like *Sarasvatī*, essays on literary or topical subjects, mostly by learned contributors, took up half of the journal, along with political news and comments by the editor, fixed columns on literary and general news, short contributions, book reviews, etc. However, the emphasis was more on the wide-ranging nature of the reading material offered, and more on information than on edification. By this indiscriminate openness and variety of the information provided, journals in an important way supplemented or substituted schools as the major source of cultural and political education, in that they induced readers to make up their own minds among the different opinions presented. In fact, both renowned scholars and newcomers took up issues over the same topics, and addressed the same public on the strength of their argument. In this way, both acquired a public voice and a role that transcended their individually defined identities.

The other half of *Mādhurī* was taken up by creative writing, mostly poems and short stories.[6] Again, whereas Dvivedī had been quite single-minded about the literature he wanted published in *Sarasvatī* (2.2), Bhārgava was more eclectic in his choices, championing both Braj poetry and the new Chāyāvād poets.[7] To writers (and, we can infer, readers) coming, as we have seen, from partial and diverse schooling experiences and literary traditions, magazines like *Mādhurī* thus provided a common literary grounding. As such, they were enormously influencial in establishing taste, in encouraging new genres,such as, for instance, the short story, and in accommodating earlier oral tastes as well. Also, it was journals, more than public associations, that carried controversies and

[5] In the introductory statement to the first issue, Dulārelāl Bhārgava acknowledged *Sarasvatī* as his model. In fact, the team of Hindi contributors Mahāvīr Prasād Dvivedī had collected around *Sarasvatī* was drawn to the new, more glamorous and rewarding journal: among them the Miśra brothers, Rāmcandra Śukla, Gulābrāī, etc. They made *Mādhurī* the foremost forum for discussion on Hindi literature. However, unlike *Sarasvatī, Mādhurī* gave space to other, contrasting critical voices; see above 2.2.

[6] Few were the novels serialised in such magazines, and fewer still the plays. *Cāṁd* was the most active in this regard, serialising among others Premcand's *Nirmalā* (1925-1926) and *Pratijnā* (1927), G. P. Śrivāstava's *Dil kī āg urf diljale kī āh* (publ. 1933), etc. *Sudhā* serialised Vṛndāvanlāl Varmā's *Kundalī cakra*, Kauśik's novel *Mā* (1929) and Nirālā's first novel, *Apsarā* (1930). *Sarasvatī* serialised only translations of Bengali novels. There were separate journals publishing novels in instalments, which catered for the low-brow market: such were Kiśorīlāl Gosvāmī's *Upanyās* (1900), Gopālrām Gahmarī's *Jāsūs* (1901), and Devkīnandan Khatrī's *Upanyās lahrī* (1902).

[7] *Mādhurī* regularly published Braj poems along with Khari Boli ones, regular critical articles and anthologies of Braj classics by the foremost Hindi scholars. An additional fixed column on Braj poetry and poets, 'Kavi carcā', was started in January 1925. Also Chāyāvād poets appeared freely when still controversial: one of Nirālā's first poems, 'Adhivās' appeared in April 1923, Prasād's play *Janmejay yā Nāg-yajña* in December 1922.

created news. With the slow development of literary reviews, they also provided an on-line commentary to the literature that was being produced.

Moreover, journals were crucial to the emergence of salaried intellectuals. Dulārelāl Bhārgava in particular introduced the practice of regularly paying contributions, which for the first time allowed writers to think that they might actually earn a living from free-lance writing. In practice, the question of monetary remuneration remained a thorny one. On the one hand, only large journals could afford salaried staff and paid contributors; in fact, most occasional writers were contented with seeing their articles in print. Besides, demanding money for *sāhitya-sevā*, service to literature, could appear improper.[8] On the other hand, for the new impecunious Hindi intelligentsia writing was a means of survival, however meagre and however tinted with nationalist passion. Poor remuneration jeopardised the possibility of maintaining a dignified living standard adequate to the public status of a 'writer' (cf. 2.4).[9]

Finally, the growing importance of journals changed the main medium of literary transmission from oral to printed (even poems recited at *kavi-sammelans* acquired a longer life-span through publication). In fact, literature in journals had a peculiar semi-permanence. While journals, available privately or in libraries even in rural areas, travelled further and faster than books, they also disappeared more quickly, since few libraries kept old files. Only at times were journals a prelude to a more permanent existence as books; nonetheless, literary material in journals aimed at something more than providing entertaining reading-matter: their declared aim was that of 'filling the *sthāyī bhaṇḍār* of Hindi'. As we shall see, they worked best in symbiosis with publishing houses.

The expansion of journals in the 1920s went hand in hand with their commercialization. A large investment required sales of at least 2000 copies to break even, and thus more attention to the technical aspect of distribution. *Sarasvatī* had counted on the network of government and affiliated schools and public libraries throughout the Gangetic plain, thanks to the excellent rapport between the Indian Press and the Education Department. An expensive enterprise like *Mādhurī* needed a big initial investment, but especially managerial skills. While the former could be provided by a publishing house or by making the journal a limited company, the latter depended on a new figure of editor-

[8] Throughout his life, Jayśaṅkar Prasād considered payment for any of his writing as an offence defiling his pure devotion to Sarasvati the goddess of learning. Poems were not paid 'by column' like the rest, 'They have no price and cannot be paid by page' argued cunningly D. Bhārgava in an editorial note; *Mādhurī*, II, pt. 1, 4, Nov. 1923, p. 512, and continued: 'कविता पर पारिश्रमिक देना एक जटिल समस्या है' [To reward a poem is a complex matter].

[9] Once questioned by Banārsīdās Caturvedī on the subject in 1930, Premcand replied that to that time, writing (130 stories and seven novels between 1921 and 1932) had earned him from Rs. 50 to Rs. 80 a month - a meagre sum for the best and most popular Hindi fiction writer; quoted in Robert O. Swan *Munshi Premchand of Lamhi Village*, Duke University Press, Durham 1969, p. 28.

enterpreneur.[10] Dulārelāl Bhārgava in fact was the best example: with *Mādhurī* he established a new kind of competition among Hindi monthlies by loud self- publicity, by increasing pages, columns and illustrations, by improving paper quality and by offering extra features like special issues.[11] Other journals had to follow suit in order to remain competitive, but the old one-man ventures could hardly afford it. Alternatively, journals, especially political ones, could survive increasing their sales; this involved turning Hindi newspapers into journals of news rather than of ideas, widening the appeal and paying greater attention to the popular public of Hindi.[12]

Beside, enterprising editors such as Dulārelāl Bhārgava and Rāmrakh Sahgal tried to increase distribution by employing local sales representatives and by distributing the journal at railway stations through an agreement with A.H. Wheelers, the booksellers. They also fostered a strong emotional link with their readership through aggressive self-publicity in the pages of their own journals.

Another factor in the greater commercial viability of Hindi journals in the 1920s was the symbiosis between periodical and 'stable' (*sthāyī*) literature. *Sarasvatī* once again showed the way, and most of the important Hindi journals followed suit. They either were launched by publishing houses or else branched out into publishing themselves. The symbiosis between periodical and 'stable' literature is easily explained: books enhanced and confirmed the success of poems, short stories or novels already familiar to the public

[10] As B.V. Parāṛkar (1880-1955), the editor of *Āj*, remarked in his presidential speech at the first Editors' Conference at the 16th Hindī Sāhitya Sammelan meeting in Vrindavan in 1925, the time of the owner-editor was gone. Though the need for capital inevitably narrowed down the editor's freedom, 'progress can only happen through commercial means... Now capitalists [invest] out of patriotism or indirect interest, later when success will come they will invest out of interest, and it will be a tough time for editors and for the independence of news'; quoted in *Sammelan patrikā*, XIII, 4-5 (1925), p. 237. *Sarasvatī* belonged to the Indian Press, *Mādhurī* to Nawalkishore, *Viśāl Bhārat* to the Ramananda Chatterjee group, Prabasi Press. *Cāṁd*, started with private capital, turned into a press and publishing house - Chand Karyalay - and was made into a limited company in 1932. The daily *Āj*, founded by the nationalist millionaire Babu Śivaprasād Gupta through a company, Bharat Samachar Samiti, was said to face a loss of Rs. 40,000 in the first year, a loss no lone editor could have faced; it was incorporated with Jnanmandal, Gupta's publishing house, and converted into a limited company in 1940; see Viśvanāth Prasād, 'Jñānmaṇḍal', n.d. Dulārelāl Bhārgava and Rāmrakh Siṃh Sahgal represent the best examples of literary entrepreneurs of this period.

[11] One peculiar form of self-publicity Bhārgava introduced (and Sahgal took up) was the regular publication of appraising comments (*sammatis*) on the journal and its publications by leading literary people, by other journals and noted personalities; see advertisements in the second issue.

[12] As Parāṛkar put it, 'What kind of classes our readers belong to, how they live, how they earn their living, what the difficulties they have to face in the battlefield of life are, how they enjoy themselves, what their interests are and what they want - we editors completely ignore these facts... If we knew them, [Hindi] newspapers would become an intrinsic a part of their readers' lives, as the case is for most Anglo-Indian, Bengali, Marathi, Gujarati and Urdu papers'. Moreover, the lives of Hindi readers were 'true' as opposed to the 'artificial' lives of English-educated Indians: 'Until we adopt the common folk and we turn our newspapers into their mirror we shall not progress and serve the real [*prakṛt*, as opposed to *kṛtrim*] nation'; B.V. Parāṛkar, Speech at the Sampādak Sammelan, pp. 233, 235. This was the case with *Pratāp* and *Āj*, which developed a network of local informers and did not rely on English news agencies. However, fines, securities and seizures of nationalist material could and did lead to temporary and permanent closures.

through journals. They also multiplied the profit, since the same material could be used twice - and with no additional cost when the editor-publisher bought the rights of the work as Dulārelāl Bhārgava did. Journals meant publicity, since they could carry large advertisements of the books published by the house (Dulārelāl Bhārgava even had his own book reviewed in his own magazine!), and both journals and books could use the same channel of distribution. The habit of subscribing to a journal or a publisher - becoming a *sthāyī grāhak* - was strongly recommended: beside creating a sentimental link between the publisher and the reader, provided financial security to the former and concessional rates to the latter.

Moreover, the journal and publication department could share manpower, thus creating the first professional class of salaried intellectuals in Hindi.[13] To take the example of *Sarasvatī*, M.P. Dvivedī worked also as literary advisor to the publisher, suggesting titles, writers and employees.[14] Later, Devīdatt Śukla, who joined the Literature Department of the Indian Press in 1918, was asked to assist editing the house's children's journal *Bālsakhā*, read the proofs of *Sarasvatī*, translate articles for it as well as several books for the Indian Press.[15] Journals required both stable, salaried staff who sat in the office, and occasional or fixed contributors who sent in their works by post and came to the office for periodical meetings. In both cases, they attracted Hindi literati and tended to shift the centre of literary production from villages and courts to towns. They also induced a shift in the notion of literary training and recognition: the editor became the *ustād* or *guru* who passed or failed you as a 'writer'; to have published in *Sarasvatī*, *Mādhurī*, *Prabhā* etc. became the mark of recognition. Editors' offices became poignant symbols of this shift.[16]

[13] After Dvivedī himself, Rūpnārāyaṇ Pāṇḍey, Śivpūjan Sahāy (1893-1963), Navjādiklāl Śrīvastava (1888-1939), Devīdatt Śukla, Banārsīdās Caturvedī, Mākhanlāl Caturvedī, Mātādīn Śukla (1891-1954) were among the first professional literary editors; see biographies in the Appendix.

[14] The complete trust Chintamani Ghosh (and later his son Harikeshav Ghosh) had in Mahāvīr Prasād Dvivedī is well known. Dvivedī, always very sensitive about hierarchy, was deeply moved, since this trust concealed the fact that he was only a dependent; he termed the publishers' attitude towards him as one of personal *kṛpā* (favour). Devīdatt Śukla, who worked at the Indian Press for 26 years, from 1919 to 1945, recalls his joyful surprise at finding that the publishers behaved with employees more like family elders than masters. D. Śukla, *Sampādak ke paccīs varṣ*, p. 10. Dvivedī was also the first Hindi editor ever to receive a pension from his employers.

[15] Similarly Premcand, offered the editorship of *Mādhurī* by Babu Biṣṇunārāyaṇ Bhārgava - at Rs. 200 pm, the highest pay for an editor at the time - in 1927, was also entrusted 'with the task not only of preparing text-books for the Nawalkishore Press but also of getting them prescribed in syllabi, and... had to do a lot of travelling, to Banaras or to Kanpur, to Patna or to Naini Tal...' In 1931 he was moved to another branch of the publishing house, the Book Depot; see Amrit Rai, *Premchand: a Life*, Oxford University Press, Delhi 1991, pp. 230 and 266.

[16] Devīdatt Śukla recalls the awe the first glimpse of the Indian Press office inspired in him; *Sampādak ke paccīs varṣ*, p. 9. In fact, his experience is fairly indicative of that of a Hindi literary publicist; see biography in the Appendix. The 'professional' atmosphere of the office could feel unpleasantly impersonal for the traditional literary person: when Kiśorīdās Vājpeyī, already known as a grammarian, decided to quit teaching and work 'among the gods' (i.e. among editors), was appalled by the official (*daftarī*) reception at *Sudhā*'s office and immediately left; the working atmosphere at Chand Karyalay, though equally 'European' and professional, was tempered by the familial and

In summary, the expansion of Hindi journalism and publishing after 1920 marked the coming of age of a modern Hindi literary industry concentrated in a few big towns; at the same time, it created a unified literary space through a network of distant contributors and regional distribution. Thanks to the growing interest in news generated by World War I and the first nationalist mass campaign, Hindi journals and political press reached beyond the pale of the highly literate and formally schooled public; through periodicals and print-language, this more mixed reading public received a common cultural and political education. At the same time, journals became more open to the diversity of tastes and voices present in the Hindi literary sphere and became show-cases for contemporary writing. Also, whether monthlies, weeklies or dailies, whether political or social or religious in inclination, all Hindi periodicals of this period featured literature in some form: this helped popularise Hindi writers and highlight the social relevance of literature. Although not a highly remunerative or secure job, journalism was an important avenue for the nationalistic-minded Hindi intelligentsia, and possibly the only source of remuneration for the first professional writers.

However, the growth of big literary magazines in the 1920s should not lead us to conclude that small or one-man journals disappeared from Hindi journalism - indeed quite the contrary is true. The fact that there is hardly a writer of the period who did not contribute or launch a magazine, and the host of small-to-middle journals which printed from 500 to 2000 copies from provincial towns such as Mirzapur, Etawah, Gorakhpur, Khandwa, Jabalpur, Indore, Ajmer, etc., bear witness to the fact that publicity could only multiply itself. Although larger ventures set the pace, scholarly, local or one-man journals survived as well - often proving to be a great financial strain for the editor-owner.[17] Yet, the spectacular growth of the Hindi press in this period shows the tremendous importance attached to the medium. At this important historical juncture, journalism made Hindi writers aware of their public voice and lent them a new self-importance.

The Hindi literary industry, however, was marked by some peculiar features, which determined its growth and influenced the position of Hindi writers. These will be examined in the following section.

2.3.2 Publishing

protective attitude Sahgal and his wife took to the staff; K. Vājpeyī, *Sāhityik jīvan aur saṃsmaraṇ*, Himalay Agency, Kankhal 1953, pp. 8-13.

[17] Premcand's well-known financial troubles in running *Hans* and *Jāgaraṇ* indicate both the need for commercial acumen and the writer's resilient dream of having his own magazine, his own platform to speak from.

A similar set of changes - numerical and geographical expansion, diversification, professional employment and the impact of the nationalist movement - affected Hindi publishing around 1920 as well. This section briefly outlines the main trends, namely the partial emancipation of Hindi publishing from text-book production, the popular market, and finally nationalist enterprises.

Until the 1920s, the main publishing houses in Hindi, i.e. Nawal Kishore (1858) in Lucknow, Khadgvilas Press in Bankipur (Bihar) and the Indian Press in Allahabad (1884), had flourished only by publishing either religious books or school text-books.[18] The case of the Indian Press well exemplifies the nature of Hindi publishing at that time. The founder, Babu Chintamani Ghosh (1854-1928), a Bengali, was a self-made man, a pioneering editor and a patriotic reformer in the spirit of the times. He realised the potential of education, and thanks to his good contacts in the education department and to the literary expertise and skills of Mahāvīr Prasād Dvivedī and Śyāmsundar Dās, he became the foremost publisher for school textbooks for boys and girls, anthologies, readers, biographies, library books for all subjects both in English and Hindi of the province,.[19] The literature department, managed by Girish Chandra Ghosh, published almost exclusively translations from Bengali: contemporary Hindi literature was practically absent.[20] However, the Indian Press was crucial in establishing high printing standards for Hindi publications. Chintamani Babu was particularly fond of character-building biographies (43 titles between 1909 and

[18] The Nawalkishore Press, the largest early publisher in the United Provinces, published mostly Urdu books, translations of religious books (Quran, Upaniṣads, Purāṇas) and in Hindi translations of Persian and Urdu romances. The Khadgvilas Press of Bankipur, near Patna, was the pioneering literary publisher in Bihar; it published Bhārtendu's books, the earliest translations of Bengali novels and theatre chapbooks of *Mudrārākṣasa* and *Satya Hariścandra* 'which sold by tens of thousands'; see Kṛṣṇacandra Berī, *Hindī prakāśan kā itihās*, typewritten article by courtesy of the author, n.d., p. 4. Most of the information of the following pages come from this useful overview. Information on the Indian Press come from Mushtaq Ali, 'Hindī sāhitya ke itihās meṁ ilāhābād kā yogdān'.

[19] In fact, thanks to Śyāmsundar Dās, the Indian Press struck a very advantegeous deal to publish educational books prepared by the Nāgarī Pracāriṇī Sabhā; in 1928 it entered an agreement with the Sabhā to print all its publications, and a special branch of the Press was opened in Banaras to deal with the work. The agreement lasted until 1940, when the Sabhā revoked it, suspecting mismanagement of funds by Śyāmsundar Dās. Publications included all Sabhā series: the 'popular' *Manorañjan pustak-mālā,* the historical *Devīprasād-aitihāsik-pustak-mālā* and *Sūryakumārī pustak-mālā*, the *Nāgarī-pracāriṇī-granthamālā* for critical editions of Hindi 'classics', and the dictionary *Hindī śabda-sāgar*; M. Ali, 'Hindī sāhitya ke itihās meṁ ilāhābād kā yogdān', pp. 442 ff. See also S. Dās, *Merī ātmakahānī*.

[20] Translations of Bankim Chandra, Tagore, R.C. Dutt, Charu Chandra, Prabhat Kumar Mukhopadhyay, Sharatchandra, etc.. were mostly by employees of the Press such as Janārdan Jhā, Lallīprasād Pāṇdey, and the most prolific of them all - Rūpnārāyaṇ Pāṇdey. In order to understand the stature of the Indian Press, it is of interest to note that it was Tagore's publisher until he retrieved the rights for his own press at Shantiniketan, and it published Ramanand Chatterjee's *Prabāsī* and *Modern Review* until he moved back to Calcutta. For a complete list of publications and a history of the press, see Mushtaq Ali, *ibid.* For a list of English and Bengali novels translated into Hindi, see Gopālrāy, *Hindī-upanyās-koś*, vol. 1, pp. 362 ff.

1940), 'useful literature', religious books for both adults and children and quality illustrations.[21]

Apart from text-books, the Hindi book-market until 1920 consisted mainly of religious publications and popular fiction. Religious publishers had cropped up in Hindi almost everywhere, often at pilgrimage centres, at the end of the nineteenth century and in the beginning of the twentieth.[22] These were often small concerns, producing religious and ritual texts of low printing quality but in huge numbers. On the other hand, the phenomenal success of Devkīnandan Khatrī's *Candrakāntā* (1891) had created a large market for cheap entertainment literature like historical romances, *tilismī* and detective novels. Like Banaras, Calcutta was a centre for both religious books of all kinds and for popular novels and romances.[23]

The impact and importance of such publications in creating a widespread Hindi public, and hence readership expectations, still need to be studied. Hindi intellectuals on the whole viewed the phenomenon with mixed feelings (cf. 2.4): Dvivedī's scorn of *Candrakāntā* had introduced a conscious and hitherto unknown distinction between good (i.e. useful) literature and low-brow literature.[24] Yet, quality literary publications occupied only a small share of the production and could not survive on the strength of sales alone; only in the 1920s that attempts to change this predicament could be made and be partially successful.

In fact, in the 1920s the expansion of the Hindi literary sphere and of the reading public allowed the growth of specific markets and of literary publishing.[25] Dulārelāl Bhārgava's Ganga Pustak Mala in Lucknow was perhaps the most successful attempt, backed once again by business innovations. Apart from the standard 'useful literature' - biographies, history, children' and women's books[26] - Bhārgava created a remarkable catalogue of contemporary Hindi literature, comprising novels, short stories, dramas, poetry, essays and

[21] The large illustrated edition of the *Hindī Mahābhārata* (transl. from Bengali by Mahāvīr Prasād Dvivedī, 1908) became a prized household book. In the *Bālsakhā pustak-mālā* (a series of children's books), *Mahābhārata, Bhagavadgītā, Śrīmad Bhagvāt* for children were also published.
[22] Ved Sansthan in Ajmer was the main centre for Ārya Samāj publications, while Brahmanand Ashram in Pushkar sold millions of copies of its *Brahmānand bhajanmālā,* and the Ramakrishna Mission in Nagpur published Ramakrishna and Vivekananda literature. Other centres in U.P. were Mathura (with Shiksha Bharati, Shyamkashi Press, etc.), Gorakhpur (Gita Press) and Banaras - which had a tradition of both Sanskrit and Hindi publishing. In Bombay Khemrāj Śrīkṛṣṇadās had the greatest stock of religious titles, followed by the Nirnay Sagar Press, Vipul Trust, etc. Most of the following information are drawn from K. Beri, 'Hindī prakāśan kā itihās', pp. 16 ff.
[23] E.g. Mahāvīr Prasād Poddār's Hindi Pustak Agency, Mūlcand Agravāl of Popular Trading Co. (the editor of *Viśvamitra*), R.S. Varman & Co., Nihalchand & Co., Narsingha Press published both. In fact, several Hindi publishers fluctuated between Calcutta and Benares; e.g. Nihālcand Berī, R.S. Varman, and Devnārāyaṇ Dvivedī of Bharati Pustak Agency; *ibid.*
[24] Right from the beginning of his contribution to *Sarasvatī*; see 'Nivedan', *Sarasvatī*, Nov. 1901.
[25] The birth of a specific market for women is briefly discussed in chapter 4; the story of the booming market of children's publications still waits to be written.
[26] In the series *Mahilā-mālā* and *Bāl-vinod-vāṭikā*.

literary criticism.[27] With his choice of both 'high-brow' and popular writers, the use of thick 'antique' paper and cloth binding, a 'rāj saṃskāraṇ' along with a 'sādhāraṇ saṃskāraṇ' and aggressive advertising, Bhārgava managed to capture both the sophisticated and low-brow readership and keep a purely literary concern afloat.[28]

Other literary publishers managed to survive thanks to the growing need of Hindi reading books, critical editions, readers and anthologies for the higher classes and colleges (see 2.5). While this allowed small literary publishers to hold up, it also strengthened the dependence of the Hindi book-market on the education system - making Hindi literature a subsidized branch.[29]

Another area in which Hindi publishing expanded massively in the 1920s was, not surprisingly, political literature. This included a cheap production of pamphlets, booklets, books, songs, biographies, as well as more enduring books on political history and political science. Pratap Press in Kanpur, Chand Karyalay and Abhyuday Press in Allahabad, Sasta Sahitya Mandal in Ajmer (est. 1926) and the Aj Press in Banaras published most of the former.[30] Babu Śivaprasād Gupta's Jnanmandal (1917) in Banaras was more concerned with the latter. Its breadth of scope, nationalist vision and partial freedom from commercial compulsions made it a unique case and a particularly precious opportunity.[31] Despite

[27] His catalogue of authors and titles is truly impressive: Premcand's *Raṅgbhūmi* (in 1925, for the record sum of Rs. 1800), the play *Karbalā* and several collections of stories; also Viśvambharnāth Śarmā 'Kauśik', Catursen Śāstrī, Bhagavatīcaraṇ Varmā, Vṛndāvanlāl Varmā, Pāṇḍey Becan Śarmā 'Ugra', Nirālā, Govindvallabh Pant, Badrīnāth Bhaṭṭ, Rūpnārāyaṇ Pāṇḍey, Pratāpnārāyaṇ Śrīvāstava, etc. - in a word all the best Hindi writers. Bhārgava took care to include also works by older writers like Bālkṛṣṇa Bhāṭṭ, Mahāvīr Prasād Dvivedī, Śrīdhar Pāṭhak, Kṛṣṇabihārī Miśra, etc. Translations of Moliere, Galsworthy, Gorky, Alexander Dumas were published, too.

[28] Maithilīśaraṇ Gupta had also proved successful in publishing his own works from his village near Jhansi. Rāykṛṣṇadās established Bharti Bhandar (1927-1935) in Banaras as a cooperative publishing house to give more royalty - 25 % - to writers, but he had to sell it in 1935-36 to the Leader Press in Allahabad, a Birla concern. Still in Banaras Premcand founded his Hans Karyalay, and Vinod Śaṅkar Vyās the Pustak Mandir (1930-50).

[29] This is a large and thorny question which still troubles the Hindi publishing world; several factors seem to feed into it: low literacy and hence a limited readership despite the enormous potential; an inadequate system of distribution, which makes literary books difficult to get outside the main urban centres; the complete dychotomy between 'good literature' (that studied at school) and literature for entertainment. All these factors are already present in the period covered by this thesis, too.

[30] Pamphlets and books of the Pratap Press included the translation of Gandhi's 'jel-yātrā', nationalist poems by 'Triśūl', Vidyārthī's book on Princely states and booklets (compilations) on Russia and on communism. Sasta-Sahitya-Mandal was a Gandhian publishing venture established by Ghanshyamdas Birla, Jamanlal Bajaj etc. in 1926, managed by Haribhāū Upādhyāy, editor of the Gandhian paper *Tyāgbhūmi*; it published mainly translations of Gandhi's and Tolstoj's, of historical and 'useful' books and biographies; all information are take from publication-lists in journals.

[31] During a long world-tour, Śivaprasād Gupta had been impressed by the excellent and cheap publications he found abroad, and once back to India he drew a long list of titles and subjects inviting Hindi writers to write books on them along 'scientific standards'. These included biographies of patriots from all over the world; critical editions of classics, books on history, sociology, political science, science and handicraft, religion and philosophy. He then suggested popular English books for translation, and drew a list which included the Home University Library series, science primers, Jacks People's Books series, Temple Encyclopedic Primers, important books on history such as Bury's *Greece*, Rhys Davis' *Early Buddhism*, V. Smith's *Early History of India*, MacDonnell's *History of Sanskrit*

generous funding, poor distribution brought huge losses every year. But Śivaprasād Gupta's enterprise did produce some hundred books on subjects few commercial publishers would have dared to propose. It provided Hindi readers and students with serious, nationalist-minded political and historical analyses, and several Hindi scholars, politicians and publicists with the chance to work on cardinal subjects.[32] In the end, however, Jnanmandal, too, survived thanks to academic publications.

To summarize this section, the unprecedented expansion of Hindi publishing meant a greater *bhaṇḍār* of Hindi literature, a larger community of writers and publicists, and the birth of new branches in a market so far dominated by educational, religious and popular publishing. However, despite the obvious growth, Hindi literary publishing did not expand enough to turn into a commercially viable activity on its own. None but the most popular novelists could hope to live by writing like professionals, and this once again produced a tension between the idealized high status and role of the writer as an independent public figure, and his actual financial status which we shall analyze in the next section in greater detail. The last part of this section explores the changes in an arena, that of poetry-meetings, that negotiated old and new tastes, old and new audiences and forms of publicity.

2.3.3 *Kavi-sammelans*

The institution of the *kavi-sammelan* or poetry-meeting acquired a new meaning and function during this period. This is particularly interesting from our perspective, because it was an old form of poetic transmission adapted to new circumstances, and because it put even new literary talents face to face with an aural, concrete and localized audience of a different sort and with different tastes from those developed by journals. Besides, *kavi-sammelans* in this period confronted audiences with forms of poetry that were not part of their *saṃskāras*. This made the issue of popularity a controversial one (cf. 2.4).

A *kavi-sammelan* was a highly formal poetic reading, modelled on the Urdu *mushaira* - which had successfully turned from a courtly affair into an urban public event - and on Braj courtly poetic contests. Poets took turn to recite or sing out their poems to a participative public. Braj poetry readings in *darbārs* had tested excellence and favoured

Literature, Lecky's *Democracy* and *Civilisation*, basic texts of European philosophy, physics, chemistry, botany, etc. Among the books published were: Śrīprakāś, ed., *Svarājya kā sarkārī masvidā* (2 vols.); Candraśekhar Vājpey, *Yūrop ke prasiddh sudhārak* (1920), Lakṣmaṇṇārāyaṇ Garde, *Jāpān kī rājnītik pragati* (transl., 1921), Prāṇnāth Vidyālaṃkār, *Rājnītiśāstra* (1922); Sampūrṇānand, *Antarrāśtrīy vidhān* (1924), Hariharnāth, *Saṃsār ke vyavsāy kā itihās* (tr. 1924); Ambikāprasād Vājpeyī, *Cīn aur Bhārat* and the seminal *Samācārpatroṁ kā itihās* (1953), on nineteenth century journals in Hindi; list of publications available from the publicity list of Jnanmandal Press, Banaras.

[32] Among the writers associated with Jnanmandal were Chāvīnāth Pāṇdey, a Congress activist, Padmasiṃh Śarmā, Rāmdās Gauṛ, Sampūrṇānand, Janārdan Bhaṭṭ and Mukundīlāl Śrīvāstava.

competition by means of *samasyā-pūrtis,* i.e. set "problems" (*samasyā*) or fragments of verses to which poets had to provide a "solution" in the form of a full poem. The best poems would be rewarded immediately by the prince or patron, and the custom persisted even when such competitions were taken out of the court into a public place: there, *raīs* and the audience would reward the successful poet with gold and silver medals or cash.[33]

Traditionally, kavi-sammelans had been a means to entertain and educate the aural public to poetic sophistication (to *sāhityānurāga* and *kāvyarasa*). But with literature meaning more and more *printed* literature, the audience for contemporary poetry was growing, in the words of a critic, 'constrained within the narrow limits of the schooled public'.[34] Moreover, when kavi-sammelans began to take a more nationalist slant, their potential to attract a different, untrained mass public (*jantā*), to whom patriotic messages could be conveyed, was recognised. This changed the function and outlook of kavi-sammelans substantially.

Hindi kavi-sammelans were increasingly popular from the 1920s onwards: they became the typical 'cultural programme' at annual functions of schools, colleges and hostels, of literary associations, and at political meetings of the Congress.[35] The Hindī Sāhitya Sammelan began to organise mass poetry meetings and joint Hindi-Urdu and All-India Hindi kavi-sammelans, inviting scores of poets from all over India. Kavi-sammelans became part of their country-wide Hindi propaganda and a public show of strength of the Hindi community. This marked a new publicity for Hindi poetry and attests to the new importance of popularity, both in political terms (for nationalist poets) and in commercial ones, since to be a popular poet now meant higher sales and more emoluments.[36]

But before turning to the consequences of such attempts at mammoth kavi-sammelans, let us analyze which kinds of poetry were most appropriate to this arena, and why.

There were two kinds of poetry most widely read at kavi-sammelans all over the Hindi region: Braj poems and nationalist poems in Khari Boli. Even minor Khari Boli poets

[33] Nothing is known about *samasyā* in Sanskrit texts, at least up to Rājāśekhar's time - wrote Rāmśaṅkar Śukla 'Rasāl', Hindi lecturer at Allahabad University, a specialist in *rīti* poetry and a Braj poet himself - nor in Hindi texts until the recent *Kāvya-prabhākar* (1905) by Jagannāthprasād 'Bhānu' (1859-1945). But many anecdotes of Raja Bhoja's time spoke of its popularity in medieval Sanskrit literature. In Hindi too, *samasyā-pūrti* started flourishing around the XVI century, both in courts and in the main towns in small circles of poets and connoisseurs (*kāvyapremīs*); R. Śukla 'Rasāl', 'Samasyā-pūrti', *Mādhurī*, VIII, pt. 2, 1, Feb. 1930, pp. 47-56.

[34] *Ibid.*, p. 52.

[35] For the importance of Hindi kavi-sammelans for Hindi propaganda in the Punjab, see 3rd Annual Report of Punjab Provincial Hindī Sāhitya Sammelan by Jaycandra Vidyālaṃkār, in *Sammelan patrikā*, XII, 10, pp. 444.

[36] When *Haldī ghāṭī*, a long nationalist poem on Maharana Pratāp and Rajput valour by Śyāmnārāyaṇ Pāṇḍey, appeared in 1938, his inspiring public recitations made the book an instant success. It won the prestigious Dev Puraskar and saw reprints over reprints.

like Mādhav Śukla, Sohanlāl Dvivedī and Śyāmnārāyaṇ Pāṇḍey became small-scale celebrities thanks to their fiery nationalist poems at kavi-sammelans. Sohanlāl Dvivedī acquired a score of fans, and when he recited aloud his poem on Gandhi:

> न हाथ एक शस्त्र हो।
> न साथ एक अस्त्र हो।
> न अन्न, नीर, वस्त्र हो।
> हटो नहीं, डटो वहीं,
> बढ़े चलो बढ़े चलो।
> No weapon in his hands,
> No weapon beside him,
> No food, water or cloth.
> Don't retreat, stay where you are
> Move ahead, move ahead

'the thousands of listeners in the *paṇḍāl* would join in with the poet at the refrain बढ़े चलो, बढ़े चलो (Move ahead, move ahead),'[37] Thanks to these poets, a poetic version of the national movement was being written and disseminated while the movement was in full swing, and kavi-sammelans became an important "place" of nationalist identification. The major nationalist poets such as Gayāprasād Śukla 'Sanehī' (1883-1939), Maithilīśaraṇ Gupta, and later Subhadrākumārī Cauhān, Dinkar and Bālkṛṣṇa Śarmā 'Navīn' were often called to attend kavi-sammelans.[38] Indeed, young Rāmnāthlāl 'Suman' wrote that 'since usually people's taste veers more towards nationalism, this kind of poets has become more and more famous,' so much so that 'any author of nationalist doggerel can be honoured - is indeed honoured - more than the author of the finest verse of *śṛṅgāra rasa*.'[39] Such poems might not have stood the test of time, but they had that unique virtue of modernity - *sāmāyiktā*, timeliness.

However, the majority of poems recited at kavi-sammelans were in Braj, once more a proof of how resistant and engrained a poetic *saṃskāra* it was. It was in fact through kavi-sammelans that Braj regained momentum, exposure, currency and popularity. Especially at minor kavi-sammelans with mostly local and amateur poets, *samasyā-pūrti* was the easiest and more practised option, and *śṛṅgāra rasa* a favoured mood.[40]

[37] Amṛtlāl Nāgar, *Jinke sāth jīyā*, Rajpal and Sons, Delhi 1973, p.124.
[38] E.g. Sanehī, *Pratāp*'s 'house-poet', presided a poetry-meeting at Allahabad University's Hindu Hostel in 1922; L. Vājpeyī presided the annual Nāgarī Pracāriṇī Sabhā meeting in Agra in 1925.
[39] R. Suman, 'Hamāre kavi aur unkī racnāeṁ', *Sammelan patrikā*, XI, 9, pp. 391-92.
[40] Why was Braj poetry so popular in this Khari Boli age? asked an editor. Both answers suggested had to do with the familiarity of the audience with this poetic style: (1) *samasayā-pūrti* was already a tradition in Braj; (2) in terms of content and of style, Braj poetry could more easily correspond and compete with Urdu mushairas; editorial note on 'Kavi sammelan', *Mādhurī*, IV, pt. 1, 3, Sept. 1925, p. 414.

However, structural changes were at work here, too. Earlier, poetic *samasyās* had been a 'brief and pleasant' test of a poet's talent and skill in a circle of connoisseurs. For the poet trained on strict poetic rules, this was a means to stir creativity: although binding, a *samasyā* allowed enough freedom to exercise the imagination.[41] In the 20th century, however, with kavi-sammelans becoming public affairs, *samasyā-pūrti* was no longer a test because *samasyās* were set, announced and printed in advance. Boycotted by Khari Boli supporters, Braj kavi-sammelans started catering to the general audience by featuring only a couple of easy *samasyās* or a general theme instead, with entertainment as the only aim.[42]

In the absence of any such tests, connoisseurs remarked, unknown and unrecognised poets flooded magazines and kavi-sammeans with bad poems - echoing laments heard in the previous section. Also, as we shall see below, publicity and popularity had some dangers. Once the general audience came into the picture and popular taste became the bottom-line, it became a question of order and control; it was one thing to recite subtle *śṛṅgāra* poems in a small circle of connoisseurs, it was quite another to recite them in front of a large, paying audience in a *paṇḍāl*. The traditional system of poetic training, exercise and correction placed authority in the hands of patrons and scholars. The new literary system, where commercialisation and publicity placed recognition in the hands of the general public, was viewed with bewilderment by *rasiks* like 'Rasāl'.

New poetics tastes like Chāyāvād did not fare well with the general audience at poetry-meetings:

> They were strange not only in their diction, but also in their attire. The people (*jantā*) watched them and listened to them dumbfounded... People thought they were creatures from another world who descended on earth and disappeared again after uttering some mystery.[43]

Kavi-sammelans in schools and colleges provided a more receptive audience and a more favourable platform for Chāyāvād poets. It was at the Jain Hostel in Allahabad in 1921 that the student Sumitrānandan Pant recited a poem in public for the first time to immediate recognition.[44] Also in Allahabad, young Mahādevī Varmā, who had started

[41] R. Rasāl, 'Samsayā-pūrti'.
[42] Poets still practised it as a kind of exercise or for the joy of it, for it forced them to enclose a *bhāva* within a determined boundary; it survived as a practice in Braj circles and even sustained a few journals, like *Rasikmitra*, edited by Rāy Devīprasād Pūrṇa; *Rasiklahrī* (1902), *Rasik vinod* (1904), *Rasik rahasya* (1907), etc. In fact, at mixed Braj and Khari Boli kavi sammelans, Braj poets were given a *samasyā*, and Khari Boli ones a theme: in Dvivedī's time these were often 'social' themes such as 'untouchable', 'widow', while during nationalist campaigns they were 'khadi', '*carkhā*', 'martyr', etc. Harivaṃs Rāy 'Baccan', 'Kavi-sammelan: ek siṃhāvalokan', in A. Kumār, ed., *Baccan racnāvalī*, vol. 6, Rajkamal Prakasan, 1987, p. 447.
[43] *Ibid.*, p. 448.
[44] D. Śukla, *Sampādak ke paccīs varṣ*, p. 23.

attending kavi-sammelans of *samasyā-pūrtis* as representative of her school, preferred to keep away and read her poems in the protected environment of smaller, sophisticated circles like the Sukavi Samāj.[45] The most popular Chāyāvād poets at kavi-sammelans were Rāmkumār Varmā and Bhagavatīcaraṇ Varmā, the former for his soft diction, the latter for his powerful delivery.

The potential of kavi-sammelans for public shows of unity within the Hindi community and for Hindi propaganda spurred the Hindī sāhitya Sammelan to organize massive, all-India affairs.[46] There were, however, several problems. First of all it was not easy to break the Braj-*śṛṅgāra* mould. After a trial experience in Delhi in 1924, the all-India Hindi kavi-sammelan organised for the16th Hindī Sāhitya Sammelan session in Vrindavan in November 1925 was meant as an occasion for young poets to their meet celebrated peers from all over India, bridging differences and forging a sense of unity of purpose.[47] But the actual kavi-sammelan turned out to be somewhat of a disappointment: in the home of Braj, Braj poems reigned. Only a few had nationalist feelings, but mostly were of *śṛṅgāra*, 'which we are now sick and tired to hear'. Some poets presented poems by earlier authors as their own, and a painful incident led the reviewer to observe that 'it lacked the seriousness and organisation proper to an All-India Hindi kavi-sammelan': when an overly bold poem in *śṛṅgāra rasa* was recited, the small group of women heroically present among the audience walked off offended by its "vulgarity".[48]

A new attempt was made to coincide with the Kanpur Congress of December 1925, partly in the Congress *paṇḍāl* itself, with the concerted effort of all literary people in the city, first and foremost Gayāprāsad Śukla 'Sanehī'. The aim was to 'introduce speakers of other languages to the abundance and charm of Hindi poetry, and the talent and

[45] In fact, Mahādevī was especially invited to give the weekly meetings social respectability, so that other young women poets would be allowed to attend. 'During the few years of its existence, it provided the young poets with an audience of their peers that could appreciate and comment with sophistication on their current writings'; K. Schomer, *Mahadevi Varma*, p. 145.

[46] The 14th Hindī Sāhitya Sammelan annual meeting in Delhi in February 1924 featured a Hindi-Urdu kavi-sammelan, organised by Pandit Udit Miśra and blessed by a telegram from Gandhi; the joint session was perhaps instrumental in drawing a full house even in a city still mostly indifferent to Hindi. Presided by Dvivedī-poet Nāthūrām Śaṅkar Śarmā, it featured among others poets Harioudh, the Miśra brothers, Padmasiṃh Śarmā, Jagannāth Prasād Caturvedī, 'Sanehī' (whose poem 'Svadeśī' won acclaim), Rāmnareś Tripāṭhī, Mākhanlāl Caturvedī, Rūpnārāyaṇ Pāṇḍey, while practically the whole Hindi establishment attended, with Puruṣottam Dās Ṭaṇḍon, Rāmdās Gauṛ, Seth Kedārnāth Goyīṅkā, Śrīnārāyaṇ Caturvedī, etc. Urdu poets Maulana Arif Hasbi, Maharaj Bahadur 'Barq', Latif Hussein etc. also recited their poems, and the poets were so many that a second day was required; see reports in *Sammelan patrikā*, XI, 7-8, pp. 346-47; and *Mādhurī*, II, pt. 2, 2, Feb. 1924, pp. 270-71.

[47] *Sammelan patrikā*, XIII, 2, pp. 76-78.

[48] Reported in *Mādhurī*, IV, pt. 1, 5, November 1925, p. 701. Years later, at a meeting of the local Nāgarī Pracāriṇī Sabhā branch in Ballia, Rāhul Sankṛtyāyan remarked that now that women were coming out in the literary sphere, self-control (*sanyam*) and refinement (*suruci*) were indespensable. Quoted in *Cāṁd*, XV, pt. 1, 3, January 1937, p. 380.

intelligence of Hindi poets'.[49] This time, Khari Boli and Braj poems were kept under different sections. The triumphant proceedings, part of the Congress *melā* (fair), lasted four days, with plentiful speeches and poems; most of the Hindi literary world of the time attended and there was an audience of about four thousand.

However, the consequence of holding huge kavi-sammelans was finally brought home ten years later after the disastrous proceedings of the all-India Rāṣṭrabhāṣā Kavi-sammelan in Lucknow in April 1936.[50] With the aim of attracting vast crowds and calling it '*virāṭ*' (huge), and of giving Hindi poetry a popular audience, entry tickets had been kept extremely low (1 anna). There were no restrictions on the noisy public or the excited poets' effusiveness, and no proper order, sound or seating arrangements; the respectable public and good poets avoided the show. By the time Mahādevī Varmā, the appointed president, arrived, the scene had already become chaotic, with the public shouting because they could not hear the poets, and poets struggling with each other for precedence. Mahādevī left immediately without saying a word; clearly, the new fashion of appointing women convenors had failed to check, indeed had provoked uncouthness.

The appalling Hindi kavi sammelan looked even more ludicrous in comparison with the Urdu mushaira organised the following night. The same *paṇḍāl* was nicely arranged, with seats and loudspeakers and flowers, tickets sold for Rs. 9, 2 and 8 annas, and invitations assured the presence of the city notables and literary community. The secretaries had prepared a printed booklet with a list of the poets, a selection of the poems and photographs of Jawaharlal Nehru and Sarojini Naidu (who presided over the mushaira) in advance, which sold for 8 annas. The President of the welcoming committee, Pandit Ānanda Nārāyaṇ Mullā stuck to the order; since it was a 'national mushaira', there were no *samasyās* and everyone read poems of their own choice; poets like Jigar, Asghar, Bismil Ilahabadi etc. won great acclaim. After the Hindi kavi sammelan Premcand was heard saying 'God knows when Hindi people will learn their manners' ('हिन्दी वालों को मालूम नहीं कब तमीज़ आएगी').[51]

The experience of the Hindi kavi-sammelan in Lucknow pointed at the tension that emerged when 'popular' and 'sophisticated' audiences met in a common arena, and different tastes and expectations clashed. Urdu mushairas addressed a cultivated, civilised audience, followed a scrupulous ritual and did not attempt undiscriminate popularization.[52] In Hindi,

[49] Report in *Mādhurī*, IV, pt. 2, 1, January 1926, pp. 126-28.
[50] Mahādevī Varmā, 'Kis aur?', editorial in *Cāṁd*, XIV, pt. 2, 2, June 1936, pp. 109-113 and pp. 175-79; cf. K. Schomer, *Mahadevi Varma*, p. 235 ff.
[51] Editorial note in *Cāṁd*, XIV, pt. 2, 2, June 1936, p. 175.
[52] Urdu mushairas are successful, an exasperated Mahādevī argued after the unhappy experience, because: (1) the subjects and metres of the poem are well-known to the public too, who can immediately enjoy it; (2) each *bhāva* is completed in a couplet, which the audience repeats; (3) the poems are checked by the poets' ustads beforehand, and no faulty, poor or obscene poem is allowed to be read; M. Varmā, 'Kis aur?', p.109. In the reminescence quoted above, Baccan recalls how the

the trend towards mass-oriented kavi-sammelans in the name of Hindi propaganda and popularity could work only with some kinds of poetry (Braj and nationalist poems), and was not free from counter-effects. Later developments show mass kavi-sammelans turning more and more into bawdy gatherings for *hāsya-rasa*. Modern, complex Khari Boli poetry, with rarefied contents, new metres or without metre at all, required a 'schooled public'.

The dilemma was partly solved by the phenomenal success of Harivaṃśray 'Baccan' (1907-), whose *Madhuśālā* (1935) bridged different *saṃskāras* by combining the Perso-Urdu tradition of wine and love with an easy diction in Khari Boli and the flowing rhythm of *rubāi* quatrains.[53]

To summarize, this section aimed at analysing the Hindi literary system as a writer in the 1920s would have experienced it. The literary sphere that was outlined here was the world he or she, coming from diverse backgrounds, would have had to enter, equipped with some or no formal education and varied literary *saṃskāras*. It was a public world, which though interacting with English and other Indian languages, was mostly sorting out its own possibilities, its public, its strengths and weaknesses. It was also a literary world in which old practices and rules were (at least partly) no more in force, where publicity and commercialisation forced writers and publicists to take up new life-styles and to wonder how to combine their new public role, their actual status, their own tastes and those of the public.

The changes in the literary sphere after 1920 thus show the discursive notion of a 'Hindi public' taking a concrete reality. Journals were, for example, not only forums for debate but also institutions which determined and fostered literary practices, the status and work of a literary person, and which influenced the output of literature and literary taste. Tensions emerged between the acknowledged social importance of literary work and the low and insecure status of the professional writer, and also between the theoretical independence of writers and their new dependence on the market and popularity, something that will be analysed in the following section in greater detail.

early Hindi kavi-sammelans tried to forge a distinctive idiom for the same ritual: they would shout *'sundar'* or *'atisundar'* instead of *'khūb'*, *'bahut khūb'* or *'vāhh! vāh!'* in appreciation, and *'punarvād'* instead of *'mukarrar irshād'*; this lent an apparent artificial tone to the proceeding; H. Baccan, 'Kavi-sammelan', pp. 447-48.

[53] A witness to the first recital in the Shivaji Hall of B.H.U. recalls how 'young and old, all started swinging (*jhūmnā*). I myself felt inebriated... to sway in the wave of the sound, to swing in the ecstasy of intoxication and at the end of every fourth line, when the word *'madhuśālā'* came up, to repeat it along with the poet, and every listener was feeling the same...' There were not that many students among the audience that day, but from the same evening lines from *Madhuśālā* started wafting in the air from every student's mouth; 'They were crazy about it'. 'Manorañjan', 'Madhuśālā kā sarvapratham sammelan: ek saṃsmaraṇ', in D. Śaraṇ, *Baccan jī kā jīvan tathā vyaktitva*, Sahitya Niketan, Kanpur 1967, pp. 57-58.

Another tension arose between the urge to 'reflect the real public' and widen the appeal of Hindi literature, and the active pursuit of a cultivated, 'useful', character-building 'high' literature. The former led journals and publishing to popularize their idiom and include more varied tastes, the latter reflected the linguistic and literary *saṃskāras* of the editors themselves, and was helped by the growth after 1920 of a schooled, cultivated public in Hindi - both male and female.

This might explain the various trends in Hindi journalism and publishing in this period, and also why miscellanies, after a rupture with *Mādhurī* and *Cāṁd*, became again increasingly sophisticated in language, taste and appeal in the 1930s. We already mentioned here briefly the shift in literary authority caused by the centrality of journals. The next section will explore another structural change in the literary system that affected literary people and literary practices, this time concerning the evaluation of literature.

2.4 Publicity and the evaluation of literature: of prizes, popularity and criticism

In the previous section we analysed some structural changes in the Hindi literary sphere. The present section takes up another aspect of the same transformation and its impact on literary people. Its scope is to show how the changes in the notion of literature, in literary education and tastes and generally in the whole Hindi literary system outlined in the previous sections affected the way works and writers were evaluated.

To study the forms and seats of evaluation is generally important because it brings to light issues of cultural values and of intellectual authority: who has the authority to exercise evaluation and on the basis of which values and norms? The question becomes particularly interesting in a period when structural revolutions like the advent of the print-market are combined with a crisis of knowledge. The previous chapter showed the change from a situation where norms about literature were established and widely accepted to one where norms had to emerge through negotiation between various points of view.

Similarly, before the advent of print-culture, the judges of a writer's merit had been his patrons, fellow poets, scholars and connoisseurs. Patronage depended on personal ties; criticism was conducted either through poetic combats or commentaries: both were internal to the system of literature. With the introduction of the notion of publicity and print-culture, the norms and authority on the basis of which literature was valued had now to emerge from the new literary sphere. All the changes examined in this section - the shift in patronage and the establishment of literary prizes; the impact of the market and the ambiguous value of popularity for the independent writer; and finally the public evaluation in journals through criticism and book reviews - are aspects of the same transformation. The process culminated, as the following section will show, in the establishment of a literary canon and a new seat of intellectual authority in literary associations and university departments.

2.4.1 Of prizes and patronage

Traditional court patronage was still extended in the nineteenth and early twentieth century to Braj poets and scholars of Sanskrit and Braj in the courts of Banaras, Orchha, Rewan, Chattarpur and a few others. A few Hindi scholars and poets were also employed in these courts as dignitaries, secretaries or officials; among the few Hindi literati

who worked in the protected but strongly hierarchical court environment were Jagannāth Dās Ratnākar in Ayodhya, Sukhdevbihārī Miśra and Gulābrāī in Chattarpur.[1]

On the other hand, the colonial government emerged as the first patron for Khari Boli prose at Fort William College (1800), where texts books in Devanagari were prepared to instruct the junior civil servants in Indian languages.[2] Later in the century, provincial governments and education departments patronized Khari Boli by heavily subscribing to journals deemed worthy, text-books and reading books on 'useful subjects', and subsidising literary activities like the search for Hindi manuscripts or public libraries.[3] Thus the colonial government emerged not only as a major supplier of jobs for the Hindi literati, especially in the education department, but also as a potential patron for Khari Boli literature through prizes and purchases.

Early Hindi literary associations, the Nāgarī Pracāriṇī Sabhā of Banaras in particular, looked up to both royal patrons *and* the colonial government for patronage, using partly different arguments.[4] With the colonial government they argued in the idiom of progress and scientific work; with royal patrons they used the traditional language of community service and meritorious acts. In his memoirs, Śyāmsundar Dās, the leading organizer of the Sabhā, recalled bitterly his strenuous pursuit of royal patronage.[5] He realized that while royal patronage was arbitrary and fickle, colonial patronage was institutional and ostensibly 'impartial', with set rules and judging committees - and a special authority derived from it. This was the kind of authority Hindi association aimed at themselves, and as they became institutions in the Hindi literary sphere, they also assumed a similar role of 'impartial' patrons. One of their main avenues of patronage became awarding literary prizes.

At first literary people themselves started endowing prizes and *padaks through* the Nāgarī Pracāriṇī Sabhā, usually in their own name in the memory of a deceased relative.[6]

[1] See biographies in the Appendix.
[2] See Bernard Cohn, 'The Command over Language and the Language of Command' in R. Guha, ed., *Subaltern Studies IV*, Oxford University Press, Delhi 1985, pp. 276-329; also C.R. King, *One Language, Two Scripts*, and R.S. McGregor, *Hindi Literature of the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries.*
[3] For the description of a prize-scheme by the government of the North-Western provinces for meritorious books in 1868, see Amrik S. Kalsi, 'Realism in the Hindi Novel in the Late Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries', unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Cambridge University, 1975, pp. 25-26. Among the first works of prose fiction in Hindi were written especially for this occasion: e.g. Gaurīdatt's *Devrānī jeṭhānī kī kahānī* (1870) and Śraddhārām Phillaurī's *Bhāgyavatī* (1877). *Ibid.*, p. 30.
[4] The Nāgarī Pracāriṇī Sabhā strove hard to acquire a number of royal *saṁrakṣaks* as well as grants from the provincial government for the search for Hindi manuscripts, for the Hindi dictionary, for its building and library; see C.S. King, 'The Nagari Pracharini Sabha of Banaras'.
[5] Ś. Dās, *Merī ātmakahānī*, pp. 123 ff.
[6] Rāmnārāyaṇ Miśra endowed a Channūlāl Puraskār of Rs. 200 for books on science in 1916; Jodhsiṃh Mehtā of Jodhpur a yearly prize of Rs. 200 for the best historical book; Jagannāth Dās Ratnākar endowed Rs. 1000, which yielded a prize of Rs. 200 every three years for the best poetry collection in Braj, and M.P. Dvivedī a Dvivedī *svarṇa padak; Nāgarī pracāriṇī sabhā kā vārṣik vivaraṇ*, Kāśī Nāgarī Pracāriṇī Sabhā, for the years 1920 and 1921.

Merchants' families with philanthropic ambitions followed suit.[7] Such prizes continued the colonial enterprise of financing books on useful subjects, and at the same time marked the independent authority of the Hindi public sphere, vested in the associations. In this way, Hindi associations claimed they knew which kind of books 'Hindi needed': only now instead of 'in absence of' a market, these prizes were now given 'in spite of' the market.

Thus, literary associations gradually became seats of recognition. The Nāgarī Pracāriṇī Sabhā also started publishing in its annual report a list of the best books of the year. When they started in the 1910s, the list included practically all good Hindi books of the year, but as numbers increased rapidly the list became more exclusive. Rather than suggesting books for good reading, the association now formally recognized the better books. And when two prizes suddenly shot the cash award to unprecedented amounts, this trend gained even greater publicity. The Maṅglāprasād Paritoṣik (1921) and the Dev Puraskār (1927), awarded by the managing committee of the Nāgarī Pracāriṇī Sabhā and carrying a more than symbolic sum of Rs. 1200 and Rs. 2000 each, along with the Sītārām Seksariya Puraskār (1930) of Rs. 500 for the best book by a woman writer, were announced with great pomp at annual meetings of the Hindī Sāhitya Sammelan and created a stir before and after the announcement.[8] They became seals of recognition in the Hindi literary community.[9]

Even official patronage for Hindi and Urdu literature came to be vested in a semi-official association, the Hindustani Academy of Allahabad (1927), run mainly by Indian members of Allahabad University. Continuing the pattern of official patronage, but this time in Indian hands, the Academy each year awarded cash prizes for the best book in Hindi and Urdu, and published quality books (mostly translations or scholarly books) with no profit.[10]

[7] R.B. Baṭukprasād Khatrī endowed a Baṭukprāsad prize of Rs. 200 in 1922 for the best Hindi drama or novel, Raja Baldev Prasād Biṛlā endowed a similar prize in 1931 for the best books on religion and ethics; *Nāgarī pracāriṇī sabhā kā vārṣik vivaraṇ*, Kāśī Nāgarī Pracāriṇī Sabhā, for the years 1921 and 1934.

[8] They were endowed by Babu Gokulcand of the family of Raja Motīcand of Benares in memory of his younger brother, and by Raja Bīrsiṃhjū Dev of Orchha, himself a Braj poet and of the family who had patronised Keśavdās.

[9] While the Maṅglāprasād prize reflected a '*bhaṇḍār* building' intention and was given mostly to serious books in history, philosophy, criticism or science, the Dev Puraskār was a purely literary prize. Among the recipients of the former were literary critics Padmasiṃh Śarmā (for the commentary on Bihārī's *Satsaī, Sañjīvan bhāṣya* in 1922), Rāmcandra Śukla (for *Cintāmaṇi*); historians like G.H. Ojhā, Satyaketu and Jaycandra Vidyālaṃkār, Hindī Sāhitya Sammelan activist Viyogī Hari, philosophers Sudhākar (for *Manovijñān*), Gaṅgāprasād Upādhyāy (for *Āstitvavād*), and also a book on anatomy and one on photography! See *Gṛhalakṣmī*, XIV, 2, April-May 1923, pp. 137-38.

[10] Among the authors awarded were Premcand (for *Raṅgbhūmi*) and Ratnākar (for *Gaṅgāvataraṇ*) in 1929, Rāmnareś Tripāṭhī and Jayśaṅkar Prasād (for *Skandagupta*) in 1930, Rāmcandra Śukla for his *Hindī sāhitya kā itihās* in 1931, Jainendra Kumār (for *Parakh*) in 1931, and Maithilīśaraṇ Gupta for *Saket* in 1933; see *The Report of the working of the Hindustani Academy, United Provinces, Allahabad (1927-1939)*, Allahabad 1939, pp. 12-14.

Thus, by the 1930s traditional patronage had partly made way for an interesting admixture of traditional and modern patronage, with aristocratic, mercantile or industrial patrons using the agency of the main Hindi associations. Instead of the traditional *vidā*, whose amount was at the whim of the patron, the poet or writer now was given a reward by the publisher and could publicly win a literary prize.[11] At the same time, Hindi intellectuals had made an indent in the new royal patronage, that of the colonial government. Prizes became a new form of recognition, especially when awarded for purely literary works.[12] As they rewarded authors, they also reinforced the authority of the awarding institution. Besides, they strengthened the self-avowed role and right of the institution and of the critic to shape the outlook of modern Hindi literature and to choose what people should read. However, this fell short of the power of choosing what people actually preferred to read, and it was this which emerged as a source of tension for the Hindi literati.

2.4.2. The market of literature

The pattern of the Hindi publishing market has been already sketched in the previous section (2.3.2). We evinced that modern Hindi literature in Khari Boli hardly had a market throughout the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth, if we discount religious books, school text-books and chapbooks of songs, popular plays, etc. Books had to be rewarded with prizes or be introduced in the syllabus at school in order to acquire a vast circulation and sale.

When there grew a class of professional Hindi literati who had to live by their pen, but who also lived by the high reformist ideals of Dvivedī, they realized that journals did accommodate serious writing, but that the market for their books was too small, in fact insignificant when compared with the market for religious or low-brow literature. A tension emerged then between the perceived ideal and status of the writer and his actual financial condition. If on the one hand writing was recognised as *sevā*, selfless service, which could not be valued in terms of money, on the other hand it was clear that the dignity and social authority of a writer could hardly be maintained if he lived like a pauper.

Attitudes to the market were ambiguous. On one side, the present predicament was explained as the corruption of the market, and was juxtaposed with a past ideal, when poets

[11] Interestingly, both were called with the same name: *puraskār*, i.e. reward.
[12] Only rarely was a prize awarded to a first work of an unknown author, or to someone outside the Hindi establishment. Perhaps the only case was that of Jainendra Kumār's *Parakh* in 1931.

were free to excel.[13] The market thus figured as a corrupting force for all: writers, publishers, critics, who lost their dignity and soul to it:

> Nowadays they [writers] do not sit down to study their own soul but to study the sales of the market. They do not gauge their own force but the capital of the publishers, and they write and contract books they think will win prizes... And if writers accept everything from [publishers], from 10 annas to 5 rupees per page, from insults to the promise of publishing their photograph, from the threat of a punch to rewards of a thousand rupees, where will they get enough courage to rebel against publishers?[14]

It was because Indian writers earned too little and were too dependent on editors and sale that they could not produce great literature, argued some; they never reached that point of financial security, self-respect and independence that would allow them not to write for the market.[15]

On the other hand, the market was seen as a purveyor of wealth and, through wealth, of status and recognition. Hence, the pitiful condition of the serious Hindi writer was even more evident once editors and journalists started comparing their financial situation with that of writers abroad.[16] Clearly, the market had two sides to it: it could and did humiliate Hindi writers as well as prize and raise to the stars their English counterparts.

[13] As Braj poet Ramāśaṅkar Miśra wrote: 'What we call by the name of literature are the mature and faultless ideas a good poet expresses clearly and well through his poetic voice or through words and places in front of the world in the form of poetry. Full of the nine *rasas*, mature with *ojas* and *mādhurya*...' To this ideal, realised in the golden past of Kālidāsa, Candabardāī, Nānak, Kabīr, Tulsī, Sūr, etc., and even the more recent past of Bhārtendu, Devīprasād 'Pūrṇa' and Śrīdhar Pāṭhak, Miśra juxaposed the literary market of the day. He compared the lofty titles of the past - *Raghuvaṃśa, Kumārasambhava, Mālatīmādhava, Kādāmbarī* - with those of today, which themselves suggested a pervasive malaise: *Apsarā, Vyabhicār, Pāp kī ḍur, Gorī, Camelī* (two are by Nirālā): 'The same country which could not restrain its pride at the literature of yesterday, has now to lower its head in shame at the attitude and ambition of modern *sāhitya-sevīs*'. The change appeared total to him: it was no more the age of the *Gītā*, but of Bengali translations, and the 'pride, heroism, generosity and self-sacrifice of earlier literary figures was ransacked by capitalists'. 'Kaviratna' Ramāśaṅkar Miśra 'Śrīpati', 'Sāhitya meṁ sannipāt', *Mādhurī*, X, pt. 1, 1, August 1931, pp. 96-98.

[14] *Ibid.* p. 97-98. Dulārelāl Bhārgava objected tongue-in cheek that many Hindi writers did not accept remuneration in the name of *sāhitya-sevā*; that *sāhitya-sevā* was both a profession and an addiction, so that poets usually did not even notice financial strains; finally, literary work, especially poetry, could not be valued for money! D. Bhārgava, 'Kavitā ke liye puraskār', *Mādhurī*, IX, pt. 2, 4, May 1931, pp. 568-71.

[15] If one were to ask this question to Premcand, to critic Avadh Upādhyāy, to Maithilīśaraṇ Gupta and even to Mahāvīr Prasād Dvivedī, they would probably choose to remain silent, the only way to maintain their dignity, concluded Ramāśaṅkar Miśra. The point here is not whether Miśra was right or whether his were unrealistic expectations, but the feeling of impotence for the predicament of Hindi writers.

[16] Figures of Rs. 8-10, even 4 and only 2 per form for Hindi translations were compared with the figures Walter Scott, Charles Dickens, Edward Gibbon, Thomas Macaulay earned in pounds for their works, and were repeated with fascination and wonder; *ibid.* Cf. Rāmkṛṣṇa Garg Śāstrī, 'Puraskār carcā', *Mādhurī*, X, pt. 1, 4, November 1931, pp. 458-462. Only Premcand, Rāmdās Gauṛ, Mahāvīr Prasād Dvivedī and a few others could dictate their price and get as much as Rs. 20 per form; see *Mādhurī*, IX, pt. 2, 4, May 1931, p. 568.

The force of the market could be summed up in one word: popularity. The market, potentially able through popularity and sales to confer wealth, status and authority on good writers, did not fulfil the role of a 'good' evaluator and prized instead 'cheap' books.

Traditional poets like 'Śrīpati' were inclined to consider popularity as a loss of integrity and quoted contemporary 'social novels' as examples. More dispassionate critics recognised it as a value, since popular writers could claim a keen understanding of the needs of the public and a real inner strength.[17]

Popularity and the market were not so problematic for some writers: those who continued to ignore them, like Prasād; those who could take advantage of them, like Rāmcandra Varmā and Rūpnārāyaṇ Pāṇḍey, and raised translation to a profitable and respectable career; those who managed to strike a balance between good and popular writing, like Premcand, Bhagavatīcaraṇ Varmā, etc.; and finally those who chose to be popular writers, such as Becan Pāṇḍey Śarmā 'Ugra', G.P. Śrīvāstava, Dhanīrām Prem, Catursen Śastrī, etc.

As such, the debate over popularity in Hindi is closely connected with the boom of 'social novels' in the 1920s and 1930s, and of novels tout court (cf. 4.3). The controversy around Pāṇḍey Becan Śarmā Ugra's *Chocolate* (1927) may illustrate the tension popularity and success in the market aroused for the reformist agenda of the Hindi intelligentsia.

Low-brow 'social novels' combined the avowed 'serious' aim of the indictment of contemporary social evils with melodramatic plots and morbid romances. 'Ugra' specialised in this kind of sensational fiction, in which social critique became a pretext to explore the most morbid aspects and taboos of Hindu society such as homosexuality, the abduction of girls into prostitution, Hindu-Muslim love, etc.[18] The advertisement for *Cākleṭ* (*Chocolate*), exposing the social evils connected with male homosexuality, expresses clearly the ambiguity of the genre, while proudly announcing its success:

[17] In his obituary of Marie Corelli, widely translated and very popular in India, too, Rāmcandra Ṭaṇḍon, himself a prolific critic and translator of contemporary European literature, tempered criticism with admiration. He recalled the adverse (and just) criticism she had faced, the many editions her novels underwent and her strengths. She had understood that 'in modern times, most readers read novels to placate their curiosity, not for character-studies or particular subtletly' (p. 35), and had exploited that curiosity with exotic settings, powerful descriptions and melodrama. He also recalled her many distinguished admirers (among whom Queen Victoria) and her inner, spiritual strength: *Mādhurī*, III, pt. 1, 1, August 1924, pp. 31-37. Translations of her novels were published by either the Hindi Pustak Agency in Calcutta or the Hindi Pustak Bhandar in Laheriyasarai (Darbhanga); among them, *Śaitān kī śaitān* (*Sorrows of Satan*, 1926), *Pratiśodh* (*Vendetta*, 1927), *Prem-parīkṣā* (*The Treasure of Heaven*, 1929), *Premikā* (*Thelma*, 1936); Gopāl Rāy, *Hindī upanyās koś*, vol. 1, Grantha Niketan, Patna 1968, pp. 183 ff.

[18] see *Cand hasīnoṁ ke khutūt* (*Letters of beautiful ladies*,1927), *Cakleṭ* (*Chocolate*, i.e. homosexual, 1927), *Dillī kā dalāl* (*The tout of Delhi*, 1927), *Budhuā kī beṭī* (*Budhuā's daughter*, 1928), *Śarābī* (*Drunkards*, 1930), etc. He published in the Calcutta journal *Matvālā*, edited by Mahāvīr Prasād Seṭh, and for the Seṭh's own publishing house, Bisvin Sadi Pustakalay, Mirzapur. For a vivid account of the 'Matvālā maṇḍal' see Rāmvilās Śarmā, *Nirālā kī sāhitya sādhnā*, vol. 1, pp. 76 ff.

It contains stories of Ugrajī which will make you hold your breath. In this book, an extensive and penetrating guide into the frightening effects of growing homosexuality in our society, you will find such a vivid depiction of the atrocities committed by respectable and well-to-do scoundrels, so that after reading it even the most innocent boys will recognise those fiendish beings as soon as they see them and will be able not only to escape their enticements, but also to save the country, which is dangerously moving towards self-destruction because of the addictions of such sinners. The best proof of the utility and need for such a book is that its first edition sold out in only two months. Printed on good antique paper, the price of this 216-page-book has been kept to only Rs. 1 in view of its propaganda value.[19]

Ugra's books were extremely popular even among contemporary writers, not least for his unique frankness and vigourous language full of humour, but their popularity enthused the guardians of morality in Hindi literature. Banārsīdās Caturvedī (1892-1981), the editor of *Viśāl Bhārat*, launched in 1928 a sustained campaign against '*ghāsleṭī sāhitya*' (obscene literature) aimed expressly at *Chocolate*. Caturvedī was an expert campaigner and sent his indictment along with the book to Gandhi himself for a '*sammati*', knowing that it would lend immense weight and authority to his view.[20] The controversy around *Chocolate* shows militant criticism deployed aggressively to uphold one's values and to 'protect' the public from 'unhealthy' influences. What was implied in this was a paternalist and moralist stance, which was backed by the new Hindi loci of authority: University departments, literary associations and important journals.

The consequence of this conflict, which pitted critics against popular novels and, by extension, against entertaining fiction tout court, was a long-lasting rift between the literature that was enshrined in the canon and subsidized through it, and that which survived thanks to its popularity. Although Ugra, G.P. Śrīvāstava and other popular novelists remained, along with Premcand and Devkīnandan Khatrī, the most widely-read writers of their day, reading their books was considered a crime for students, and critics made sure they were never included in the syllabus, indeed in the history of Hindi literature. As such, their books were forgotten and not even available in print.

Such controversies also show how the evaluation of a literary work or a writer was only ostensibly conducted along universally acknowledged values. What actually the market and popularity, along with new notions of literature, had produced was the end of

[19] From the advertisment printed on the first edition of *Dillī kā dalāl*, Bisvi Sadi Pustakalay, Mirzapur 1927, p. 3.

[20] At first, Gandhi added a short note supporting Caturvedī's statement, without reading the book. As Caturvedī revealed many years later, however, after reading the book Gandhi was taken in by the ostensible reformist aim and sent a disclaimer to Caturvedī. Caturvedī, however, did not disclose the letter in order not to spoil his campaign, which raged for several years; he would confess his deception only in 1950; see the preface to the new edition of *Cākleṭ*, Tandon Bros.,Calcutta 1953.

universally accepted values and standards, which now had to be re-negotiated through criticism.

2.4.3 Reviews and criticism

As mentioned in the previous section, journals in this period accommodated not only theoretical debates on the nature and function of literature, but also reviews and articles of practical criticism. Because it was conducted in columns and reviews in periodicals, and it was a field both new and 'public', virtually everyone could be a critic. This itself appeared, as we have seen (2.2), as a major danger to much of the literary intelligentsia.

What we also see at work then is a process by which the 'natural' tendency to publicize and encourage the production and reading of Hindi literature was regularly undercut by exclusions and prohibitions and warnings about what not to read, and the authority and freedom of writers to explain the world in their own way was constantly undermined. Literary criticism in Hindi seems to have developed under several compulsions: (a) the literary *saṃskāras* of critics, both in terms of notion of literature and of critical practice (*rasa* and *alaṃkār*, taxonomy, etc.); (b) their cultural *saṃskāras*, and ideas about 'Indian/Hindu culture' and anxiety about corrupting 'foreign' values; (c) the overall orientation of literary authorities towards *lokhit* and nation-building, which implied a protective attitude towards the public and a normative one towards writers; (d) linked to that, a suspicion about the market and popularity, particularly about 'light' genres such as the novel. This may explain why Hindi literary criticism of this period seems so little concerned with literariness and interpretation - so little prone to accept and evaluate literary works and figures on their own terms - and at same time so ruthless in making or breaking their reputation, whether they corresponded to the concerned critic's standards or not.

Under such circumstances, it is not hard to understand why a new kind of practical criticism (*samālocnā*) was hard to develop. In reviews of poetry, which was clearly divided into 'camps', the play was somewhat evident.[21] To develop general rules of interpretation was difficult because tastes were so diverse: Khari Boli poetry of the Dvivedī school for

[21] So much so that Sukhdevbihārī Miśra, one of the Miśra-bandhu and at the time editor of *Mādhurī*, had to publicly justify his positive and sympathetic (*sahṛday*) criticism of Chāyāvād, while all other 'old' literati like him were against it; he also had to specify that this was his personal opinion and not that of the Miśra brothers. Such a sympathetic position, which tried first to understand the nature and intentions of the author, and which could admired different trends at the same time, had to be defended! See 'Rāybahādur paṇḍit sukhdevbihārī miśra aur paṇḍit sumitrānandan pant', editorial note in *Mādhurī*, VII, pt. 2, 5, May-June 1929, pp. 716-17.

example could not be evaluated in terms of figures of speech - since it valued plain diction - and the *rasa-bhāva* theory could work only up to a certain point with elusive Chāyāvād poetry.[22]

Criticism of novels, a comparatively 'new' genre with clear 'foreign' origin, raised other important problems. One of them concerned categorization and its criteria; another, the nature and aim of the genre. But first of all, respectable credentials had to be established: both the fact that novels were clearly about entertaining the reader, and that they often concealed an aim made them automatically suspect.[23]

The taxonomic urge to classify and define the rules of a genre was a typical feature of Indian poetics. Thus well-defined categories had to be found even for modern novels, a genre without direct Indian antecedents. Since the genre came from western literature, its categories were used, and it became a habit to find European 'models' for each Indian novelist. The problem arose when, as was the case with Premcand's *Premāśram* (1921), no model could be found. As one reviewer put it, this made evaluation difficult:

> When reading the novels of Bankimchandra, the critic acquainted with English literature can say at once that they are historical novels in Scott's fashion. One may call the novels of Rabindranath "social novels" and find English equivalents for them: George Eliot, Thackeray, Dickens. Premcand's novels, instead, do not fit in any of these categories.[24]

In the case of Hemcandra Jośī, then a young and sophisticated graduate in Berlin, the weight of his Bengali and foreign *saṃskāras* is apparent in his strong denigration of the novel. To critics who had 'dragged in' great names from other literatures in comparison with *Premāśram* - Sharatchandra was said to have even mentioned Rabindranath, Josī replied:

[22] The same held true while approaching foreign poetry, where images, symbols and values were bound to be different; for early acknowledgements of this fact, see 'Kāvya meṁ sadācār aur bhāvnā', *Mādhurī*, VII, pt. 1, 5, Jan. 1929, pp. 956-957; Paraśurām Caturvedī, 'Kavitā par paristhiti kā prabhāv', *Mādhurī*, II, pt. 1, 1-3, Sept.-Oct. 1923, pp. 191-195 and 329-334.

[23] Both novelists Premcand and P.N. Śrīvāstava upheld the right, in fact the duty to entertain; secondly, 'novel-writing is considered 'light literature' because it entertains the reader. But it takes as much mental toil for a novelist to write a novel as for a philosopher to write a book on philosophy' wrote Premcand; see 'Upanyās racnā', *Mādhurī*, pt. 1, 4, October 1922, p. 354; see also Pratāpnārāyaṇ Śrīvāstava, 'Upanayās aur hindī ke vartmān upanyās-lekhak', *Mādhurī*, VIII, pt. 2, 1, Feb. 1930, pp. 20-27. As for the aim, Premcand was all for combining entertainment with a message; most social reforms in modern Europe had been induced by novels, he wrote (p. 358). In fact, engagement was for Premcand coterminous with literature: 'Writers are usually the creators of their age. They have this strong aspiration to free their country and their society from suffering, injustice and lies (*mithyāvād*)', and their only way to bring society on the desired path is to 'run their pens' (*kalam calānā*). Also, whereas earlier literature was meant to entertain and serve the rich and powerful, this particular age was one of 'struggle for life' (*jīvan-saṅgrām*). 'Today we, the so-called educated people, cannot look indifferently at injustice'; Premcand, 'Upanyās racnā', p. 355.

[24] Kālidās Kapūr, 'Premāśram', review in *Mādhurī*, I, 4, October 1922, p. 365. The same happened with the great Bengali novelists, who were constantly used as reference points in evaluating Hindi ones. Thus, for example, Jainendra Kumār was called Hindi's Sharatchandra.

> Impossible! What is there in *Premāśram*? There is not one character which can do honour to literature. Not one sentence which will leave a mark on your heart. Not one chapter without gross mistakes. I could not even figure out to what category of novels it belongs. Is it naturalistic? Emotional? Philosophical, or a mixture of all of them?[25]

References to models from other literatures could thus be used both to praise or denigrate a Hindi writer; in both cases, they show a reluctance or incapacity on the part of Hindi critics to analyze and assess a Hindi novel on its own strength. A spin-off from this attitude was that one of the aims of the Hindi critic became to 'expose' apparent plagiarizations of foreign novels. So much so that these unsavoury controversies came to dominate criticism about novels; they certainly increased the sales of journals and the fame of critics, but did little to help a balanced *samālocnā*.[26]

Directly connected to the problem of categorization was that of the nature of the genre: what constituted a novel, and what distinguished a good one from a bad one? Was contemporaneity a quality or a limit? How should characters be? Again, reviews of

In fact, one feature of the novel critics marvelled at was its apparent lack of all the qualities that would make a novel interesting: its characters were ordinary people, and the plot centred on problems related to the land and the zamindari system. 'Who cares about Sukkhū Caudhrī, Balrāj, the winter crop, jobs and socialism... What is there in *Premāśram?* How can Dukhran Bhagat, Manohar, free labour (*begār*) and rural conflicts between Ghaus Khan and Qadir Mian entertain?'[28] Moreover, in *Premāsram* contemporaneity seemed an asset: though never mentioned directly, nationalism and the peasants' campaign of 1920 was implied in the political awakening of the villagers and in the personality of the 'good

[25] Quoted in the reply by Janārdan Jhā, 'Sāhitya-kalā aur premāśram', *Mādhurī*, I, pt. 2, 5, May 1923, p. 500. See also H. Jośī, 'Premāśram aur sāhitya-kalā': the comparison with 'Ravi babu' was called a 'sacrilege'. Whereas *Premāśram* was condemned to a flimsy success - Jośī predicted - '*Gorā* gives us as much pleasure today, Shakespeare's *Hamlet* is still as new...'; H. Jośī, 'Premāśram aur sāhitya-kalā', *Mādhurī*, II, pt. 1, 3, December 1923, p. 341.

[26] Such is the case, for example, of Avadh Upādhyāy, a mathematician with literary ambitions linked with the Hindī Sāhitya Sammelan, who made it his goal to 'expose' Premcand. In 1926 he convinced Devīdatt Śukla to publish in the otherwise impeccable *Sarasvatī* a series of slanderous articles on Premcand - then at the peak of his fame. Upādhyāy "demonstrated" that in *Raṅgbhūmi* (1925) Premcand had plagiarised *Vanity Fair* and in *Premāśram* Tolstoy's *Resurrection*. The articles, 'which all read with great gusto' were discontinued only at Premcand's personal request, but soon afterwards Upādhyāy started reviewing Premcand's *Kāyākalp* (1926), again claiming that it plagiarised *The Eternal City*. Through an almost obscure reviewer, the editor had not only increased the journal's popularity but had also been able to air his own personal dislike for Premcand as a novelist; see Devīdatt Śukla, *Sampādak ke paccīs varṣ*, p. 33.

[27] Awarded the Maṅglāprasād prize, the novel attracted many reviews because of its originality and success; for a complete analysis of these reviews, see Vīr Bhārat Talvār *Kisān, rāṣṭrīy āndolan aur Premcand, Premāśram aur avadh ke kisān āndolan kā viśeṣ adhyayan*, Northern Book Centre, New Delhi 1990, pp. 225-237.

[28] Janārdan Jhā, 'Sāhitya kalā aur premāśram', p. 504.

zamindar', Premśaṅkar.[29] Finally, reviewers observed, *Premāśram* had no hero or heroine: the ideal couple of the novel, Premśaṅkar and his wife Vidyā, were not the real protagonists, who were instead Gyānśaṅkar and his sister-in-law Gāyatrī, far less ideal characters.[30]

Thus, criticism of novels revealed an uneasiness about defining the status and function of the genre, and an attempt to distinguish serious novel-writing from the low-brow market.[31] One crucial way that was suggested was to 'keep to Indian ideals' and to *maryādā.*[32] This would avoid the danger of western influence and provide emotionally inspiring and faultless models of 'Indian culture'.[33] Thus, rather than idealism or realism, what seems crucial here is once again moral self-representation, a preoccupation with 'nation-building' even when social reform or political awakening are at stake - all the more important in a genre that could dangerously veer toward its opposite, even in the name of realism or of social reform (cf. 4.3). Here, again, the critic was to lead and discipline the novelist, and to warn, or preach to, the reader - thus treading more on a moral terrain than a literary one.

To summarize, we discussed in this section the changes in the evaluation of literature following new notions and standards, the growth of a market for Hindi books and also the growth of public media like the press. Publicity was a double-edged sword: on the one hand public exposure increased the sense of self-importance of Hindi writers and put them face to face with the public, so much so that many could reject the traditional system

[29] It was an issue-based novel, with credible characters, and had a message to give, wrote Janārdan Jhā in his balanced review: 'When literature's aim is to preach *lok-hit* (the good of the people), there is nothing wrong if it contains elements of porpaganda. In fact, its *maryādā* increases instead of diminishing; J. Jhā, 'Sāhitya-kalā aur premāśram', *ibid.* Śrīdhar Pāṭhak instead (orally) criticised the book for the same reason: since it dealt with contemporary problems, the novel would be of no importance fifty years later - hence no great art; quoted by Hemcandra Jośī in 'Premāśram aur sāhitya-kalā', p. 341.

[30] Kālidās Kapūr, 'Premāśram', p. 366.

[31] Novelists themselves tried to offer their own categories for analysing a novel; Premcand mentioned subject, plot and *masālā*; the marks of a good plot were simplicity, originality and interest; *masālā* included experience, self-study, insight, curisity, observation and imagination; Premcand, 'Upanyās racnā', pp. 355-57. P.N. Śrīvāstava regarded realistic novels as the highest product of an historical progression in the genre, i.e. after romances and idealistic novels; the qualities novels should have were: characterization, compact language (*bhāṣā-sauṣṭhava*), style, psychology, interesting events; G.P. Śrīvāstava, 'Upanyās', pp. 20-24.

[32] See also Kālidās Kapūr, 'Upanyās-sāhitya', an early article lamenting the absence of such novels in Hindi, in *Maryādā*, Pt. 22, 6, March-April 1921, pp. 327-28.

[33] See Avadh Upādhyāy's enthusiastic review of Jainendra Kumār's first novel, *Parakh*, which 'maintained Indian ideals to quite a good extent'. To do so was particularly important when writing about love and marriage, because Indian and the West have different ideals - in fact, the West is still seeking one. Girls in the West are always ready to 'sacrifice' themselves on the altar of love (i.e. they loose their virginity), and thereafter commit suicide: if in literature there are so many examples of lovers taking their lives, there must be some truth in it, he argued. If Indian writers copy these plots it is unexcusable, because love does not have the same place in 'Hindu life' as it has in 'Western society' In India marriage is a religious (*dhārmik*) act and a moral necessity, in order to fulfill one's duty in life'; A. Upadhyāy, 'Parakh', *Sudhā*, IV, pt. 2, 4, May 1931, pp. 471-77.

of patronage. On the other, writers and intellectuals faced unprecedented challenges to their ideals and their very sense of self-importance as new forms of evaluation became dominant. The main challenge was that of the market, i.e. of popular taste, which valued entertainment above everything else. The second challenge was that of criticism in print, which often tried to impose rigid demands and took the form of strong personal attacks by unsympathetic critics.

The other form of evaluation that emerged was that of literary prizes, administered by the two main Hindi literary associations. The prize committees usually comprised the major activists, university lecturers and established literary figures. Thus, independent writers could find themselves in a peculiar situation, pressed between an unresponsive market and the demands of a literary establishment that did not look too favourably upon literary experimentation. Thanks to wider publicity and greater mobility, independent writers could count on mutual support and appreciation, and they did enjoy some popularity and status. The developments analyzed in the next section point at how they remained largely excluded from the process of building and transmitting a literary tradition in Hindi. It was once again the scholars in literary associations who, thanks to their strategic position as Hindi experts, could pursue their cultural agenda through the Hindi curriculum.

2.5 Hindi literature and education

Education was considered a vital terrain by most Indian colonial intellectuals, sensitive both to the dangers of cultural colonisation and to the opportunity modern, centralised education offered for nation-building. Hence, on a discursive level they were quick to recognise the importance of modern education as 'national education' - a crucial agency to transmit the knowledge and values of one's own civilisation. From contemporary debates on 'national education' it transpires how education - like literature, one, standard, for all - was invested with a grand cultural agenda. Hindi intellectuals perceived themselves to be peculiarly and ideally placed to be the custodians and transmitters of cultural identity, for, unlike their English-speaking counterparts, they had profited from modern ideas without being 'corrupted' by English or western ways.

The grand agenda of education was put forward first on the discursive level - in face of the various earlier traditions of education (now in decline) and of huge practical hurdles, such as widespread illiteracy and the lack of funds and infrastructures to establish education on a mass scale.

The 1920s, however, marked a period of great expansion, activity and change in the field of Hindi education - parallel to a similar process in literature, as the previous sections have shown. This was the time when Hindi became an established language in schools; it became the medium of instruction for most subjects in the lower forms, and a subject taught in high schools, colleges and universities.[1] This change, the result of three decades of constant pressures from Hindi literary associations and the Hindi intelligentsia, was to have enormous consequences for the development of the Hindi literary sphere. As Krishna Kumar observes:

> The teaching of Hindi at college level, and the subsequent starting of Hindi departments in universities in the first quarter of this century made a major contribution towards the success of the Hindi literati's cultural agenda. Syllabi and anthologies were required to teach Hindi in colleges. Preparation of a syllabus

[1] It was not a plain victory, though: it was in fact one thing for Hindi to find a place in the curriculum, it was quite another for it to become the teaching medium for all subjects. The fact that Hindi was used as a teaching medium for all subjects only in lower classes, and that it became problematic to teach non-literary subjects at the higher levels is symptomatic of the orientation of Hindi efforts, and of the difficulty of making Hindi a complete medium of instruction. The issue was much debated, but with little consequence; was it because, as was generally argued, proper scientific text-books, books and good translation in Hindi were in short supply? Or was it due to a minor interest and familiarity of the Hindi pandits with such subjects? The only exception was Rāmdās Gauṛ. The matter deserves separate study.

meant the systematization of available knowledge, its codification in a formal way. Once codified as syllabus, the knowledge would gain legitimacy from the university's name and from the rigour and reputation of its examination.[2]

Hindi as a subject largely involved teaching Hindi literature. This meant formalising a Hindi literary canon - something an association like the Nāgarī Pracāriṇī Sabhā had been working on for decades - and involved the growth of a separate branch of literary publications for the students' market. It also meant that for an increasing number of students - now the main purchasers of literary books - the final linguistic and literary *saṃskāra* became more and more what was acquired and transmitted at school through text-books. Finally, thanks to the central role education acquired in the Hindi literary sphere, university departments - closely linked with literary associations and publishers - became crucial seats of intellectual authority. This because, despite the overarching presence of the colonial education department, the teaching of Hindi and of Hindi literature was left almost completely in the hands of the Hindi literati, both within and outside the department: they could choose the cultural and symbolic contents of the syllabus, while the Education Department and its Textbook Committee played only the role of selector and controller.

This section analyses firstly the ways in which Hindi intellectuals put together a cultural agenda for education, particularly through text-books. Secondly, it examines how their attempts to establish this agenda consisted of putting pressure both on the education system of the colonial state and independent enterprise. Finally, it tries to assess the making of the Hindi linguistic and literary *saṃskāras* through education, and the cultural values the curriculum transmitted.[3]

Let us start then from the bottom level of the education system, which is also the beginning of the story.

[2] K. Kumar, *The Political Agenda of Education*, pp. 129-130. This section owes much to his chapter on Hindi school literature, 'Quest for Self-Identity'.
[3] The role of the curriculum in shaping children's notion of knowledge and cultural identity cannot be underestimated. 'What is considered worth teaching to the young is selected out of the available body of knowledge and then represented in teaching materials, such as textbooks. In the Indian context, textbooks are not just one of the materials used for teaching; most of the time, they have been the only material that the teacher could use. Hence the importance of how knowledge is represented in text-books. In the context of language teaching, the text-book is all that the children are expected to be able to read.' *Ibid.*, p. 131. The situation was not much different for teachers, especially in rural areas. According to a survey of Etawa district in 1929, of 702 teachers who answered the questionnaire, 306 read no newspapers and 40 no books, while religious books were the first choice for private study (252). 'It is evident from the above that most of the teachers are suffering from intellectual starvation' concluded the author. Ś.N.Chaturvedi, *An Educational Survey of a District*, Indian Press, Allahabad 1935, pp. 232 ff.

2.5.1 Hindi text-books for primary schools

This is not the place to give a history of text-book writing in Hindi.[4] Suffice to note that whereas the presence of English at the higher levels of the educational ladder was not even questioned until the 1920s, from the nineteenth century onwards vernaculars were targeted as the medium of primary instruction. Actual efforts however remained very limited for lack of funds.[5] In fact, one of the cornerstones of the Indian critique of English education was that English was too expensive and could never be the medium of mass primary education - indeed of education tout court.

English education was also criticised on moral grounds, either because it lacked religious instruction or because it upheld Christianity. These criticisms were reworked in countless articles, stories and pamphlets on the evil effects of Western education. Rather, with its emphasis on rationality, western education induced students in questioning their own religious customs, beliefs and norms.However, it has been pointed out how the attitude towards English education in Indian social leaders was at best ambivalent. As Tagore put it: 'We say that the only thing wrong in our education is that it is not in our absolute control; that the boat is sea-worthy, only the helm has to be in our own hands to save it from wreckage'.[6]

For one thing, then, the 'administrative control of institutions was perceived by Indian social leaders as a tangible expression of the colonizers' grip on the indigenous culture'.[7] The efforts of colonial intellectuals to counteract it took two forms: they either sought to 'Indianise' education by preparing text-books with a different cultural content and by pressing for the use of the vernacular, or they founded independent educational institutions. Noteworthy in this respect in North India were the schools founded by the Ārya Samāj and those established during the nationalist movement,the so-called "national" schools.

Such independent schools often differed little from government schools, apart from being in Indian hands, giving some form of religious instruction and - in the case of "national schools" - in the use of spinning or constructive work side by side with the normal

[4] See 'Bāl-sāhitya kā nirmāṇ aur uskā vikās' by Jagannāthprasād Singh, *Mādhurī*, XI, pt. 1, 3, October 1931, pp. 367-371, for contributions of the Agra School Book Society (1833), Calcutta School Book Society, Allahabad Mission Press, Orphan Press Mirzapur, etc. Also his 'Prārambhik śikṣā kī hindī pustakeṁ', *Sarasvatī*, Nov. 1911.

[5] See M.L. Bhargava, *History of Secondary Education in UP*, Superintendent Printing and Stationery, Lucknow 1958.

[6] Rabindranath Tagore, 'The Centre of Indian Culture', 1919, in *Towards Universal Man* (Bombay: Asia, 1961, p. 204), quoted in K. Kumar, *The Political Agenda of Education*, p. 117.

[7] *Ibid.*, p. 116. Control was crucial if education was to fulfill its nation-building role. 'All progressive (*unnatiśīl*) nations build their own civilisation and its several constituents according to their own ideals'; 'Rāṣṭrīy śikṣā', editorial in *Cāṁd*, VII, pt. 2, 6, October 1929, p. 630.

curriculum. A few of them, however, produced interesting experiments, in that they set their own curriculum, wrote and published alternative text-books and provided symbolic "Indian" alternatives in education. They will be examined later in this section (2.5.3).

All in all, the first avenue, that of influencing the school curriculum and the education department 'from within', proved to be the more feasible and safe one, especially as the scope of Hindi education within the public system increased. For example, after the U.P. Text-Book Committee[8] transferred to private publishers and authors the task of preparing text-books for the regular curriculum, private publishers - and their writers - acquired scope for preparing text-books according to their own linguistic and cultural tastes. Besides, the Committee became the official object of unofficial pressure from publishers, literary associations and their members in the education department.[9] This resulted overall in a greater involvement and sensitivisation of Hindi intellectuals toward education, and indicates how Hindi intellectuals realized that the 'right' ideas could be instilled by circulating them in the public sphere.

It has already been mentioned that the first generations of Hindi literati mostly found employment in the education department or in areas connected with it. Thus they owed a double loyalty to the department and its policy as well as to their own cultural agenda of Hindi propaganda. To gain control over Hindi textbook production was a 'soft' way to pursue the latter without endangering the former - at least until the whole climate changed after 1920. Not only were schools a low-status institution in the colonial administration, and vernacular schools in particular. 'The role of language teaching as a means of spreading religio-cultural consciousness was far too subtle to be acknowledged by the bureaucracy of the education department as a contradiction in its 'secular' policy.'[10]

In the 1920s the situation partially changed when the U.P. Municipalities Act (1916) and U.P. District Boards Act (1922) gave the boards, responsible for the

[8] Formed in 1894, it superseded previous similar committees for each educational division of the province. Its duties were to select textbook for government schools; to recommend changes in prescribed textbooks; to make suggestions for the creation of new books; to make lists of books for school prizes and for school libraries. The work was mainly done by sub-committees: the Hindi Sub-Committee was one of them, and initially did not include any Hindi native speaker! Still, a few Hindi supporters worked in other branches of the Department, bridging the gaps between the policy of the Committee and the wishes of Hindi associations. C. King, 'The Nagari Pracharini Sabha', pp. 297 ff.

[9] Among the first publishers to jump at the offer were the Indian Press of Allahabad, which gained almost complete monopoly in the province, Macmillan Co. of Calcutta, and Khadgvilas Press of Bankipur. They often employed their writers among teachers or officials of the education department itself: they would naturally find it easier to have their books prescribed by the Text-book Committee. Thus, among the first writers of text-books we find Lala Sītārām, Deputy Collector, and Mr. Mackenzie of the Indian Education Service, who later became Director of Public Instruction in U.P. The other main writers were: Rāmjīlāl Śarmā, who initially worked for the Indian Press and later started his own press and two children's journals, *Vidyārthī* (1913) and *Khilaunā* (1924); Pt. Rāmdīn Miśra, Lala Bhagvān Dīn, Babu Rāmlocanśaran 'Bihārī', Pt. Rāmlocan Śarmā 'Kanṭak', Śyāmsundar Dās and Mahāvīr Prasād Dvivedī.

[10] K. Kumar, *The Political Agenda of Education*, p. 135.

administration of most vernacular schools, elective chairmen, who were the chief executives in control of local vernacular education. Although the education department remained in control of the curriculum, examinations, the recognition and inspection of schools and grants-in-aid, municipal elections in 1922-23 brought Congressmen in control of municipal boards in Lucknow, Allahabad, Kanpur and Banaras. Hence, former non-cooperators could now exercise some power and undertake some initiative within the official network of education.[11]

Although the extent and nature of their initiatives requires further study, they seem indeed to have taken some steps.[12] In Allahabad, the second municipal election in 1921 brought Puruṣottam Dās Ṭaṇḍon (1882-1962) as chairman of the board and Saṅgamlāl Agravāl as chairman of the education committee: together they implemented the scheme for a national college for women, the Prayāg Mahilā Vidyāpīṭh (see 4.1). Similarly, in the 1923 election in Banaras Dr. Bhagvān Dās was elected chairman of the board, while Sampūrṇānand became the dynamic chairman of the education committee. In that capacity, he acted on a previous decision taken by the department of education banning some textbooks Rāmdās Gauṛ had written for national schools. Although he was not empowered to lift the ban, he could commission new ones.[13] Mukundīlāl Śrīvāstava (B.A. and Hindī Sāhitya Sammelan graduate), the editorial director of the nationalist publisher Jnanmandal, was appointed to compile them. Predictably, the new readers contained much nationalist literature, with passages by Gandhi, poems by nationalist poets like 'Triśūl' and M.Ś. Gupta, biographies of Tilak and C.R. Das, etc.[14] In this way a partly nationalist syllabus came to be

[11] The chairman of the district board controlled, among others, the appointment, leave, punishment, dismissal, transfer and control of teachers; the arrangements for opening new schools and the supply of furniture to the schools; however, limited financial means usually curbed radical initiatives. As a result of the Montagu-Chelmsford reforms of 1919, two Indians became in 1922 ministers in the new elected U.P. cabinet (C.Y. Chintamani and Jat Narain, and after they both resigned, Rai Rajeshwar Bali and Jwala Prasad Shrivastava). None of them was from a Hindi background, and all in all they showed limited interest in education. K.P. Kichlu was chief inspector of vernacular education from 1920 to his retirement, and 'his office dealt directly with district boards and municipalities in matters concerning Vernacular education'; Bhargava, *A History of Secondary Education*, p. 153.

[12] When the Banaras municipal board was dismissed for mismanagement, Premcand protested that the education department of the board was probably one of the best of the province, and education was not 'as lifeless as in the schools managed by the government bureacracy (*naukarśāhī*). Moreover, no one has tried as much as the muncipality of this town to teach children, along with education, the sorrowful state of the country, its political subjection, and to make them the future reformers of the country, and their teachers true masters'. Premcand, 'Śrī rāmeśvar sahāy sinhā', *Jāgaraṇ*, 14 May 1933, quoted in *Vividh prasaṅg*, vol. 2, Hans Prakasan, Allahabad 1980, p. 528; cf. below 6.1.

[13] Because Gauṛ's 3rd and 4th reader were taught at municipal schools, Sampūrṇānand wrote, after the ban 'the need arose for books that might take their place, i.e. which would teach patriotism, love for freedom, self-reliance, self-control, self-sacrifice and other such qualities along with the other useful subjects.' This and the following information are taken from his introduction to Mukundīlāl Śrīvāstava's *Hindī kī cauthī pustak*, Jnanmandal, Banaras 1925.

[14] See *ibid.*

taught within government schools, albeit only at the primary level, and teachers were brought in direct contact with politics.

The two aspects in which Hindi literati could most make their mark in primers were the choice of language and cultural content. It is no chance that Chintamani Ghosh, the founder of the Indian Press, picked up Mahāvīr Prasād Dvivedī from his obscure job as a telegraph clerk to become the editor of the Press' Hindi journal and its foremost literary advisor because of Dvivedī's criticism (printed as a booklet in 1899) of the Indian Press' *Third Hindi Reader* (*Hindī śikṣāvalī,* 1889) by Dīndayāl Śarmā and Lala Sītārām (1858-1938).[15] In his rigorous and sarcastic analysis, Dvivedī had pointed out faults in grammar, syntax and idiom, and the improper choice of didactic and poetic passages (all in Braj), and from the *Manusmṛti*. His sure sense of language and of what he considered proper moral instruction, his appeal to reform and his blend of loyalism and patriotism must have appealed to Chintamani Ghosh, whose feelings were very much along the same lines.[16]

In the primer Dvivedī produced for the Indian Press in 1903 in '*rozmarrā kī bolī*',[17] the emphasis was all on moral instruction, with lessons on the good boy (lesson 7) and the bad boy (8), and on how children should not wear jewellery (9). All animal stories, according to the ancient Indian tradition, carried a moral teaching (the donkey as a model of hard work, the parrot of a student learning by rote, monkeys as examples of bad behaviour, etc.). Children were told to obey and love their parents, to make good use of their time and be enterprising. For example, they were told not to consider office employment as their only aim and look down on menial work:

> नौकरी करके कभी कोई अमीर नहीं हुआ। अमीर होने के लिए बैपार चाहिए... हम लोग बैपार करना नहीं जानते यह अफ़सोस की बात है... नमक मिर्च मसाला तेल तक बेचने में शरम न करना चाहिए। बैपार बनियों ही के लिए नहीं है - सभी के लिए है।

[15] Dīndayāl Śarmā was at the time Assistant Inspector of Schools in the Allahabad division, and Babu Sītārām B.A. was Deputy Collector and a veteran Hindi writer in the public service; for Sītārām's career, see biography in the Appendix.

[16] 'इस पुस्तक को हमने सद्यान्त पढ़ा परन्तु इसमें ऐसा कोई पाठ हमको न मिला जिसमें अंग्रेज़ी राज्य की प्रशंसा अथवा कथा होती। नादिरशाह का वृत्तान्त है, भारतेश्वरी विक्टोरिया का नहीं । बाबर की कथा बड़े प्रेम से वर्णन की गई है, किसी वाइसराय की नहीं। जिसके राज्य में हम लोग सुख से शयन करते हैं, जिसके राज्य में हिन्दी पाठशालाएँ नियत हुई हैं, और जिसके राज्य में आज किताबें लिखने का सौभाग्य हमको प्राप्त हुआ है, उसका अथवा उसके किसी प्रतिनिधि का परिचय लड़कों को दिलाना क्या कोई अनुचित बात थी?' [I have read this book from beginning to end and could not find any lesson which contained a praise or description of the English *rājya*. The story of Nādirśāh is there, but not that of empress Victoria. Akbar's story has been lovingly told, but nothing about a Viceroy. Wouldn't it have been appropriate to introduce pupils to the reign in which we sleep peacefully, which has established Hindi *pāṭhśālās*, and for which we have now the good fortune of writing Hindi books, [and introduce them] to any of its representative figures?] *Criticism on the Hindi Reader No III by Mahavir Prasad Dvivedi*, Jhansi, 1899, p. 33. Noteworthy here are both the loyalism, not surprising among patriots of the time, but also on the need Dvivedī felt of introducing children to the contemporary predicament.

[17] M.P. Dvivedī, *Hindī kī pahlī pustak*, Indian Press, Allahabad 1911.

> No one ever got rich by working in an office. Business makes rich... It is a pity that we do not know how to do business... There is no need to feel ashamed by selling salt, pepper, spices or even oil. Business is not only for *baniyās*, it is for all.[18]

Simple natural and physical descriptions of nature, a poem in praise of education and a final one on God, seen as a well-wishing creator without further specifications, concluded the book.

Initially, text-books for primary schools were published in both Devanagari and Perso-Arabic script, according to the policy of the education department.[19] In terms of language, Dvivedī dutifully respected the Indian Press' wish to conform to it. However, lively public debates in the province on which language should be used for primary school text-books ended with an official enquiry and a compromise solution. After the Piggott commission in 1912-13, the government ordered supplementary readers in Hindi and Urdu, which came into use in 1916. The decision amounted to an admission that its policy of a "common language" had failed, and gave a great boost to text-book production.[20] It also showed that Hindi enteprises in the public sphere, and a different political environment, compelled the government to take a more compliant stance. The way was open for the introduction of a more Sanskritized Hindi, of passages with stronger cultural content and of Hindi literature in the school curriculum.

Rāmjīlāl Śarmā's *Bālvinod* (part 5 for the 5th class), published by the Indian Press in 1910, will prove the point. If compared with Dvivedī's primer, its cultural content was much more wide-ranging: passages of moral value (on piety, diligence, thrift, hygiene) were interspersed with stories from India's glorious past (with poets such as Tulsīdās and Kālidāsa, and rulers such as Śūdraka, Yudhiṣṭhira but also Ahalyābāī),[21] and with stories from other countries of the world (Portugal, Russia, Japan, Italy).[22] Significantly, the 'prose sections' were accompanied by 'poetry sections'; these included a large selection of moral

[18] *Ibid.*, p. 21.

[19] See e.g. the letter (dated 16.5.1903) from the government of U.P. to the Director of Public Instruction, confirming a policy dating 1876: 'Several recently published school books have been expressly designed to give a practical effect to the principle that the common language of the educated classes in N.W.P. is one and the same, whether it be written in the persian or nagri letter...'; quoted in C.S. King, 'The Nagari Pracharini Sabha', p. 298.

[20] *Ibid.*, p. 472.

[21] Here the national scale is given by the geographical opening of the passage on 'The history of queen Ahalyābāī': 'Those who have travelled even once to Kāśī, Prayāg and Vṛndāvan...' must have noticed the monuments left by queen Ahalyā; R. Śarmā, *Bālvinod*, pt. 5, Indian Press, Allahabad 1910, p. 25.

[22] The second part of the prose section included a similar miscellany of Indianness, modernity, adventures from the world and moral values: old Indianness in the shape of the Nala-Dāmāyantī story and new Indianness in the shape of Vidyāsāgar's biography and Bālkṛṣṇa Bhaṭṭ's classic essay on 'conversation'; modernity in the form of passages on the art of printing; adventures in the form of Robinson Crusoe's story, and moral values with five out of the thirteen passages on physical and moral education. *Ibid.*

couplets, descriptive passages from Tulsī's *Rāmcaritmānas* and the episode of Rāma's bow, a few Braj couplets by Girdhar and Vṛnd, and a poem on *Bhāratvarṣa*. All in all, *Bālvinod* offered the child educated through the medium of Hindi the same format of an English text-book, with its Victorian engravures, its emphasis on moral instruction, and some of its 'adventurous' quality with simple stories from all over the world and a 'children's classic' like Robinson Crusoe.[23] Significantly, it ignored the British presence in India, concentrating on either India's glorious past or on Indian reformers. Finally, it introduced the child to Tulsīdās, the hero of the Hindi literary tradition, and used Hindi poetry to convey both moral instruction and a sense of community. Religion as such was not present, but subsumed in a 'secular' cultural message. Moreover, in both the text-book for boys and for girls, the language was far from the *'rozmarrā kī bolī'* of Dvivedī's book of 1903, and reflects the growing pressure of Hindi activists to give the language of Hindi textbooks a distinctive style from Urdu.

After 1916, Hindi rose slowly but steadily in the education system: it became a compulsory subject upto high school leaving examination in 1922 and an optional subject in intermediate colleges in 1927. Again, more and more literary readers, anthologies and students' editions had to be prepared, giving rise to a veritable industry. This change went hand in hand with the building of the Hindi literary canon in the first Hindi university departments (see 2.5.2). The process of setting the syllabus and choosing and preparing course-books took up the better half of the 1920s. By the 1930s the curriculum was ready, and could be reproduced, transmitted, diluted, fractioned, and slightly altered for countless readers in the higher primary and secondary grades. Compiling text-books provided a side-income for lecturers, but more importantly in this way their values, choices and opinions acquired a much wider currency, reaching a far greater number of pupils than those who would actually make it to university. This, in turn, enhanced their intellectual authority, and their status as inheritors of a Hindi intellectual tradition. It was in fact thanks to them, to Śyāmsundar Dās, Harioudh, Bhagvān Dīn, Rāmdās Gauṛ, Rāmcandra Śukla, Pītāmbardatt Baṛathvāl (902-1944), P.P. Bakhśī, Kāmtāprasād Guru etc. that the works of Hindi intellectuals since the 19th century were compacted into a common corpus of literary passages.

Whereas the anthology *Bhāṣa-sār-saṅgrah*, prepared by some Nāgarī Pracāriṇī Sabhā members for the Indian Press in 1899-1902, had been a compilation of useful

[23] If we look at Śarmā's parallel text-book for girls, *Bālābodhinī*, part 5 (Indian Press, 1912), we find a consistent simplification. No mention is made of the world outside, but only Indian stories: no Robinson Crusoe, no Portugal nor Russia. Even in common passages (on Kālidāsa, on Ahalyābāī), History is turned into stories, with no dates and no historical perspective. The book, half the size of the one for boys, contains much the same poetry and the same percentage of moral tales, though of course geared towards making good daughters, wives and mothers.

knowledge of all kinds, later readers became more literary and less dependant on translations.[24] Moreover, anthologies for high schools and intermediate colleges started to include histories of the Hindi language and literature, and arranged selections in chronological order, establishing a tradition of modern classics along with that of medieval poets. They also started spreading a notion of Hindi as a 'natural language' with a separate linguistic tradition and cultural identity. The prose section of *Hindī-bhāṣā-sār* by Lala Bhagvān Dīn and Rāmdās Gaur (1916, 4th ed. by 1927) for example traced the development of modern Hindi prose back to Munśi Sadāsukhlāl, and included Urdu writers like Nazīr Ahmad and Ratannāth Sarśār.[25] This served the authors to argue that language was not determined by the script, and Hindi had two styles, 'pure' (*śuddh*) and 'mixed' (*miśrit*), 'also called Urdu' (p. 9); in other words, that (a) Urdu had filiated from Hindi but was not actually a separate language; and that (b) Hindi prose had not started under the patronage of Fort William college (with the customary Lallūjī Lāl), but was already used independently (pp. 2-3).

Typically, prose meant almost exclusively non-fiction, with only the occasional short story, since novels were deemed too cheap and entertaining to be included. Whereas poetry selections for the lower forms included more patriotic poetry (M.Ś. Gupta, 'Triśūl', 'Ek bhārtīy ātmā' i.e. Mākhanlāl Caturvedī), anthologies for the higher classes emphasised the unbroken tradition between the medieval 'Hindi' (Avadhi, Braj) tradition and modern Braj and Khari Boli poetry - with few 'daring' incursions into Chāyāvād.[26]

Long historical introductions and biographical notes tried to change the customary method of teaching that involved telling only the meaning of words and explanation of phrases and of figures of speech by bringing in some critical analysis.[27] However, the former must indeed have been the case, judging by the profusion of 'keys' (*kuñjīs*) and question-answer books for the text-books and exams of the province, by the appendices on metre and rhetoric in the anthologies, and by the kind of questions future teachers were

[24] See. e.g. Ayodhyānāth Śarmā and Sadguru Saran (both professors at the Sanatan Dharma College in Kanpur), *Sāhitya-kusum*, in 3 parts, for classes 4 to 6 of vernacular schools, expressly produced according to the curriculum set by the education department in 1916, Gautam Press, Kanpur n.d. Since Śarmā was member of the U.P. Board of High School & Intermediate Education, his reader was sure to be adopted. See also Kālidās Kapūr (Headmaster of Kalicharan High School, Lucknow), *Hindī-sār-saṅgrah* for classes 4 and 5, Agraval Press, Allahabad 1933; Harioudh and Girijādatt Śukla 'Girīś', *Sāhitya-mālā* for classes 5 and 6 (illust.), Nandkishor and Bros., Banaras 1932.
[25] Bhagvān Dīn and R. Gaur, eds.., *Hindī bhāṣā sār*, prose section, Hindi Sahitya Sammelan, Prayag 1916, 4th edition 1927; cf. below 5.2.
[26] See e.g. Keśavprasād Miśra and Pītāmbardatt Baṛathvāl (both lecturers at B.H.U.), *Padya parijāt*, Nagari Pracharini Sabha, Banaras 1931; Kāmtāprasād Guru, *Padya samuccaya*, Indian Press, Allahabad, 3rd ed. 1934 - both for high school classes. Quite innovatively, *Padya parijāt* included poems by Prasād, Pant, Nirālā and Rāykṛṣṇadās.
[27] Śyāmsundar Dās, foreword to *Hindi Prose Selection* for classes 9 and 10 of High schools, Indian Press, Allahabad 1929, p. 1.

asked in Hindī Sāhitya Sammelan examinations. Selections became independent, self-sufficient texts which students had to memorise, to 'translate' in their own language and in the standard language used for examinations, and to interpret them in one, set way - the notorious *bhāvārth* and *vyākhyā* which are still the examinee's lot today.

To conclude this sub-section, the expansion and rise of Hindi and Hindi literature in the curriculum was successful in bringing the Hindi intelligentsia to a position of intellectual authority (as experts on Hindi) already under colonial rule. From there they managed to establish a standard literate language, the new 'pure' Hindi, as the language of education, and to codify suitable knowledge of Hindi literature.

As Krishna Kumar observes, the restrictive use of language in education, which excluded spoken varieties and labelled Urdu words as 'foreign', was not without consequences. It meant

> an exacerbation of syntactical complexity and a Sanskritization of vocabulary. These tendencies, in turn, strenghtened the reproductive role of education. Only children of upper-caste backgrounds could feel at home in a school culture where the language used was so restrictive.[28]

Once students became teachers they would, in turn, reproduce the same linguistic and literary *saṃskāra*. Literature as entertainment, as the adventurous discovery of one's environment and of other worlds, as a variety of possible experiments through language seems to have had little room in this. The choice of such an exclusive language and literature in schools had also to do with the priority status had over popularity in the agenda of the Hindi intelligentsia. This will be the object of the following section.

2.5.2 The Hindi curriculum in Universities

To establish Hindi as a university subject was one recurrent aspiration echoed in Hindi journals of the 1910s and 1920s.[29] For all the emphasis on Hindi as the only medium of mass education, clearly to establish Hindi at the top of the education system was equally, if not more, important. Not only it was seen as a way to 'indianise' universities, those 'reigns of English', but also to prove that Hindi and Hindi literature were fully developed, and to establish the authority of Hindi as much as possible on par with English.[30] The creation of Hindi departments thus involved questions of status and, as we have mentioned already, it

[28] K. Kumar, *The Political Agenda of Education*, p. 142.
[29] See e.g. 'Deś-bhāṣā meṁ śikṣā', *Sammelan patrikā*, III, 7-8, February-March 1916, p. 205.
[30] See the editorial note on the influence of Indian schools on 'modern culture', where the predominance of English in colleges was taken as a sign of systematic denationalisation; 'our nation is being formed, there is no doubt about it, but it will not be a Hindu nation, it will be an English nation like Canada and New Zealand'; in *Mādhurī*, III, pt. 2, 2, March 1925, p. 276.

involved codifying a literary canon as per institutional requirements. While the first university to hold M.A. examinations for Hindi was Calcutta, the first Hindi departments were all in the United Provinces: initially at Benares Hindi University in 1922 (a good six years after the university was founded), followed by Allahabad University in 1926, Lucknow, Agra, etc.[31]

In fact, when B.H.U. was finally inaugurated in 1916 after ten years of relentless fund-raising tours by Madan Mohan Mālavīya, Hindi intellectuals had placed high hopes on this champion of Hindi to make it the first university where Hindi would be the medium of instruction.[32] So much greater was then their disappointment and puzzlement when they discovered that English would still be the medium of instruction. Several public appeals were made, especially by the nationalist millionaire Babu Śivaprasād Gupta, who had donated generously to the University and who now decided single-handedly to found a national university where higher instruction would all be all in the "national language", Kāśī Vidyāpīṭh.[33]

[31] The fact that Calcutta was the first university to introduce Hindi as a subject was a source of no small embarassment for Hindi intellectuals of the United Provinces. Since the provision to teach Indian languages, and Bengali in particular, as main subjects was there since 1916, to introduce Hindi seems to have been mainly a question of funds and endowments. Hindi teaching started on a small scale in 1922 after a donation by Ghanshyamdas Birla, and after Lala Sītārām, the retired Hindi scholar of the U.P. education department, was approached by the Vice-Chancellor Sir Ashutosh Mukherjee and prepared 6 volumes of *Hindi Selections*, which the publisher, the Indian Press, presented to Calcutta University; quoted from *Bhāratmitra* in *Sammelan patrikā*, VI, 12, June 1920, pp. 280-283.

[32] Never had so much money been collected before for a public institution, and no other university could count as many departments. 'The BHU was a community project, not a gift of the administration as Allahabad was. It quickly became the mint where the modern cultural coinage of the north Indian plains was stamped and approved for circulation... The name of BHU was supposed to wash away the associations of Macaulay and his legacy from one's education'. K. Kumar, *The Political Agenda of Education*, p. 129.

[33] Mālavīya's arguments were threefold: firstly, B.H.U. was not a provincial university (like Allahabad) but a national one, which was to cater to students from all over India; secondly, India was not yet ready to accept Hindi as its national language in practice, though that was the common aim; thirdly, and this was half-confidential, though an independent institution, B.H.U. needed government aid, and the condition of the then Education Secretary Sir Harcourt Butler was that instruction should be in English; quoted in *Sammelan patrikā*, VIII, 10, May-June 1921, p. 235. Śivaprasād Gupta wrote several open letters to *Bhāratmitra*, presented motions at the Jhansi Provincial Hindī Sāhitya Sammelan and the Bhārtīy Sāhitya Sammelan in Jabalpur. See also Padmasiṃh Śarmā's tirade against the B.H.U. policy on Hindi in his presidential speech at the U.P. Provincial Hindī Sāhitya Sammelan in Muradabad in 1920 - with both Mālavīya and Gupta present; 'हिन्दु विश्विद्यालय जैसे सफ़ेद हाथी के पालन पोषण में गरीब पबलिक का लाखों रुपया नष्ट करने से देश और जाति को क्या लाभ पहुंचा यह जरा गर्दन झुकाकर सोचने की बात है! गरीब क़ौम को ऐसे तिलायी बस्तों की ज़रूरत नहीं है। इसके लिए देशी काठ के करघे गुरुकुल महाविद्यालय ऋषिकुल जैसी संस्थाएँ ही कहीं मुफीद हैं जे यथाशक्ति राष्ट्रभाषा का प्रचार कर रही हैं। हिन्दू विश्वविद्यालय से हिन्दी का बहिष्कार इतना न असरता यदि यह जाति की न होकर सरकारी संस्था होती' [We should bow our heads in shame and think what good has wasting lakhs of the poor public to feed a white elephant like the Hindu University brought to the country and the community (*jāti*). A poor nation has no need for such foreign machines. Institutions like the Gurukul university and the Ṛṣikul, which are trying their utmost to propagate Hindi, are much more useful. The exclusion of Hindi from the Hindu University would not feel so bad if it were an official institution instead of a community one']; quoted in *Sammelan patrikā*, VIII, 6, p. 98.

The appointment of the first two Hindi lecturers, Rāmcandra Śukla and Lala Bhagvān Dīn, at B.H.U. in 1921 marked an important step: both were well-known literary figures, though with no university qualifications themselves, and both belonged to the Nāgarī Pracāriṇī Sabhā. Thus, after thirty years of voluntary activities in the public sphere, the first association of Hindi literati had come to occupy a seat of official literary authority. The scholars and activists had become professors. With the appointment of Śyāmsundar Dās, one of the Nāgarī Pracāriṇī Sabhā founders, at the head of the Hindi department a few months later, the process of building a canon and a Hindi establishment could reach completion. In the case of the latter, however, Hindi lecturers at B.H.U. soon found out that despite being leading authorities in the Hindi literary sphere, they still suffered a discriminating treatment - perpetuating the English-Hindi hierarchy even within the 'community' institution.[34]

As far as the former was concerned, one of the main problems facing Ś. Dās in organizing the courses was the lack of course-books. Good editions of Hindi classics were by now in print, but not easily available. Nothing, moreover, existed for linguistics, literary criticism, almost nothing on the history of the Hindi language and literature, etc. On the strength of their publishing experience with the Nāgarī Pracāriṇī Sabhā, and with the zeal of pioneers, the three teachers started producing what would become standard text-books and critical editions for decades. Lala Bhagvān Dīn, an expert on *rīti* poetry apart from a valent poet himself, wrote commentaries and works of traditional poetics.[35] Śyāmsundar Dās wrote on literary criticism and on the history of the Hindi language.[36] Rāmcandra Śukla's output was impressive. After working until then on Nāgarī Pracāriṇī Sabhā projects, he now published (with Lalal Bhagvān Dīn and Brajratna Dās) the three volumes of *Tulsī granthāvalī* (1923), the complete works of Jāyasī (1924), Sūrdās's *Bhramar gīt* (1925) and

[34] Both R. Śukla and Bhagvān Dīn had been first appointed at a lower salary than any other lecturer (Rs. 60 per month); despite Ś.S. Dās's protests, he, a professor, was paid at the rank of an assistant-professor, something which made him wonder about the sincerity of Mālavīya's feelings for Hindi; see Dās, *Merī ātmakahānī*, pp. 207, 210. By comparison, salaries at Allahabad University in 1927 were Rs. 800 to 1250 pm. for professors; Rs. 450 to 850 for readers; Rs. 250 to 450 for lecturers, and Rs. 150 for junior lecturers. Salaries in aided primary schools in 1922 were Rs. 10 for untrained teachers, Rs. 14 for trained teachers and Rs. 20 for schoolmasters, *Quinquennial Report on Public Instruction in the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh*, for the years 1922-27, p. 14, and 1917-22, p. 78.

[35] Bhagvān Dīn wrote commentaries of Keśavdās (*Keśav-kaumudī*, Benares 1923-4), Bihārī (*Bihārī-bodhinī*, Benares 1925-6, and *Bihārī aur Dev*, Benares 1926), Tulsī (*Tulsī-pañcaratna*, 1928; of the *Ayodhyākāṇda* and of the *Kiṣkindhākāṇda* in 1926-7, and of *Kavitāvalī* in 1931-2 with Viśvanāth Prasād Miśra). He had written *Alaṃkār-mañjuṣā* in 1916, now he added *Vyaṅgyārtha-mañjuṣā* in 1927 and a translation of *Anyokti-kalpadruma* in 1931-32.

[36] Dās compiled a textbook on criticism while teaching (*Sāhityālocan*, 1922, see above 2.2); he then compiled a similar course-book on linguistics (*Bhāṣā-rahasya*, Indian Press 1935, augm. ed. as *Bhāṣa-vijñān* in 1938) with the help of Pt. Padmanārāyaṇ Ācārya. The section on the development of Khari Boli was published in English in the Bulletin of the Scool of Oriental and African Studies at Grierson's advice; Dās, *Merī ātmakahānī*, pp. 222 ff.

Bhārtendu's works (1928).[37] His history of Hindi literature (1923-29, rev. ed. 1940), originally a preface to the monumental dictionary of the Nāgarī Pracāriṇī Sabhā, has remained the standard text on the subject, a landmark in terms of periodisation, historical characterisation and critical treatment of single authors. Śukla's admiration for Tulsī and the 'golden age' of medieval Hindi literature and his mistrust for contemporary developments (especially Chāyāvād) set the tone of the atmosphere of B.H.U.

Let us now take a brief look at the syllabus: the syllabus for the Entrance examination paper on Hindi poetry included extracts from Candbardāī, Kabir, Sūr, Tulsī (56 out of 104 pages for him alone), Bihārī, Keśav - and only one modern work: Maithilīśaraṇ Gupta's revivalist poem *Bhārat bhārtī* (see 3.1). The emphasis thus was heavily towards medieval Hindi, and modern literature ended with the Dvivedī age; fiction, as well as contemporary poetry, had no part in the curriculum.[38] Literary criticism included some description of the historical context and a redefinition of *rasas* in psychological terms. Practically, however, it mainly consisted of an admixture of moral judgements and traditional Braj poetics. The literary past of the region was ordered in a nationalist narration which had a glorious, martial beginning with the *rāsos* in Rājasthān, came to a cultural and literary climax with Sūrdās and Tulsīdās during the Bhakti period, keeping the flame alight even in the dark age of foreign (Muslim) occupation, declined then into unhealthy and useless eroticism during the Rīti period, and started ascending again along a reformist path in the nineteenth century.[39]

By contrast, the Hindi department in Allahabad University had none of B.H.U.'s bias against contemporary literature.[40] In fact, with Pant, Rāmkumār Varmā, Mahādevī Varmā,

[37] To these should be added his important works on aesthetics; *Cintāmaṇi* (1939 and 1945) and the essays of *Ras-mīmāṃsā* (1922, but published together in 1949).
[38] This tension between the canonical and the contemporary was, of course, not only a Hindi problem. But with modern Hindi being such a 'young' tradition, it appears more odd to include works by lesser poets because of their cultural or historical interest at the expense of the excellent contemporary experiments.
[39] This was, in a nutshell, Śukla's historical account, barely questioned in Hindi scholarship since, apart from Hazārīprasād Dvivedī's rehabilitation of Kabīr, and Nāmvar Siṃh's attempt at discerning a 'progressive', popular Hindi tradition; see Nāmvar Siṃh, *Dūsrī paramparā kī khoj*, Rajkamal Prakasan, New Delhi 1982, where the critical climate at B.H.U. during H. Dvivedī's time is vividly recaptured. The subject requires a much broader discussion, which would demand a separate study.
[40] Allahabad University, the first government university of the province, had a different history altogether. Originally an examining body, it was was reorganised in 1921 as a teaching University through the Allahabad University Act. Colleges in other parts of the province and in neighbouring areas were disaffiliated and new teaching universities were formed in Lucknow (1921), Agra (1925) and Nagpur. By 1937 the University counted around a hundred professors and fifteen hundred students, out of whom a thousand were living in eight hostels. One of them, Holland Hall (est. 1900), was modelled on Oxbridge halls. Teaching was - and still is! - mostly geared towards Law and the administrative services, with due attention to the Arts (English literature, Sanskrit, Arabic, Persian, Philosophy, History, etc.) and the atmosphere was definetely genteel.

Harivaṃśrāy 'Baccan' and later Dharmvīr Bhārtī and Jagdīś Gupta, Allahabad University was definitely at the vanguard on the literary front.

Despite the efforts of Vice-Chancellor Gaṅgānāth Jhā, a Sanskrit scholar, Hindi teaching started only in 1923, with the appointment of Dhīrendra Varmā, a Sanskrit graduate from the university.[41] In the beginning Hindi was taught in English (!) like all other subjects, and Hindi journals could not help wondering how two *Hindī-premīs* and active members of the Hindī Sāhitya Sammelan like Dhīrendra Varmā and Devīprasād Śukla could abide by such rule.[42] The rule changed (though theses were written in English until 1947), and Allahabad, initially a small department with few students, became the second centre for Hindi studies. After Dhīrendra Varmā and Devīprasād Śukla, other Arts graduates from the University were appointed as lecturers: Rāmśaṅkar Śukla 'Rasāl', the first D.Lit. in Hindi from Allahabad (in 1937) and poet Rāmkumār Varmā, a student of the department.[43] This meant that Hindi students and lecturers at Allahabad would grow quite familiar with the English-speaking world, and could move freely between the English and Hindi sphere - something very few Hindi literati could yet do.

Moreover, as a product of the university system and not of associationism, the Hindi department in Allahabad had less of a Hindi tradition and identity to pursue and uphold. Rather, it was more oriented towards mapping the field of Hindi literature and of literary criticism in a modern fashion; history of the Hindi language, Hindi linguistics, comparative literary criticism, research methodology were all part of the curriculum and became the trademarks of the department.[44] Hindi lecturers in Allahabad did not share any of the alienation from Urdu of their colleagues in Banaras, either. Raghupati Sahāy 'Firāq', one of

[41] In 1916 Gaṅgānāth Jhā had proposed at a Senate meeting that instruction in *deśbhāṣa* be made compulsory for Matriculation, but his proposal had been rejected. Nonetheless, a Hindī Pariṣad was founded in 1922 by Dhīrendra Varmā on the pattern of other students' societies. Setting up debating competitions, poetry meetings and essay-writing competitions, it 'helped a lot in creating feelings of respect, sympathy and affection towards the mother-tongue Hindi in the "English" atmosphere of the University'; 'Introduction' to *Pariṣad nibandhāvalī*, pt. 1, 1929. In fact it was part of the success of the society that a full-fledged Hindi department was created. Lectures started in 1924 with five students, and in 1926 Urdu and Hindi formally became degree subjects - as French, German and Italian were already. *Sammelan patrikā*, XIII, 7-8 (1926), p. 205. As a student of Muir Central College, Dhīrendra Varmā had lived at the Hindu Boarding House, with Acharya Narendra Dev, Paraśurām Caturvedī, Sumitrānandan Pant and Bābūrām Saxenā as hostel mates. Dhīrendra Varmā and Bābūrām Saxena were both students of Gaṅgānāth Jhā; Saxena and Paraśurām Caturvedī were later to be employed in the University too. Among Varmā's students were Mātāprasād Gupta, Hardev Bāhrī, Lakṣmīsāgar Vārṣṇey, Brajeśvar Varmā, Raghuvaṃś, etc., all familiar names in Hindi literary historiography.

[42] See *Sammelan patrikā*, XIII, 9 (1926), p. 382.

[43] Interview with Rājendra Kumār Varmā, former student of Dhīrendra Varmā and Head of the Hindi Department in Allahabad. July 1993.

[44] Among the works written and used as coures-books by the members of the department are: Dhīrendra Varmā's *Hindī bhāṣa kā itihās* (Hindustani Akademi, 1933), *Hindī bhāṣa aur lipi* (introductory chapter of the former, published separately, 1935), *Brajbhāṣa vyākaraṇ* (Rāmnārāyaṇ Lāl, Al. 1937), *Aṣṭachāp* (Ramnarayan Lal, 1938); Rāmkumār Varmā's *Sāhitya-samālocnā* (1929), *Kabīr kā rahasyavād* (1930) and *Hindī-sāhitya kā ālocnātmak itihās* (1939).

the most distinguished Urdu writers of the day, was a colleague in the English department, and they readily took part in the founding and activities of the Hindustani Academy (see 2.4).

Gradually graduates from Banaras and Allahabad spread to colleges and departments all over the Hindi area, carrying with them the literary curriculum the two departments had set up for Hindi literature. Smaller universities more or less followed the curriculum set by Banaras and Allahabad and used the same course-books. By 1940 then, at the end of the period under survey, Hindi literature had established its credentials as a subject worthy of research and teaching at the highest level of education, and Hindi scholars in the universities had become central figures of authority and symbols of Hindi enterprise.[45]

They had also established a curriculum which defined what was worthwhile in Hindi literature, described an unbroken historical development since the eleventh century, linked the development of literature to that of the Indian nation (with a dark Middle Age and a modern Renaissance), and arranged the amount of literature composed in nine centuries in neat anthologies and historical outlines.

Although the centralised education system made the influence of public institutions particularly pervasive, autonomous institutions were important under other respects, as mentioned earlier. Their cultural impact was perhaps more indirect, but they were like laboratories for symbolic alternatives in education.

2.5.3 Hindi in Ārya Samāj institutions

We mentioned earlier how autonomous schools included institutions which broadly followed the government curriculum, examinations, etc. but were managed by Indian bodies and had a few Indian features, and also some which were completely independent from the government system. The schools founded by the Ārya Samāj comprised both, and were in fact the earliest and most important enterprises of the kind in North India. As such, they deserve some mention here.

The Ārya Samāj had been from the start one of the most vociferous critics of the moral dangers of English education - a vehicle of conversions to Christianity - while upholding the value of education per se. Dayānand Sarasvatī himself had been sensitive to the use and potential of Hindi - which he called *āryabhāṣā*, the language of the Aryans - as a

[45] In fact, Hindi journals commented on the issue of the appointment of Hindi lecturers and teachers, that the government was insulting the Hindī Sāhitya Sammelan by ignoring it; they should refer to and consult with the Hindī Sāhitya Sammelan (as some Princely States did) instead of selecting only University graduates; editorial notes in *Mādhurī*, IV, pt. 2, 4, May 1926, pp. 562-64.

community language.[46] 'Its Sanskritized form became part and parcel of the movement's vision of a reformed Hindu society in which Vedic ideals would be practised.'[47]

Education (=progress), Āryabhāṣa and Vedic ideals became basic tenets of Ārya Samāj propaganda, and found a receptive soil among the Hindu community in the Punjab and in Western U.P.. In fact, the first Dayanand Anglo-Vedic (D.A.V.) college that opened in Lahore in 1886 was completely independent of government aid, thanks to some brilliant experiments at fund-raising from the community.[48] In the next twenty years, a successful network of D.A.V. schools and colleges, now affiliated to the government system, covered the whole of Punjab and also several places in the United Provinces - Kanpur, Dehradun, Banaras, Lucknow, Anup Shahar, Meerut.

D.A.V. schools were the first autonomous attempts at Indian western-style education in the area: instruction was English-medium and followed broadly the government curriculum, although some of the text-books were written by Samāj members, and Vedic (= spiritual) instruction was imparted. Thus, D.A.V. schools combined the advantages of western education with a latent revivalist and patriotic spirit.[49] Hindi was introduced as a compulsory subject by Lala Hansraj, and though it did not become the medium of education as in Ārya schools for girls (see 4.1), the success of these schools among the whole Hindu community popularised Hindi as the symbolic Hindu language throughout the Punjab.[50]

However, the anglicized orientation of D.A.V. schools came early under attack from more radical educationists of the Samāj like Lala Munśīrām of Jallandhar (later Svami Śraddhānand, (1856-1926), who strove at a complete alternative to the English education

[46] Dayānand himself had switched over from Sanskrit to Hindi as medium of communication after meeting Brahmo Samāj leaders in Bengal in 1872, and the Ārya Samāj had been very active in the Nagari propaganda at the end of the nineteenth century. The fifth of the 28 basic norms of the Ārya Samāj, established in Bombay in 1875, read: 'प्रधान समाज में वैदोक्तानुकूल संस्कृत और आर्यभाषा में नाना प्रकार के सदुपदेश की पुस्तक होंगी और एक आर्य प्रकाश पत्र यथानुकूल आठ-आठ दिन में निकलेगा' [In the main centre there will be several books in Sanskrit and in *āryabhāṣā*, and a periodical called *Āryaprakāś* will come out every eight days]. Quoted in Lakṣmīnārāyaṇ Gupta, *Hindī bhāṣa aur sāhitya ko ārya-samāj kī den*, Lucknow University, Lucknow 1960, p. 26.

[47] K. Kumar, *The Political Agenda of Education*, p. 128.

[48] Techniques such as the *āṭā* fund, rag fund, *paisā* fund were later to be used in the nationalist movement; see K. Jones, *Arya Dharm, Hindu Consciousness in Nineteenth Century Punjab*, California University Press, Berkeley 1976, pp. 81 ff. By 1893 the college obtained government recognition; *ibid.*, p. 84.

[49] As Kenneth Jones remarks: 'Aryas recognized the new world's demand for English literacy and sought that literacy within a milieu of revived Hinduism'; *ibid.*, p. 69.

[50] According to Lajpat Rai's autobiography, it was the Hindi-Urdu controversy of the 1880s which wedded him 'to the idea of Hindu nationalism'. Despite a heavily Islamicized father and an Urdu education, he began to make pro-Hindi speeches even before learning the Devanagari scriptt; quoted in S. Sarkar, *Modern India*, p. 127.

system.[51] The Gurukul he founded on the banks of the river Ganges near Hardwar (1900, 1902 in Kangri) was to be a model of true Indian education, with the explicit aim of turning a few children into *brahmacārīs*. Students and teachers lived together in a simple and wholly dedicated environment. The place, especially at the time of its annual festivals, became a favourite pilgrimage spot also for nationalist leaders and for Hindi literati, who could breathe for a few days the air of a living ancient India. As a teacher observed: 'The Gurukul does not belong to the Ārya-Samāj alone, nor to the Ārya *jāti* alone, nor to Punjab alone: it belongs to Bhāratvarṣa'.[52]

Although the school grew - a Mahāvidyālay department was opened in 1907, and in 1921 the Ārya Pratinidhi Sabhā turned it into a chartered university - the Gurukul never provided the kind of practical alternative to government schools D.A.V. schools did. The curriculum was too markedly different from the one in government schools, though other Gurukul branches in Vrindavan (1911), Kurukshetra, Indraprastha, Vaidyanath (Bihar) and a few other places in the Punjab followed it.[53] Because Hindi was the medium of instruction, a large number of textbooks in Hindi had to be written for all subjects, such as Acarya Rāmdev's *Bhāratvarṣa kā itihās*, as well as readers for the lower classes in the sanskritised *āryabhāṣā*.[54] As Bhavānīprasād of Bijnaur, the compiler of the *Āryabhāṣa pāṭhāvalī*, observed in his introduction, other text-books could not be used to teach Hindi at the Gurukul also because 'textbooks used by the education department are written in a

[51] 'We are just like an ungrateful man who is feeding sweets to other people while his own mother is starving. In other words, to abandon one's own language and rely on another for writing literature is a complete sin. The institutions which use Hindi for this [literary] purpose are following their *dharma* and are worthy of praise' wrote Rāmcandra Śarmā M.A., quoted from *Ārya jagat* in *Sammelan patrikā*, XII, 3-4, (1924) p. 161. Munśīrām and the Ārya Pratinidhi Sabhā split from moderate or "College" Āryas over the issue, and in 1898 he started collecting funds for his school modelled on the ancient Hindu universities.

[52] *Ibid.*

[53] Teaching lasted 14 years, 10 in the school and 4 in the Mahāvidyālay, which was divided into a Vedic department, an Arts department and a department of Ayurveda. Graduates from the Vedic department were called Siddhānthālaṅkār and studied comparative religions apart from Vedic scriptures; they would later become preachers or teachers themselves. Arts graduates studied Western philosophy, history, Maths, English and Hindi, and were called Vidyālaṅkār. Graduates in Ayurveda studied comparative medicine and received 'nothing short of government medical training'. Of the 125 graduates by 1925, 10 had become journalists, 15 were Ārya preachers, around 30 were teachers - none had joined the civil service, as could be expected; Satyavrat, 'Gurukul kāṅgṛī', *Mādhurī*, III, pt. 2, 5, May 1925, pp. 635-42. Yaśpāl studied here before moving to the D.A.V. college in Lahore, to terrorism and to Hindi literature.

[54] Padmasiṃh Śarmā mentioned in several letters to Dvivedī his displeasure about the impure language (Urduized, with Panjabi influences) of Lal Devrāj's text-books for the Ārya Kanyā Mahāvidyālay, which were used in other Ā.S. schools; see Baijnāth Singh, *Dvivedī yug ke sāhitykāroṁ ke kuch patr*, pp. 97-98. It was possibly for this reason that Śarmā left the Gurukul for the Mahāvidyālay in Jvalapur.

language which is neither Urdu nor Hindi, and they lack a classical language to support them'.[55]

It is interesting to note that by the 1923 edition of the *Āryabhāṣā pāṭhāvalī*, the author could proudly remark that text-books for government aided vernacular schools were now written in 'polished Hindi' and contained examples of poems and essays by distinguished Hindi authors.[56] Four years later, in the preface to the 5th edition (1927), he was 'overjoyed at seeing that the polished style of Āryabhāṣa shown in this reader is now universally approved and established' (p. 10). Thus, by the 1920s a sanskritised Hindi like that of the Gurukul textbook had become the accepted language of Hindi education.[57]

In terms of content, the *Āryabhāṣa pāṭhāvalī* resembled Dvivedī's 'useful' and moralising pattern, and indeed several passages were taken from his textbooks, and poems from *Sarasvatī*. Children seem to have been regarded as wild things ever ready to stray from the right path, 'raw matter' to control, domesticate and order.[58]

To conclude this subsection, education in the Gurukul was not completely 'traditional', in the sense that it reworked traditional and new subjects, old rituals and new concerns, into an ostensibly 'ancient Indian' framework. Hindi literature figured only marginally in the curriculum. The literary *saṃskāra* imparted there was again a mixture of a traditional one, strongly indebted to Sanskrit poetics, and a reformist spirit.[59] The only Hindi literary scholar of note directly associated with Gurukul education was Padmasiṃh Śarmā, who taught for several years at Kangri before moving to a similar institution, Gurukul Mahāvidyālay in Jvalapur.[60] He was, as we have seen, both a close friend of

[55] Bhavānīprasād, *Āryabhāṣa pāṭhāvalī*, Gurukul Press, Kangri, 6th ed. 1927; Introduction to the first edition (1909), p. iii.

[56] *Ibid.*, pt. 2, p. 9.

[57] For example, in the passage 'Billī' ('Cat', Pt. 1), the word used for 'white' was *śvet* and not *safed*, 'angry' was *kruddh* and not *nārāz*, 'tongue' was not *jībh* but *jihvā*, 'clean' not *sāf* but *svacch*: whenever possible, either *tadbhava* or 'foreign' words were replaced by *tatsama* ones. The passage 'Din aur rātri' was a similar exercise in 'translation' into a *tatsama* vocabulary: 'रात्रि होते ही सब पशु और पक्षी विश्राम करते हैं। हमको भी अधिक रात्रि गए तक जागना उचित नहीं है अन्यथा प्रातःकाल उठने में विलम्ब होगा और इससे अगले दिन कार्य में बाधा पडेगा। इसलिए रात्रि को दस बजे से पूर्व ही सो रहो।' (p. 34).

[58] Cf. the daily life of the Gurukul Brahmacari as described in the poem 'Hamārā gurukul'; *ibid.*, pt. 2, pp. 102-4.

[59] At a literary meeting there Premcand, on a visit to the Gurukul, could not help remarking that 'most of the poems were ridiculous; but I'll praise the courage of the *brahmacārīs* who were not shy in the least of reciting their inchoate poems'; Premcand, 'Gurukul kāṅgṛī meṁ tīn din', in *Mādhurī*, VI, pt. 2, 3, April 1928, pp. 364.

[60] Founded by Pandit Nardev Śāstrī in 1907, Jvalapur Mahāvidyālay near Hardwar provided another example of education free from Western influences: 'यह महाविद्यालय अंग्रेज़ी के वातावरण से रहित है। यहाँ आते ही प्राचीन ऋषि आश्रम का साक्षात दर्शन होता है'. Teaching focussed even more on the Vedas, on ancient Indian philosophy and on ancient and modern Sanskrit literature; Hindi literature was part of the curriculum along with other 'court' languages, and graduates usually became preachers, teachers or Ayurvedic doctors; quoted in L. Gupta, *Hindī sāhitya ko ārya-samāj kī den*, p. 125.

Mahāvīr Prasād Dvivedī, with whom he shared the reformist spirit and scholarly outlook, and a Braj specialist (cf. 2.2).

Although at first the Gurukul kept aloof of political involvement, yet the spiritual and patriotic atmosphere of the Gurukul conveyed an alternative to the colonial system, an agenda for education and culture that could easily turn nationalist in a political sense.[61] In fact, Śraddhānand and the students became actively involved in Non-Cooperation and the Khilafat movement, and even launched a nationalist daily from Delhi, *Vijay*.[62] He later became one of the initiators of the militant movement for *śuddhi*, and was killed by an enraged Muslim in 1926.

The impact and importance of the Ārya Samāj educational institutions should be judged not in terms of their direct influence on Hindi literature, which was after all scarce, but in terms of a broader cultural influence. This was particularly strong for what concerned the construing of an Indian past, rooted in the 'Aryan myth'. The direct filiation of modern Hindus from the Vedic *ṛṣis* was made apparent and alive in the independent, pure and disciplined enclave of the Gurukuls, which offered to contemporary Indians almost a *tableaux vivant* of what education must have been like in ancient India (see 3.1). Thus, the cultural ideal represented physically by the Gurukuls appealed powerfully not to the Ārya Samāj alone, but to a very wide section of the Hindi intelligentsia and of nationalist leadership, who saw in them a symbol of the living force of "Hindu tradition". This appeal will be analysed at greater length in the next chapter.

Another interesting experiment with education, independent and yet practical and not completely severed from the government system, was that of Hindi literature examinations set up by the Hindī Sāhitya Sammelan, to which we shall presently turn.

2.5.4 Hindī Sāhitya Sammelan examinations

The Hindi literature examination set up in 1915 was perhaps the most far-reaching and successful enterprise of the Sammelan. A brief discussion of this little-known aspect of the history of Hindi will show once more how education was central to Hindi propaganda, and how a centralised system of some sort was crucial for transmitting a consistent cultural

[61] Thus Gandhi, who sent his own son to the Gurukul, remarked about Śraddhānand: 'We met each other in 1915 at the favourite Gurukul and with each meeting we came closer and knew each other better. His love of ancient India, Sanskrit, Hindi was remarkable. He was undoubtedly a non-cooperator before non-cooperation was born'; quoted in Shraddhanand, *Inside Congress*, Phoenix, Bombay 1946, p.7.

[62] *Ibid.*, p. 46. The paper was edited by his son, Indra Vidyāvācaspati, who served the Gurukul as teacher, principal and vice-chancellor between 1912 and 1920. Later he became the editor of the important nationalist daily *Arjun* (later renamed *Vīr arjun*) from Delhi.

saṃskāra. Originally meant only to train teachers in officially recognised and aided schools, the scheme was later opened to the general public and succeeded in fulfilling several needs of the fast-growing Hindi public sphere.[63]

First of all, these examinations fulfilled the need for a cheap alternative to University degrees in Hindi, at a time when Hindi teachers were in great demand: most of the primary and secondary school curriculum had been converted to the vernacular, but trained teachers were lacking. Apart from new teachers, there was a need to retrain old ones in the vernacular, and official training colleges were too few. Candidates for Hindī Sāhitya Sammelan examinations, instead, could prepare cheaply at home - even while keeping their jobs - and sit for examinations in a growing number of centres. The degrees accorded (*sāhitya-viśārad* and *sāhitya-ratna*) were half-way between the traditional titles (*upādhi*) granted by patrons or literary institutions - mere marks of prestige - and the degrees of the official education system, which were of practical value.[64] In fact, as the examinations became more and more popular, the degrees earned greater acceptance both with Congress boards and ministries and with the government Board of Secondary Education.[65] Thus, the authority and endeavour of the Hindī Sāhitya Sammelan was recognised by a colonial government unable to fufill the task to train teachers on such a large scale. Moreover, the Hindī Sāhitya Sammelan examinations were the first examinations of Hindi literary proficiency, years before Hindi was established as a subject in the university and other schemes were floated.[66]

[63] Originally a committee formed after the 5th Hindī Sāhitya Sammelan meeting in Lucknow in 1914 prepared a scheme for Hindi proficiency examinations to be submitted to the provincial government - i.e. years before Hindi was made a subject at any university. The examinations would be administered and marked by the education department: in a word, the Hindī Sāhitya Sammelan was putting its expertise at the service of the government, while putting forth its own claim as an alternative think-tank. The proposal was not followed up, and the Hindī Sāhitya Sammelan started implementing it on its own; see *Sammelan patrikā*, II, 10 (1914), p. 276. The committee included Rāmdās Gauṛ, Rāmnārāyaṇ Miśra, Śyāmsundar Dās, Puruṣottamdās Ṭaṇḍon, the Miśra brothers and several other 'founding fathers' of both the Nāgarī Pracāriṇī Sabhā and the Hindī Sāhitya Sammelan. Thus, it was not a completely anti-colonial scheme until Independence, as the current director of the Sammelan maintains; interview with Prabhāt Śāstrī, Allahabad, July 1993.

[64] Several Hindi literati started bearing the title *viśarad* or *sāhitya-ratna* after their name as earlier happened only with B.A., M.A. or other degrees.

[65] The *Sammelan patrikā* regularly carried news about individual teachers who had obtained jobs or higher wages after passing Hindī Sāhitya Sammelan examinations - as well as vacancies for teachers with Sammelan degrees. By 1940 the proud editor could announce that the U.P. Board of Intermediate education had recognised the *madhyamā* examination on par with Intermediate; Bihar government followed suit and recognised *prathamā* on par with the High school examination, *madhyamā* with Intermediate and *uttamā* with B.A. - according to candidates the same job opportunities. In central India, the government of the Central Provinces and Jodhpur, Jhalabar and Chattarpur states offered higher wages to teachers with Sammelan degrees; see e.g. *Sammelan patrikā*, XXVII, June-July 1940, 8-9, p. 16.

[66] Punjab University in Lahore launched Hindi proficiency examinations that were popular with teachers in aided schools, but their impact was limited because they were barred to candidates from other provinces. Allahabad University set up Hindi Proficiency examinations only for teachers of the province. The syllabus at Lahore included grammar, rhetoric, M.P. Dvivedī's *Sacitra Mahābhārata*, the

At the same time, Hindī Sāhitya Sammelan examinations provided a safe and useful way to show one's commitment to the national language and consequently to the nationalist cause. The success of the scheme enthused the Hindi intelligentsia and seemed a convincing evidence that Hindi was indeed being accepted as the national language. Though most of the examination centres were in the United Provinces and Bihar, by 1939 there were centres all over India.[67] Yearly reports with figures and statistics highlighted the constant spread of the scheme as well as the path yet to cover; itinerant preachers sent by the Hindī Sāhitya Sammelan contacted principals to establish new examination centres even in small townships.

In short, the examinations provided the Sammelan with a much-needed focus for Hindi propaganda, which had so far been pretty abstract. The whole undertaking fed very well into its centralising strategy, which had suffered so far from a certain lack of means and ideas. Examinations became also a profitable business: although very cheap,[68] they paid handsomely since all examiners were volunteers. In particular they gave a boost to the text-book industry, since Hindī Sāhitya Sammelan course-books, critical editions, anthologies, etc. were sure to run into several large editions.[69]

Although basically tests for Hindi proficiency, the syllabus of the examinations was mainly literary. Thanks to the single, centralised curriculum, the Hindī Sāhitya Sammelan could then exert a great cultural influence as an agency which exercised judgement and decisions on what Hindi literature was and how it should be read. This makes the syllabus of the examinations all the more interesting, both to see what kind of literary curriculum the Hindi literati (for many were called to take part in drawing the syllabus and be examiners) wished to set up and transmit, whether it was different from the one in official institutions, and what kind of literary *saṃskāra* candidates would draw from it.

The scheme involved three levels of examinations - *prathamā* (basic language and literature proficiency), *madhyamā* (high proficiency), and *uttamā* (a kind of Hindi honours) - and quite an exhaustive syllabus.[70] In order to show a high standard, the committee had

History of India by Miśra brothers and by Marsden, Bhārtendu's plays and *Vīr Abhimānyu* by Rādheśyām Kathāvācak, *Premsāgar*, and the usual Hindi classics: Tulsī's *Rāmāyaṇa*, Bihārī, Dev, Bhūṣaṇ, Keśavdās, and among the moderns only Maithilīśaraṇ Gupta; see *Mādhurī*, II, pt. 2, 1, Feb. 1924, pp. 96-97.

[67] 562 in 1939 according to the *Hindī-sāhitya-sammelan ke hindī-viśvavidyālay kī parīkṣāoṁ kī vivaraṇ-patrikā*, saṃvat 1995-1996 [1938-39], Allahabad 1939; the names are given at pp. 82-99.41

[68] Fees were Rs. 2.50 for prathamā, Rs. 6 for madhyamā, Rs. 11 for uttamā and journalism in 1938; *ibid.*, p. 2. The income the Hindī Sāhitya Sammelan derived was Rs. 7101 in 1936, Rs. 22,321 in 1942. See *Sammelan patrikā*, XXIV, 3 and XXX, 10.

[69] This attracted a kind of publishers and book-sellers' lobby to the Sammelan, which struggled for its monopoly, thwarting other activities and genuine democratic participation; see Kiśorīdās Vājpeyī, *Sāhityik jīvan aur saṃsmaraṇ*, pp. 106 ff; see also below, 5.3.

[70] According to the original Sammelan scheme, the first examination included seven papers: medieval poetry; modern poetry including prosody and rhetoric; modern and old prose including rhetoric and

gone quite far with the load of texts.[71] The syllabus itself changed several times in the first few years to incorporate more and more subjects in Hindi.[72]

The *prathamā* examination tested mostly language proficiency and a general knowledge of rhetoric and of literary selections. Whether in language or literature, the candidate was tested by his or her ability to 'translate' passages from complex (*kliṣṭa*) Hindi (with words like *sāṅgtā, pratigrah,* etc.) into plain (*saral*) Hindi, to explain their meaning (*bhāvārtha*), and to be able to name and explain figures of speech. The candidate was also asked to correct mistakes in grammar or in metre of a few short passages and to make sentences with particular words, proverbs, compounds, etc.[73] No creative or intellectual effort was required, nor invited. Literature proficiency meant to know metres and rhetoric figures and to possess a stock (*bhaṇḍār*) of literary passages mostly from Bhakti poets, conveniently packaged and explained in the anthologies and commented editions the Sammelan started to bring out. To know Hindi meant to be able to use a 'high', Sanskritised register in addition to the one for daily use, and to accept a cultural set-up which gave passages like:

> सरस्वती भी धन्य है जो उनके मुखकमल के सम्पर्क का सुख अनुभव करती हुई ऐसे महात्मा के प्रसन्न गंभीर मानस में राजहंसी सी वास करती है ।

grammar; unseen prose and poetic passages; essay writing; elementary Sanskrit, including easy prose and poetry and rudiments of grammar; translations form Hindi into Sanskrit and from easy Sanskrit into Hindi. Among the core texts there were: parts of *Padmāvat, Ayodhyākāṇḍa, Sūrsāgar, Sabhā-vilās* and *Rāmcandrikā*; Harioudh's *Priyā-pravās,* Śrīdhar Pāṭhak's *Śrānta-pathik* and *Kaśmīr-suṣmā*, and Hindi translations of *Meghadūta* (by Raja Lakṣmaṇ Singh), *Mṛcchakaṭika* (by Lala Sītarām) and *Mudrārākṣasa* (by Bhārtendu); Lallūlāl's *Prem-sāgar*, three early Hindi novels (*Sau ajān aur ek sujān, Parīkṣāguru* and *Kahānī ṭheṭh hindī kī),* Bālmukund Gupta's essays, Ś. Dās's *Hindī bhāṣa kī utpatti*: almost all that had been written in Hindi so far, but no contemporary literature; *Sammelan patrikā*, 2, 10 (1914), pp. 279-80

[71] The high proficiency examination e.g. included eight papers: old poetry and history of Hindi poetry of that period; medieval poetry and history of Hindi poetry of tha period; prose and history of Hindi prose literature; unseen passages; essay writing; rudiments of Prakrit; elementary Sanskrit prose and poetry; translation from and into Sanskrit. The syllabus for this examination included all the other halves of the works for the first examination, plus eleven cantos of *Pṛthvīrāj rāso*, Bihārī and Keśavdās; Miśra-bandhu's shorter history of Hindi literature and other collections of essays. *Ibid.*

[72] 'Many subjects like linguistics, history, maths, Geography, Agriculture etc. have found a place better and faster than in schools and colleges' declared with pride Master Ātmarām from Baroda at the 9th Hindī Sāhitya Sammelan meeting in Bombay in 1919. *Prathamā* examinations involved four compulsory papers on Hindi literature and one choice subject among maths, history, Ayurveda, English, agriculture, philosophy and Sanskrit, geography, science and hygiene, *dharmaśāstra*, drawing, economics, politics, agriculture, music and home science (only for women!). Hindi literature for the *Madhyamā* included two papers in a subject of one's choice among among maths, history, Ayurveda, English, agriculture, philosophy and Sanskrit, geography, science and hygiene, *dharmaśāstra, jyotiṣ*. The *Uttamā* examination could be taken in Hindi literature, Sanskrit literature or history and politics, with papers on diverse subjects such as psychology, literary criticism, physics and foreign history. There were also examinations for Ayurveda doctors, *ārāyaz-navīs*, newspapers editors and *rāṣṭrabhāṣā* propapagandists; *Sammelan patrikā*, VI, 9-10, April-May 1919, p. 219.

[73] Exactly the kind of examination we had to sit for at the Central Institute of Hindi in New Delhi 70 years later!

अकेली गंगा है । लम्बी चौड़ी वासनाओं का निवास उस स्थान में नहीं । आकाश पाताल को एक करनेवाले विचारों का कहाँ प्रवेश नहीं होता।

ब्राह्मण लोग हिन्दू जाति के अगुए है। इसमें कुछ संदेह नहीं कि बहुत से ब्राहमणों ने पढना लिखना छोड़ दिया है। परन्तु यह समय की गति है। उनका प्रभूत्व ज्यों का त्यों बना है।

> The goddess Sarasvatī is fortunate, for she dwells like a royal *haṃsa* bird in the blissful and profund lake of the mind of such great spritual souls, and experiences the joy of the contact with their visages. The Ganges is unique. It has no place for wide and large desires. Where cannot thoughts penetrate, which bring the sky and the netherworld together?... Brahmins are the leaders of the Hindu community. Undoubtedly, many of them have stopped studying, but this is a consequence of the times. Their authority (*prabhūtva*) is undiminished.[74]

The *uttamā* examination started from being a longer version of the *madhyamā* examination with additional papers and an essay (on subjects like 'What is the role of literature in national resurgence, and what is the state of Hindi in this respect'), and ended into a full-fledged university syllabus.[75]

Broadly speaking, the *saṃskāra* of Hindi literature that was thus transmitted was along similar lines to that of the university and high-school syllabi, and so was the canon. Literature worth this name was mainly literature of the past, along a national chronology. The few moderns present were either those who had marked the birth of modern Hindi (e.g. Lallūjī Lāl, Insha Allāh Khān, Śrīnivās Dās, Bhārtendu), a couple of modern classics like Maithilīśaraṇ Gupta or Harioudh, and those who, although experimenting, had not subverted the literary order (Sumitrānandan Pant, Rāmkumār Varmā). Literary history meant a sound period classification (according to the 'scientific' principles laid out by Rāmcandra Śukla) and placing authors and texts in neat categories and trends; each category would 'contain' a particular kind of poetry, whose characteristics mirrored the characteristic *lokapravṛtti* (people's attitude) of each epoch. The modern period was called the 'age of prose', but prose meant mainly essays, a few early specimens of novels; among Premcand's novels only *Godān* (1936) was selected, and not the more widely acclaimed and problematic *Sevāsadan* (1919), *Premāśram* (1921) or *Raṅgbhūmi* (1925) - and certainly not the kind of fiction that was widely enjoyed in the market.

To summarize, in this section we have outlined the main processes concerning Hindi education in the two decades. We showed how the centrality of education on the discursive level was actually mirrored in the centrality of education for the Hindi

[74] The first Hindī Sāhitya Sammelan examination paper for 1915; *Hindī sāhity sammelan kī parīkṣāoṁ kī vivaraṇ-patrikā*, saṃvat 1982, Hindi Sahitya Sammelan, Allahabad 1915, p. 7.
[75] The paper on modern poetry included Rāy Devīprasād 'Pūrṇa' as the only Braj poet, a few Dvivedī poets, and contemporary works awarded the Maṅgalāprasād prize, like Viyogī Hari's *Vīr satsaī*, M.Ś. Gupta's *Saket*, Rāmkumār Varmā's *Citrarekhā*; *Vivaraṇ patrikā, uttamā parīkṣā*, 1938-39, p. 6.

intelligentsia, in order to transmit a sense of cultural identity (see 3.1) and the right values for the nation in the making.

Hindi intellectuals and literary associations were largely successful in their task, insofar as it involved carving a niche for themselves and their agenda in the colonial education system. They were not as successful in 'vernacularising' knowledge, that is in bringing about a wholesale transformation of the education system. This might have had to do with their limited resources, with the hierarchical nature of colonial education, and with huge practical difficulties - which made education *tout court* quite a limited affair in North India in this period. It also had to do with the fact that while putting forward an agenda of national culture, Hindi efforts - even the independent enterprises - centred around preserving certain values and notions of tradition mainly through the literary syllabus.

On the other hand, Hindi intellectuals and literary associations rightly realised the importance of gaining a place in the education system, particularly at the top, also for acquiring authority and control in the Hindi literary sphere. In earlier sections we acknowledged the new centrality of printed literature as literary *saṃskāra*. Here the centrality of the text-book appeared even stronger, both for the book-industry and as the hardcore of education. Because of the centralised and hierarchical nature of the colonial education system, intellectual authority concentrated in the hands of the new Hindi lecturers, both on the strength of their position in the university (as experts and examiners), and also of their hold over the curriculum and text-book production.[76]

Literature for education, both in the form of text-books and of prescribed texts, certainly provided a boost to the publishing industry but, in the absence of a self-reliant literary market, it also contributed to turn Hindi into a kind of subsidized literature. Moreover, Hindi literature became part of a 'text-book culture' which severed the texts from their living contexts, gave them one meaning only and expected a set answer for each question.

What was left for students was to read selected passages from the (mostly medieval) prescribed texts with the help of commentaries and "keys", and to memorise critical definitions (*sthāpnāeṁ*) as factual knowledge, without questioning the values and assumptions underneath. Transmission of literary knowledge through education thus ensured the acquisition of a 'pure' linguistic and cultural identity.

The success of the Hindi intelligentsia in imposing such a syllabus was dense with other, political consequences, both during the nationalist struggle and after Independence. Hindi education became a 'secret door' through which cultural nationalism could enter the

[76] Krishna Kumar has examined at length the parallel loss of authority of the school-teacher within the centralised system, where the curriculum, examinations, timetables and retribution were all decided by others; *The Political Agenda*.

colonial system, but also imposed a rigid linguistic and cultural ideal that was to survive undisturbed even in independent India.

2. Conclusion

The aim of this chapter was to map the changes occurring in the Hindi literary scene at the level of discourses and institutions, so that writers, texts or tastes could be placed in a common framework and acquire a historical depth. The common framework also allowed to see how diverse texts and discourses were related to each other, and how discourses did not originate or spread separately from institutions of literature. The elitist slant of Hindi literary discourse was somewhat belied by the wealth of popular literature, and by the fact that questions of identity, of the self, of society came up as much in serious literature as in the so-called popular one, as we shall see in section 4.3.

If we look at the picture which emerges, we can see four main processes at work. The first concerns the centrality of print-culture. Though oral tastes, transmission and publics did not disappear altogether, and sometime acquired a new face or function altogether (e.g. with the *kavi-sammelan,* or with political songs), they usually either became marginal or were subject to a 'fixation' through print. This is the case, for example, of all Bhakti poets, who became literary classics in critical and semi-critical editions, or of contemporary Braj *samasyā-pūrtis*, which received a new lease of life in some literary journals. Not only certain genres became predominant - the novel, the short story, modern poetry (literary drama in fact existed almost only in print) - but the public that was implicitly addressed was either a literate or, if we can use the term, a 'literating' public. Thus, for example, even a unique collection of folk-songs addressed the urban, literate reader and focused on their literariness.[1] Also, the attitude of the Hindi intelligentsia of educating the public and watching over it like a worried parent to keep away evil influences.

True, the Hindi reading public was growing and education was expanding. But if we compare the much greater popularity of entertaining or political reading-matter (periodicals, pamphlets, books) with that of literary fiction and non-fiction, we may assume that a large section of the newly-literate Hindi public had not become literate through formal education. That made the issue of 'popularising' the print-language and reflecting the interest (*ruci*) of the public a crucial issue. However, only a few editors and writers were able to break their elitist, moralising mould.

The second important phenomenon, a direct consequence of the growth of the print-industry, was the rise of the professional writer and intellectual. Journals were crucial

[1] See Rāmnareś Tripāṭhī, *Grām-gīt*, Allahabad, 1930.

in this respect: as a professional editor, writer or contributor, a writer could now be independent from ties of personal patronage and enter a different relationship with the wider, anonymous public of print and with the extensive network of the Hindi literary community. One may also say that s/he could be free from the fetters of patronage to be tied by new ties of dependence from the editors, publishers, literary associations (themselves patrons) and the market. Yet, there is certainly a sense in which (especially) Hindi intellectuals of this period felt free to write on all public matters, to explore new styles and voices (both at the popular and high level) and felt that they were performing a social and political role that mirrored the new, widened role of literature. The very notion of *sevā*, which they used to indicate their literary work, hints at how they felt they were part of a wider whole, and acting for a larger purpose. This may explain why there was such a varied and rich literary output in this period, much of which had to do with a generous use of the imagination, and an imaginative use of literature.

It may also explain, and we reach the third point, why such a fuss was made about norms and boundaries (*maryādā*) in literature. Parallel to the rise of the professional writer, in fact, we see the rise of the expert. Rather, in this period the early group of scholars who constituted the Hindi intelligentsia in literary associations acquired the final seal of authority by becoming the first Hindi professors and lecturers. The fact that the study of literature and of the literary tradition was now a 'scientific' discipline, to be studied and discussed in universities among experts, undermined the individual prestige of the literary persons and restricted their space to dissent.[2] It also lent a special rigidity to notions, values and boundaries of the established canon which made it particularly conservative to change and to conflicting voices. The crucial importance of literary associations and universities in establishing and transmitting the literary canon, a standard language of education, in providing patronage, authority and criticism, and in boosting the publishing industry, shows a remarkable combination of official and non-official efforts. It was in fact a success for the Hindi intelligentsia that their human resources and expertise were accepted already by the colonial administration. On the other hand, the Hindi expert was the Hindi *literary* expert, and this marked the limits of his sphere of influence.

Finally, to delimit means automatically to exclude. While a Hindi literary tradition and modern Hindi literature were fashioned, certain voices, tastes, traditions were

[2] The marginalisation that resulted from this process of specialisation and professionalisation was of course not unique. England, too, witnessed a similar process in the 1870s: 'As knowledge became institutionalized and removed to an academic milieu, so dissent was restricted by virtue of its being conducted in accordance with the canons of academic propriety. How competing claims were tested, and what principles were to regulate their intellectual and institutional acceptance or rejection, these became central topics. Moreover, the nature of those tests changed, for by being placed in an academic milieu, intellectual authority became exclusively textual in nature'; I. Small, *Conditions for Criticism. Authority, Knowledge and Literature in the Late Nineteenth Century*, Clarendon Press, Oxford 1991, p. 27.

automatically excluded. Thus, the literary canon admitted non-orthodox voices and forms only after sanitising them, as it happened with Mīrā, Kabīr and others, and only in a textual form. Thus, their living, oral tradition - with all its social depth - was not taken into account.[3] We have already mentioned the limit of literacy, and within literacy the limited space for a non-pure (*aśuddh*) idiom. We shall see in chapter 4 how difficult it would be for women, for example, to acquire a voice, ways of self-representation and spaces for public activity.

In view of these processes of self-definition and exclusion, it becomes especially interesting to examine debates and treatments of history. History, it has repeatedly been pointed out in recent years, was one of the crucial places where Indian intellectuals contested colonial knowledge and power, and where an affirmative identity of 'we' as a nation was propounded, argued, shared and transmitted. It was also the place, as the recent history of independent India has dramatically shown, where cultural nationalism operated dangerous exclusions, which the official ideology of secularism either ignored or papered-up in a vision of the Indian past which, once again, avoided conflict and difference. This is why it becomes important to explore the making of a historical *saṃskāra* in modern Hindi culture; in the following chapter we shall take up some of its aspects by analysing how history was imagined through literature in Hindi.

[3] For e.g. the canonisation of Mīrābāī, see Parita Mukta, *The Community of Mira Bai,* Oxford University Press, Delhi 1994.

Chapter 3

The uses of history

3.1 The engagement with history

> When a *jāti*, lost in darkness, forgets its history, when it forgets its great men, their lofty ideals, and follows the path to decadence, fulfilling only its base, worldly desires, then its destruction is only a question of time. A fallen *jāti* can only be saved by hearing and reflecting upon the story of its ancestors... This is precisely what we can see now in Bhāratvarṣa. From one corner of the country to the other, waves of national consciousness (*jātīytā*) are spreading all over, and with them a devotion for history has arisen in its inhabitants, who have started to worship their forefathers with devotion and love, and who in their hearts feel strongly inclined to listen to their sacred stories (*pavitra kathāeṁ*).[1]

This passage by Veṅkateś Nārāyaṇ Tivārī, a veteran Hindi journalist and Congress politician from Allahabad, gives a fair idea of the attitude to history of early twentieth century Hindi intellectuals; history was the memory of the (vaguely defined) community (*jāti*), the 'sacred stories' of its great men and their ideals with which modern Indians ought to identify. To take interest in history meant to 'worship one's ancestors'; this interest was a prerequisite for national resurgence. In this chapter we shall first examine how Hindi historians and writers sought in Indian history a source of identity, and how they fashioned and defined their ideal in contention with colonial historians (3.1). Tivārī's regard for history was typical of Indian colonial intellectuals. History was one of the crucial terrains on which questions of colonial knowledge and power were contested, and where an affirmative history of 'we' as a nation was propounded, argued, shared and transmitted.[2] Literature was

[1] Veṅkateś Nārāyaṇ Tivārī, 'Bhagvān buddhadeva', *Sarasvatī*, January 1910, quoted by H.P. Gauṛ, *Sarasvatī aur rāśṭrīy jāgaraṇ*, National Publishing House, Delhi 1986, p. 10.

[2] The story of how colonial Indians became obsessed with history; of how history became a 'source of nationhood', and how Indian intellectuals contested European rationalistic and colonial histories of India has been variously told by recent scholars, with special reference to Bengali intellectuals: e.g. Ranajit Guha, *An Indian Historiography of India: A Nineteenth-Century Agenda and Its Impilcations*, K.P. Bagchi, Calcutta 1988; Tapan Raychaudhuri, *Europe Reconsidered*; Sudhir Chandra, *The Oppressive Present*; Partha Chatterjee, *The Nation and Its Fragments*, Princeton University Press,

especially valuable as a space for re-telling and spreading the 'sacred stories', and also for working out some of the knots thrown up by Indian history, especially regarding the 'medieval period' (3.2). Finally, we shall turn to the strategies adopted and problems faced by Hindi intellectuals in linking the past with the present, or rather in accomodating the troublesome present in the idealised view of the past (3.3).

The first step in this history-building process involved viewing history primarily as a narrative, much in the pattern of the ancient *itihāsas*, whose main function was to provide collective order and, above all, meaning. Thus Indian historians strongly objected to the rationalistic distinction between myth and history which excluded what they considered the most meaningful of their histories, the *Rāmāyaṇa* and *Mahābhārata.*[3]

In fact, although Indian historians had studied and absorbed the European rationalistic conception of history, their historical enterprise was radically different.[4] They retained the notion of history as the story of a people, i.e. a national history rather than a play played out between kings and gods; they also saw history-writing as a collective enterprise, something the historian did on behalf of the community. Yet, they denied British rule the honour of being the culmination of India's history by firstly shifting the subject from a British to an Indian 'we', with an emphasis on Vedic/Aryan ancestors, and secondly by viewing history as a secular play of power, where conquest did not necessarily bestow moral superiority on the conquerors.[5] This gave a new meaning both to medieval history and to British conquest.[6] Muslim invasions and kingdoms were thus only a 'narrative break', usually the result of a series of 'betrayals', and British rule was just the prelude to national resurgence: both were equally 'alien'.

Let us turn now to the specific features of Hindi historical narratives. First we shall examine the main contentions Hindi historians had with colonial historiography (3.1.1). We

Princeton 1993; Sudipta Kaviraj, *The Unhappy Consciousness*. For conflicting Maratha historiographies in Maharastra, see Gail Omvedt, *Cultural Revolution in a Colonial Society, The Non Brahman Movement in Western India: 1873 to 1930*, Scientific Socialist Education Trust, Bombay 1976.

[3] In fact, though the *Rāmāyaṇa* is technically a *kāvya* and not an *itihāsa*, Hindi historians enthusiastically upheld its historical truth. See Jaycandra Vidyālaṃkār below; also S. Chandra: 'The search for a counter-history was facilitated by the traditional absence of a distinction between mythology and history. So, both literary and quasi-historical classics of the past - the Ramayana, the Mahabharata and the Puranas, for example - came to be seen as more than repositories of the community's myths, wisdom and traditions; they were seen as containing a history and a meaning relevant in providing the raw materials for reconstructing India's past. They were histories'; *The Oppressive Present*, p. 57. Cf. S. Kaviraj, 'Imaginary History', in *The Unhappy Consciousness*, pp. 107-57.

[4] 'If judged in rationalistic terms, their efforts often fell far short of the European ideal of constructing a reliable account of the people's past; in some other ways, in giving an imaginative unity to it, they went far beyond'; Kaviraj, *The Unhappy Consciousness*, p. 108.

[5] The moral superiority and military invincibility of the British was implied in history text-books for Indian school-children such as Edmund Marsden's *A History of India* (1900), translated in Hindi by Rāmcandra Prasād as *Bhāratvarṣa kā itihās,* for 5th and 6th standards of vernacular schools, Macmillan 1920.

[6] P. Chatterjee, *The Nation and its Fragments*, pp. 83 ff.

will then turn to the first full-fledged narrative expression of this nationalist history of India, Maithilīśaraṇ Gupta's long poem *Bhārat-bhārtī* (3.1.2).

3.1.1 A national history of India in Hindi

The sheer quantity and variety of historical publications is enough to prove that history was an important issue for nineteenth and early twentieth century Hindi intellectuals.[7] Articles on history were a regular feature of Hindi journals, and the reports and findings of the Asiatic Society and of the Archeological Survey were dutifully commented along with the works of major orientalists.[8] This engagement with history was, as we have seen, part of a country-wide response to European historiography of India. When print and institutions for public debate started making a real impact in Hindi in the early twentieth century, the discourse on Indian history developed by orientalists, English historians and Indian reformers had already taken a definite shape.[9] Nonetheless, it is important to examine the particular forms and ways in which the discourse on a national history of India took shape in the Hindi literary sphere.[10]

[7] Historical publications in Hindi included compilations from English sources, like Śyāmbihārī and Sukhdevbihārī Miśra's series of books on Indian, as well as German, Russian, English, Japanese history for the Indian Press, Allahabad between 1908 and 1912 (cf. M. Ali, 'Hindī sāhitya ke itihās meṁ ilāhābād kā yogdān', pp. 383-385); original works by Hindi historians like Munshi Devīprasād, G. H. Ojhā and V. Reu, especially on royal dynasties; endless retellings of 'historical stories', especially for school-children, like Dvārkāprasād Caturvedī's *Aitihāsik kahāniyāṁ*, for the Manorañjan Pustak-Mālā of the Nāgarī Pracāriṇī Sabhā, and Devnārāyaṇ Mukhopādhyāy's *Mere deś kī kathā* (Indian Press, 1938); and of course poems, plays and novels.

[8] Indeed, it had been so since the time of Bhārtendu and his circle; see e.g. S. Chandra, *The Oppressive Present*, chapter 1; in the twentieth century, historical essays appeared in every issue of the *Nāgarī pracāriṇī patrikā*, *Sarasvatī* and *Maryādā*; historical essays were regularly read out at meetings of the Nāgarī Pracāriṇī Sabhā and the Hindī Sāhitya Sammelan, and the annual Sammelan meetings featured a special *Itihās pariṣad*. In fact, Gaurīśaṅkar Hirācand Ojhā's first work was a biography of Colonel Tod (1902), while his notes on the translation of Tod's work remained unpublished; cf. Ś. Dās, *Hindī ke nirmātā*, vol. 2, Indian Press, Allahabad 1941, p. 10. R.C. Dutt's *History of Civilisation of ancient India* and his historical novels were read in Hindi as early as the 1880s, and so were Bankimchandra's essays and his *Ānanadamaṭh*; see Gopāl Rāy, *Hindī upanyās koś*, vol. 1, pp. 306 ff.

[9] See e.g. Uma Chakravarti, 'Whatever Happened to the Vedic *Dasi*? Orientalism, Nationalism and a Script for the Past', in Sangari and Vaid, eds., *Recasting Women*. Possible exceptions were K.P. Jaisvāl and G.H. Ojhā, whose work would require separate study. In fact, the paucity of original historical works in Hindi made translations of European historians all the more hegemonic.

[10] Since the education system, the aim of so many Hindi literary efforts, was barred, enterprises in field of history had to be all internal to the Hindi public sphere. Thus, at the 15th Sammelan annual meeting in Dehradun in 1924, the nationalist millionaire Śivaprasād Gupta advanced a resolution on the need for an Indian history of India. He suggested to open a public fund of Rs. 1 lakh, and a committee composed by Śivaprasād Gupta himself, Narendra Dev, G. H. Ojhā, P.D. Ṭaṇḍon and Rāmkaraṇ Siṃh Asopā of Jodhpur was formed to finalise the project. Though the project was not carried through, the resolution was recalled at later meetings, and several articles and books were to appear along its lines, some of which form the basis of the following discussion. 'The nation which does not have an authentic history of its own is not a living nation... The history text-books which are taught in Indian schools and colleges are extremely misleading and unreliable. Our heroes such as Śivājī are called 'looters'! Our Vedas are called ballads of herdsmen and peasants! Can such books can

The first contentious issue concerned the beginning of Indian history, which also involved establishing India's original claim to historicity. Vincent Smith[11] had set the beginning of Indian history in the Buddhist period, with Alexander's campaign and the Indo-Bactrian and Indo-Parthian states, when the first historical (i.e. Greek) sources could be found. But this meant pushing the whole Vedic period into pre-history or myth, 'as if *they* [the Greeks] had brought history, civilisation, etc. into this country'.[12] On this very ground Jaycandra Vidyālaṃkār condemned the *History of India* Lala Lajpat Rai had written especially for national schools at the time of Non-Cooperation, but which closely followed Smith's chronology and classification. For a true national history of India, argued Jaycandra, one needed to reframe the whole accepted knowledge, and this involved basic issues of belief and identity.

> For European scholars Rāma and Sītā, Kṛṣṇa and Duṣyānta are mythological figures - does Lalaji think so, too? When does the history of India begin; did Duṣyānta and Bharata, Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa, Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna exist historically or not? - these are very important questions for our nation (*jāti*) and our history. [13]

Even though more research was needed, conceded Jaycandra, genealogies in the *Mahābhārata* and the Puranas could provide standpoints for pre-Buddhist chronology and should be taken as historical sources. The aim here was to give historical proof to the 'Aryan age'. Once the Aryan age was accepted as a historical period that was *mirrored faithfully* in the Vedas, Brahmanas, the epics and the Shastras, its glorification as a golden age could grow stronger and even acquire a daunting immediacy - after all the Gurukuls reflected life in ancient India. This is the picture we get in *Bhārat-bhārtī* (3.1.2). Even the discovery of the Indus Valley civilisation could be used against colonial historians. Since excavations in

be called histories? Can any scholar and dispasssionate historian say that such historical books contain a true picture of the life in ancient India?' See *Sammelan patrikā*, XII, 4-5, pp. 216-217.

[11] Whose *Oxford History of India* (1904) and *The Oxford Student's History of India* (1908) were the standard reference books for the Hindi educated.

[12] Jaycandra Vidyālaṃkār, 'Bhāratvarṣa kā ek rāṣṭrīy itihās', *Mādhurī*, V, pt. 1, 2, September 1926, p. 167, emphasis added. Jaycandra, who offered to realize Śivaprasād Gupta's project, taught at Ārya Samāj schools and 'national' institutions such as Lahore's National College (where Bhagat Singh and Sukhdev were among his students) and at Patna's Bihar Vidyāpīṭh; for more details, see biography in the Appendix. Other Ārya Samāj historians inlcuded Acharya Rāmdev, the Vice-Chancellor of Gurukul Kangri, and Satyaketu Vidyālaṃkār, who was also awarded the Maṅglāprasād prize.

[13] *Ibid.* A popular self-assertion of *kṣatriya* identity by some lower castes (touchable *śūdras*) in the public sphere of religious processions, festivals, popular entertainment and martial activities (the *akhāṛās*) was taking place parallelly. Their active participation in the Rāmlīlā as 'the army of Mahāvīr', as well as the growing Bīr worship, the formation of *yādav akhāṛās* and related performing arts such as *Nauṭaṅkī* gave the belief in Lord Rām a contemporary significance and militant edge that would progressively to merge in Hindu revivalism and in direct involvement in communal conflicts; see Nandini Gooptu, 'The Political Culture of the Urban Poor: the United Provinces between the two World Wars', unpublished Ph. D. thesis, Cambridge University 1991, pp. 122 ff. See also the articles by Freitag, Coccari, Hansen and Marcus in S. Freitag, ed., *Culture and Power in Banaras*, University of California Press, Berkeley 1989.

the Indus valley linked the Indus civilisation with the Sumers, 'it is therefore demonstrated that India is really the *ādiguru* of all the civilisations in the world'.[14]

Once the motif of an original golden age was accepted - and it was accepted, with the help of western orientalists, by all Hindi authors - another contentious issue emerged. This regarded the onset of decadence. Dates changed according to whether decadence was considered to have been the consequence of inner weakness and conflict or of alien invasions.[15] In both cases, the existence of a Hindu/Indian nation deriving directly from the Aryan past and incorporating all regional kingdoms, was implied.

With this history of India firmly established as 'our' history, i.e. the history of the Aryan/Hindu community, the great questions that followed were: why were 'we', Hindus defeated? Had 'we' been defeated completely? *Bhārat-bhārtī* offered a poetic answer and explained history as a cyclic pattern: thus, after the heights reached by ancient India there could only be decline and decadence.[16] A different answer was offered by Prof. 'Indra', who argued that Hindu defeat had never been complete.[17] Once again, scattered instances were taken as exemplifying a whole trend, and different entities were taken as parts of one nationhood. Single acts of resistance proved that Hindus ('we') had not been passive. Moreover, while political subjection might have been complete, there were important areas, like religion and society, which had remained independent.[18] In the end, Sikhs, Mahrattas, Jats - once again as many parts of 'us' - had defeated 'them'.[19] Thus, although Aryans had

[14] Janārdan Bhaṭṭ, 'Bhārtīy purātattva meṁ naī khoj', *Mādhurī*, III, pt. 2, 2, March 1925, p. 149.

[15] According to Prof. 'Indra' (Svami Śraddhānand's son), decadence had started in 1192 wth Pṛthvīrāj Cauhān's defeat at the hands of Shahbuddin Gori; Prof. 'Indra', 'Prācīn bhārat meṁ rājnītik svādhīntā', *Mādhurī*, IV, pt. 2, ,2, February 1926, p. 186. In Maithilīśaraṇ Gupta's poetic vision, it had started much earlier, with the Mahābhārata war, i.e. when the perfect harmony of the Aryan-Hindu community began to be marred by inner conflict. See *Bhārat-bhārtī*, *Atīt khaṇḍ*, stanzas 195-96, Sahitya Sadan, Cirgaon 1991 (original ed. 1912), see below 3.1.2.

[16] In fact, decadence was itself a proof of the earlier glory: 'उन्नति तथा अवनति प्रकृति का नियम एक अखण्ड है । चढ़ता प्रथम जो व्योम में गिरता वही मार्तण्ड है । अतएव अवनति ही हमारी कह रही उन्नति-कला । उत्थान ही जिसका नहीं हुआ उसका पतन ही क्या भला?।। ६।। ' [Rise and decadence are a natural law. It is the sun which first rises in the sky and then falls. Thus decadence itself speaks of our past progress. How can anyone fall without having risen first?]. *Ibid.*, stanza 6, p. 12.

[17] In the article on 'Political indipendence in ancient India', Prof. 'Indra' argued that Muslim rulers, both during the Sultanate and in the Mughal period, had constantly to fight against Hindu Rajas, hence their victory was never total or ever-lasting E.g. Iltutmish against the rulers of Malwa, Babar against the Hindu rulers of Ranthambor, Malwa, Kalinjar, etc. Prof. 'Indra', 'Prācīn bhārat meṁ rājnītik svādhīntā', part 2, *Mādhurī*, V, pt. 1, 3, October 1926, p. 326.

[18] Here lay, for example, the cultural importance of Tulsī in the eyes of modern Hindi intellectuals: he had saved Hindu culture in an age of cultural crisis and subjection; see below 3.3, fn. 12.

[19] 'किसी भी मुसलमान-बादशाह का राज्य ऐसा नहीं गुज़रा जिसमें उसे हिन्दुओं के साथ लड़ना न पड़ा हो। भारतवासी सामाजिक तथा धार्मिक दृष्टि से पूरी तरह से स्वाधीन रहे। विदेशियों और भारतवासियों के सदियों तक चलते हुए राष्ट्रीय युद्धमें अंतिम विजय भारतवासियों की हो चुकी थी जब एक और विदेशी शक्ति बीच में कूद पड़ी।' [There was never a Muslim sultan who did not have to fight with Hindus. Indians (*bhāratvāsīs*) always remained completely independent from the social and religious points of view. In the national war that went on for centuries between foreigners [i.e. Muslims] and Indians, the last victory would have belonged to Indians if another foreign power had not intervened]; *ibid.*, p. 326. In the essay Indra made it specific that by *bhāratvāsī* one should read 'Hindu', and by 'foreigner' 'Muslim'. He argued that it was the 'people' (*prajā*) who had not accepted

been a *jāti*, a nation-community, they did not become a *rāṣṭra*, a nation-state, until they encountered the 'other': just as the sense of independence comes from tasting subjection, 'Indra' argued, a national sense can only emerge out of an encounter with the 'other'.[20] 'Therefore, although the seven-centuries-long war looks like a Hindu-Muslim war, it was in fact a war of Hindustanis against foreign invaders'.[21]

However, most writers and scholars were ready to accept that the conquest at the hands of foreigners who did not want to assimilate into Indian society had been a total defeat, a humiliating and painful experience.[22] The lack of national sense and national unity among Hindu rulers was the most common explanation, with treason providing a sub-motif. It had been the people, then, who had kept national identity alive by refusing to convert and to abandon their customs. 'Good' Muslim rulers had temporarily lightened the burden, and provided, along with a few Muslim poets who wrote in Hindi, interesting occasions for ambiguity. The figure of Akbar presented the most interesting paradox, and it is noteworthy how Indian histories of India juggled with different perceptions on him.[23]

Finally, the last question concerned the state of India at the time of the British conquest. At stake here was a notion of British superiority and of Indian incapacity. Some, like Maithilīśaraṇ Gupta, went along the line of British historians like Vincent Smith, who maintained that India had been saved from a state of chaos after Aurangzeb's death.[24] Others, like 'Maṇḍan Miśra', objected that regional kingdoms had in fact been quite prosperous, popular and attentive to the needs of their subjects.[25] Their stand was in tune with the fictional revisitation of recent local rulers such as Rani Lakṣmībāī as model rulers

foreign subjection and had risen. Although they had not objected to different Indian rulers, 'they could not bear domination at the hands of *mlecchas*: that was real subjection for them. Then their natural will for independence arose'; *ibid*, pt.1, p. 182.

[20] *Ibid.*, p. 185.

[21] *Ibid.*, pt. 2, p. 328.

[22] As Partha Chatterjee remarks, 'the theory of medieval decline fitted nicely with the overall judgement of nineteenth-century British historians that "Muslim rule in India" was a period of despotism, misrule and anarchy - this, needless to say, being the historical justification for colonial intervention'. This theory fitted also with prejudices about Islam as "essentially" cruel, fanatical, bigoted, warlike, dissolute; P. Chatterjee, *The Nation and Its Fragments*, p. 101.

[23] On the one side, Akbar was the paradigm of the 'good ruler' and had promoted tolerance and cohesion between the Hindu and Muslim communities; he had raised Hindus to the highest offices of state and had prized Indian (Hindu) literature, knowledge, music and art. On the other side, his war against Maharana Pratāp and Rani Durgāvatī placed him in the role of the villain.

[24] Cf. M. Gupta, *Bhārat-bhārtī, Vartmān khaṇḍ*, stanzas 243-47, p. 91.

[25] Quoting reports of several Indian and European travellers, Maṇḍan Miśra remarked that regional rulers *had to* pay more attention to their *prajā*, and Alivardi Khan in Bengal, Nawab Saadat Ali Khan in Avadh, the Holkars and Scindia in Malwa, the Mahrattas in Poona, the Nizam in Hyderabad, Hyder Ali in Mysore would pass the test. Thus, the overall situation was not as bad as it was depicted, especially when compared with contemporary Europe, upset by the Seven-years war and the French Revolution! The absence of ccentral rule could not be called anarchy; economy and trade prospered, fairs circulated both goods and religion, and village economy ensured Muslim and Hindu interdependence. Maṇḍan Miśra, 'Briṭiś-sāmrājya ke pūrva bhārat', in *Mādhurī*, IX, pt. 2, 1, February 1931, pp. 47-54.

and champions of national independence (3.2), and with the indictment of early British governors for their ruthless and unjust annexations.[26]

To summarize, Hindi historians did borrow from western historians the basic framework of Indian history with its three-fold chronological division, and with Hindus and Muslim cast as two incompatible and homogeneous blocks, but at the same time made important alterations. These included using Indian literary and religious sources and disclaiming the ostensible passivity and inferiority of Hindus. More importantly, Hindi historians adopted uncompromisingly a single Aryan-Hindu-Indian collective subject, which included the people (*prajā*) as well as the kings, and which subsequently excluded all Muslims as foreigners and, despite certain ambiguities, as oppressors.[27] We shall turn now to a literary text that was crucial in popularising this version of Indian history, and that shows how literature contributed to the making of a historical *saṃskāra* which became a substratum even for 'secular' intellectuals: Maithilīśaraṇ Gupta's long poem *Bhārat-bhārtī* (1912).

3.1.2 *Bhārat-bhārtī* and the interpretation of Indian history

> हम कौन थे क्या हो गये और क्या होंगे अभी
> आओ विचारें आज मिलकर ये समस्याएँ सभी।
> यद्यपि हमें इतिहास अपना प्राप्त पूरा हैं नहीं
> हम कौन थे इस ज्ञान को फिर भी अधूरा है नहीं।।
> Who we were, we are and we shall be
> Come, let's ponder over it together.
> Though we do not have our full history
> we still know fully who we were.[28]

Maithilīśaraṇ Gupta (1886-1964),[29] the first poet to turn whole-heartedly to Khari Boli as a poetic language, can be described as a quintessential Dvivedī-poet; his view of poetry, choice of themes, use of language and historical sense were largely shaped by

[26] See e.g. Caturvedī Pandit Dvārkāprasād Śarmā's biographies of Robert Clive and Warren Hastings, which cost him his government job; Udaynārāyaṇ Tivārī, 'Bhaiyā sāhab paṇḍit śrīnārāyaṇ caturvedī', in V. Miśra, ed., *Hindīmay jīvan. paṇḍit śrīnārāyaṇ caturvedī*, Prabhat Prakasan, Delhi n.d.

[27] As scholars have pointed out, the narrative of oppression and fight for nationhood could have either Muslim and/or British rule cast in the role of the enemy: the and/or nexus was left lax, so that the identification of Muslims as British and vice versa could or could not be activated, often depending on the context and occasion of the narrative. See S. Chandra, *The Oppressive Present*, pp. 116 ff. However, this did not leave much space for more positive images and notions of Muslim participation in Indian history, who could only be exceptions.

[28] The 37th edition of the work is used here, published by Gupta's own concern, Sahitya Sadan, in Cirgaon, Jhansi, 1991, *Atīt khaṇḍ* stanza 14, p. 14.

[29] For a brief evaluation, see R.S. McGregor, *Hindi Literature in the Late Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries*, Harrassowitz, Wiesbaden 1974, pp. 109-110; also the special issue of *Ālocnā*, Delhi, October-December 1986.

Mahāvīr Prasād Dvivedī, his mentor.[30] By the time he started writing *Bhārat-bhārtī* at 26 in 1912, he was already an established poet, with *Raṅg me bhaṅg* (*Valour and adversity*, 1909) and *Jayadrath vadh* (*The killing of Jayadrath*, 1910) published to his credit, and regular historical poems in *Sarasvatī*.

Bhārat-bhārtī, a long poem (702 stanzas) on the past glory and present disarray of India, prompted by Hālī's *Musaddas*, was a resounding success on its publication. It soon became a modern classic and one of the very few works of contemporary Hindi poetry to enter the Hindi university syllabus (2.5.2). Since the poetic qualities of the text are scant - rhyme often the only element to distinguish it from prose - the success and the ensuing status of the book can only arise from its content and from the historical juncture at which it was published. It was in fact the first poetic version of the debates on the Indian history of India, a fitting example of how literature could provide a nationalist answer to colonial views of Indian history. The narrative inflation of a previous poem by Gupta, 'Pūrva darśan' (1910), *Bhārat-bhārtī* enhanced the lamentation over the glorious past and the appeal to the present and future with arguments, historical evidence, stories, dramatic scenes, monologues, and heterogenous notes from a number of sources: *śruti* and *smṛti*, European history-books, R.C. Dutts' *Civilisation of Ancient India*, newspapers items, traditional stories, etc. The composite and bountyful presence of notes shows the poet's urge to ground his poem in historical and scriptural truth.

That the subject of this history is 'us' is expressed uncompromisingly from the beginning. The Indian past is the past of 'our ancestors', 'our civilisation', 'our knowledge', etc.[31] The perspective, too, is clearly national: heroes of the past are taken indiscriminately from all regions and kingdoms of India; heroes of the present include leaders, rulers, artists and scientists from all over the country (*Bhaviṣya khaṇḍ*, 123-130).[32] In fact, the same projection works for the readers as well: the small audience of Hindi-educated is addressed and represented in the poem *as if* they were the nation. In this way, the actual readers are

[30] The pride in tradition and the glorification of the Vedic past had been at the centre of Dvivedī's agenda. Most of the historical poems published in *Sarasvatī* were hymns to India as the land of the Aryans, e.g. 'Āryabhūmi' by Mahāvīr Prasād Dvived, in the April 1906 issue; else, they reworked figures from the Epics and the Purāṇas in a both historical and national framework, e.g. the poems commissioned by Dvivedī to accompany colour plates by Raja Ravi Varma, later collected in *Kavitā kalāp* (Indian Press 1909).

[31] The direct filiation of 'us' from the 'ṛṣis' is repeated time and again in the poem, and the development of the Aryan civilisation is presented under the headings of 'our origin', 'our ancestors', etc.

[32] The impressive list mentions Rammohan Roy and Dayanand Sarasvati, Tilak and Madan Mohan Mālavīya, Rajendralal Mitra and Debendranath Tagore, the Maharajas of Darbhanga and of Mysore, the painters Abanindranath Tagore and Ravi Varma, the musicians Paluskar and Satyabala, Rabindranath and the sculptor Mhatre, Gokhale and Gandhi, etc. as signs of hope for the future; interestingly, R.C. Dutt's *Mahārāṣtra jīvanprabhāt* is one of the 2 novels mentioned as rays of hope (for a discussion of the novel, cf. Chandra, *The Oppressive Present*, p. 64). Mālavīya is the only person of Hindi background mentioned, praised with the Maharaja of Darbhanga for founding B.H.U.

invested with a garb and a role that transcend their limited identities. The real barriers which would separate the Hindi-educated from other audiences within the nation can be overcome discursively: literature becomes thus the site where an undivided national consciousness can be retrieved and reworked. This had, according to Gupta, as much to do with the power of poetry as with the power of history-telling: both can revive a dead nation.[33]

The fact that Gupta addressed only the Hindu community while compiling a national history of India should be no surprise now: apart from the powerful identification of language and religion (Hindi-Hindu), the kind of history Gupta narrated was that outlined in the previous section, in which non-Hindus are either foreigners or subordinate to the mainstream.[34] As Puruṣottam Agravāl observes, though Gupta sincerely desired unity and a truly national consciousness, his *baddhamūl saṃskāras* ('rooted assumptions') - which are in fact the object of the poem - led him to view the Indian nation as coterminus with the Hindu *jāti*.[35] This vision was partially altered as the poet came under the influence of Gandhi and his idea of a universal 'human *jāti*', but would resurface regularly every time he would write about his *saṃskāras*, as in the poem *Hindū* (1927-28).[36]

It is precisely this discrepancy between 'uncriticised' *saṃskāras* and nationalist ideology which enabled poets like Gupta, his many readers and Hindi nationalists in general to later subscribe to a secular, broad-minded ideology while retaining a sense of identity, history, etc. based on an exclusive and unquestioned notion of Hindu community as voiced in the poem.

[33]In fact, Gupta expressed as follows his faith in the power of poetry (if useful, didactic poetry) to effect the transformation from divided to undivided nation: 'संसार में कविता अनेकों क्रान्तियाँ कर चुकी । मुरझे मनों में वेग की विद्युत्प्रभाएँ भर चुकी। है अन्ध-सा अन्तर्जगत कवि-रूप सविता के बिना। सदभाव जीवित रह नहीं सकते सु-कविता के बिना।। मृत जाति को कवि ही जिलाते रस-सुधा के योग से।' [How many revolutions has poetry effected in the world! - as if injecting withered minds with electric charge; the inner world is blind without a poet's light, goodness cannot survive without good poetry. Only a poet can revive a dead nation with the nectar of *rasa*.] *Bhaviṣya khaṇḍ*, stanzas 97-98, p. 182.

[34] Not only the millennial history from the first invasions of the Śakas to the arrival of the first Muslim invaders takes less than 20 stanzas (out of the 253 of*Atīt khaṇḍ*): Buddha, Jīna, Śaṅkara, Vikramāditya, Bhoja are only bright stars of a darkening sky. The section on Muslim rule is also surprisingly short, only 20 stanzas, and clearly less important than that on Hindu civilisation. We find here all the *topoi* of the Indian history of India: 'we' called the Islamic hord, Jaycandra's selfish betrayal; the rule of the 'Yavanas' was mostly destructive (the longest section goes under the heading '*atyācār*'), with a few good exceptions like Akbar (logically explained, since a whole community cannot be bad and keep completely apart from the whole - Hindu - society, p. 87) but with Aurangzeb as a dark epilogue. Set against 'Yavana' rule are examples of Hindu pride: Maharana Pratāp, the collective sacrifice (*jauhar*) of Rajput women, Śivājī. Once again, the end of Yavan rule is caused by the end of a cycle (*Atīt khaṇḍ*, 242, p. 90): 'अन्यायियों का राज्य भी क्या अचल रह सकता कभी ? आखिर हुए अंगरेज़ शासक राज्य हैं जिनका अभी॥ संप्रति समुन्नति की सभी हैं प्राप्त सुविधाएँ यहाँ॥ सब पथ खुले हैं भय नहीं विचरा जहाँ चाहो वहाँ॥' [Can an unjust rule last forever? Finally the British became rulers and they still rule. Hence all means of progress are there, all routes are open, you can go anywhere you want without fear.] *Atīt khaṇḍ*, stanza 243, 90.

[35] P. Agravāl, 'Rāṣṭrakavi kī rāṣṭrīy cetnā', *Ālocnā*, New Delhi, Oct.-Dec. 1986, pp. 127-136.

[36] *Ibid.*, p. 130.

Let us now turn to the poem itself: divided in three parts, *Bhārat-bhārtī* seeks to answer the question of 'who we were, we are and we shall be'. Evidently, existing identities are not sufficient, and identity has to be 'rediscovered' from nothing less than the Vedic past. The first two parts are mainly descriptive, as if the Aryans were 'out there' and the act of description would leave no doubt about their existence as they are presented.[37] The third part, concerning the future, is exhortative. Importantly, since history is cyclical, if 'we' rise from the present decadence it will only be to become what we were: thus there is no need to imagine a future different from the past.

Like in Hālī's *Musaddas,* the first two parts of the poem present a stark contrast indeed: as much everything was good and pure in ancient India, everything is bad, very bad, in modern India - *'Hā, hāy!'* is the common refrain. In fact, past and present are complementary, and the glorified vision of the past sets the agenda for the present. The section on the past starts uncompromisingly with *'hamārī śreṣṭhtā'*, our excellence. The pure past of Aryan-Hindu-Indian civilisation is juxtaposed both to the Indian present and to 'Western civilisation', feeding into essentialist views of the inherent superiority of India.[38] In a series of antitheses, ancient Aryans are compared to the rest of the world: when others went around naked, we built palaces which touched the stars; when others roamed in jungles eating meat, we practised agriculture (*Atīt khaṇḍ* 47, p. 26).[39] What is important here is not the (scarce) originality of this view, but its typicality and wide currency: these passages from the section on the past were the ones invariably included in the curriculum (cf. 2.5), and similar views were aired in all seriousness in prestigious Hindi magazines.

The description of the Aryan forefathers is predictably one of perfection; along with general virtues, Aryan men, women and children are endowed by Gupta with exactly the qualities he thought modern Hindus lacked and needed; hence independence, selflessness,

[37] In fact, in a 'historical glimpse' (*jhāṁkī*) of ancient India, with the backdrop of temples and buildings, the poet leads us through the pure daily routine of Aryan men, women and children. The land of India, 'the image of Brahmā', the 'giver of life', 'endowed with knowledge and glory', the poet assures us, is still the same: only 'we' have changed. Although the point is not overemphasised, we find it again at the onset of the second section: buildings, ruins are the signs and remainders of the past. Temples speak, though where once children chanted now owls cry and warn Hindus of the impending disaster; *Atīt khaṇḍ,* stanzas 143 ff., pp. 65 ff; *Vartamān khaṇḍ,* stanza 6, p. 96.
[38] India, the land of the Aryans, was the seat of creation, the 'pride of the earth', the 'land of the *ṛṣis*', and 'we' are the children of the Aryas. Quotations from Manu, the Puranas, Tod, Sir Walter Raleigh, the Gospels and the Quran all prove India's antiquity and excellence; *ibid.*, p. 14.
[39] India, the cradle of world civilisation, has given knowledge, science, philosophy and even religion to the world: 'संसार को पहले हमीं ने ज्ञान- भिक्षा दान की। आचार की व्यापार की व्यवहार की' [We were the first to initiate the world to knowledge, to civilised manners and to business] *Atīt khaṇḍ,* stanza 45, p. 26. This was of course a common-enough line in Hindi journals and in literature from the time of Bhārtendu's *Bhārat durdaśā* (1880). Also: 'we first preached to the world, we first inhabited the world, we civilised Greece' (*ibid.*, p. 77); even Jesus was a disciple of the Hindus, and Japan learnt from India (*ibid.*, pp. 33-34). The note accompanying the first line quotes a Mr D.A, Brown, who in the *Daily Tribune* of 10.2.1884 wrote: 'After objective examination we have to admit that the Hindus are the true creators of world literature, religion and civilisation'; *ibid.*

self-control, maturity in 'behaviour, commerce, science' (p. 26). Much space is devoted to the ancient Hindus' excellence in world-wide sea- (and air!) trade, in science ('we knew all the world's secrets', p. 29), in education and in literature in the wide sense of the word, that is in all branches of human endeavour. Above all, the Aryan community had all the marks of a nation, namely unity of language and of feeling:

> थी एक भाषा एक मन था एक सबका भाव था।
> सम्पूर्ण भारतवर्ष मानो एक नगरी थी बड़ी
> पुर और ग्राम-समूह-संस्था थी मुहल्लों की लड़ी।
> All had but one language, one mind, one feeling
> the whole of Bhāratvarṣa was like a big town:
> cities and villages like a net of *muhallas* (*Atīt khand* 73, p. 37)

Gupta dwells particularly long on education, comparing it to the present one in oder to criticize English education: then, education was imparted to both boys and girls, first at home by their parents (after all, mothers were educated, too), then at gurukuls, where education was free and teachers were respected (pp. 70-72). The idyllic and moving view of children chanting the Vedas recalls the reports of enthusiastic visitors to Ārya Samāj gurukuls.[40] English education, on the contrary, is alienating, morally and intellectually harmful, since it hides from Hindus the truth that they were the *jagadgurus*; furtheromore, it teaches 'free thought' instead of the Vedas (*Atīt khaṇḍ* 148, p. 128).[41] Unlike traditional Indian education, English education is for sale, does not inculcate self-respect and leads only to badly paid clerical jobs, or to begging:

> हा ! आज शिक्षा-मार्ग भी संकीर्ण होकर क्लिष्ट है
> कुलपति-सहित उन गुरुकुलों का ध्यान ही अवशिष्ट है।
> बिकने लगी विद्या यहाँ अब शक्ति हो तो क्रय करो
> यदि शुल्क आदि न दे सको तो मूर्ख ही मरो !।
> Ah, the path of education is but narrow and crooked today
> only the memory of those Gurukuls and teachers is left!
> Knowledge is for sale, if you can buy it, good,
> if you cannot, you can die illiterate!
> (*Vartamān khaṇḍ* 138, p. 126).

Worth noticing is Gupta's description of power and society in ancient India: it reconciles heroism to the essentialist view of India as intrinsically peaceful, and kingly

[40] 'आधार आर्य्यों के अटल जातीय-जीवन-प्राण का -। है पाठ कैसा हो रहा श्रुति शास्त्र और पुराण का । हे राम! हिन्दू जाति का सब कुछ भले ही नष्ट हो ।पर यह सरस संगीत उसका फिर यहाँ सु-स्पष्ट हो॥' [(it was) the basis of the national life of the Aryans: how the Śruti, the Śāstras and the Purāṇas are chanted!Oh Rām, may everything be destroyed of the Hindu *jāti*, but may this melodious music should resound here clearly!] *Atīt khaṇḍ,* stanza 175, p. 72.
[41] 'Free thought', one of the *bêtes noires* of Hindi reformist thinkers, is glossed here as 'unrestrained thought, to blabber', *ibid.*, p. 129.

power to non-attachment.[42] The power of the ruler was 'naturally' limited by the paternalistic ideal of the king as 'father to the people' (*prajā-pālak*). Also, the four *varṇas* are accepted as originally good: they were building blocks for the perfectly-ordered Hindu society, where competition and conflict are absent. Thus the appeal for radical reforms in the second and third sections is voiced as an appeal to the four castes and to the 'natural leaders' of society to return to the purity of the *varṇāśrama* system (cf. 3.3). Once again, the future does not have to be imagined differently from the past.

By explaining India's decadence as the result of inner flaws, i.e. straying from the Aryan ideal, Gupta situated the motor of the process very early, on a moral ground and completely within the community (i.e. not as a consequence of foreign invasions).[43] In this way, he managed to send a particular message to the audience: if decadence was a moral process, so is progress, and history would teach Hindus that the key to progress lay not in historical circumstances but in their inner unity, purity and strength, and in returning to the ideals of the past.

The description of the present, by contrast, is an indictement of India's economic, social, religious and cultural bankruptcy, and an agenda of reform much along the lines of *Sarasvatī*. In this section, in fact, the poet abandons the earlier lyrical elegy for an argumentative, prosaic tone; indeed, were the rhyme absent, this could be one of the many articles on *Bhārat durdaśā* coming straight from Dvivedī's pen.[44] The picture is one of Kāliyuga, where economic decline is matched by social chaos and cultural confusion, and where social evils are corruptions of the originally good principles.

In all this, British rule appears as the very paradox of modernity. On the one side it is presented as good, the road to progress and opportunities, in full accordance with the colonial view: safety, civic amenities, good administration, rail, telegraph, hospitals, schools.[45] On the other side, it appears ruinous and alienating because it suppresses

[42] The heroism of the ancient kings, the wonderful weapons of the Aryans and their conquests of South-East Asia are immediately counteracted by the statement that they resorted to violence only for self-defence: 'Where did we ever lit the flame of war? We travelled everywhere but never caused revolutions'; *Atīt khaṇḍ,* stanza 137, p. 63.

[43] With a kind of sin of *hybris*, 'our' self-pride blocked our resources of truthfulness and humility, and the seeds of hatred, envy and self-interested started eating from within. The Mahābhārata war was the product of this process and marked the beginning of decadence; *Atīt khaṇḍ,* stanza 195, p. 98.

[44] Gupta's criticism of present India is indeed merciless: education is scarce and harmful; literature, whether poetry or fiction, is impure (when not downright vulgar) and useless, indifferent to its real vocation; associations are only cradles of further division and unrest; religion is in the hands of scrupleless *mahants*, while *sadhus* have forgotten the ancient ideals of the *munis*; *Vartamān khaṇḍ,* stanzas 157-200, pp. 130-139. The final verdict on contemporary (Hindu) society is a familiar list of 'social evils' - mismatched unions between old men and child-brides, sale of brides or bridegrooms, corruption, unnecessary litigations in court, addiction to liquor, inner divisions, adultery, family quarrels, hypocrisy, lack of self-support - the list is endless but selective.

[45] This possibly explains why the nationalism of *Bhārat-bhārtī* was considered outdated by the 1920s, as nationalist poems took an outspoken anti-British stance; see Rāmnāth Lāl 'Suman', 'Vartamān hindī kavitā aur chāyāvād', in *Mādhurī*, VII, pt. 1, 1, Aug.-Sept. 1928.

economic *svadeśī* and the cultural ideal of the forefathers:[46] economic dependence on foreign goods is seen as a sign of both physical and psychological subjection.[47]

The poem ends with an exhortative section. Gupta's appeal is first to Hindu society as a whole, and then to the *leaders* of every group - *raīses*, mahants, pandits, the four castes, religious leaders, students, youth, the wealthy, poets, and finally women and children - reminding each of their dharma. The message, in short, is two-fold: adapt to the new times, to technology but, above all, remember your cultural origin and follow the footsteps of your forefathers (*Bhaviṣya khaṇḍ* 35, p. 170). What is noteworthy in this articulation of society is that it is viewed as composed of different, compact and cohesive groups, where conflicting interests and ideas are only an effect of cultural confusion and do not reflect any real disharmony. It would be enough for each group to 'progress' along the dharma of its forefathers for the whole society to progress harmonically.

The rationalist agenda of Mahāvīr Prasād Dvivedī is thus enmeshed with an idealised view of the past, where devotion to history becomes an unquestioned source of identity and nationhood, where unity becomes a crucial value and conflict an alien threat. Both implied a consensus that was, however, more easily achieved on the discursive level of literature than on the practical one of politics, and that was not immune to critique from subjects who objected to the role and status bestowed upon them. Although in Hindi there was nothing like the widespread and comprehensive critique of religion and history mounted by Jotirao Phule in Marathi, and whatever critique was not supported by autonomous activities and institutions as in Phule's case, the terms of the critique moved by the fledgling Adi-Hindu movement of the 1920s in the United Provinces are remarkably similar.[48] Adi-Hindu ideologues retained the mainstream narrative of Indian history, but

[46] Dvivedī's influence is apparent, first of all, in the emphasis on economic dependence, on the state of agriculture and on the importance of education. The tone is one of impending gloom, the agenda that of civic reform. If the signs of the past, temples and ruins, still remind us of our glorious past and of our real identity, the signs of the present tell a completely different story of poverty, famine, epidemics, cow-killings, economic dependence, waste and irresponsibility on the part of the wealthy, and wide-spread ignorance. Gupta uses a variety of approaches in dealing with the rural situation, from the straightforward economic analysis of exploitation and export of wealth to the pathetic description of the 'poor farmers' reduced to begging by debts and ridiculous wages. See also below 6.2.

[47] The polemic addressee is here the modern city-folk, who take pride in buying foreign goods, and are westernised to the point of ~~stopping~~ to believe in God - in a word, who have stopped being Indian. The tone is that of sarcastic tirades in Bengali against the westernised Babu, but here reproach is directed primarily against the rich traders, the *raīses*, those who should ideally be entrepreneurs and civic reformers, i.e. lead the country on the path of economic self-reliance and social progress; *Vartamān khaṇḍ*, stanzas 106-22, pp. 120-23.

[48] The Adi-Hindu movement of the 1920s in the United Provinces was a movement of urban untouchables that stemmed from a Bhakti revival among them, based on the notion that Bhakti was the religion of the original, ancient inhabitants of India, the Ādi Hindūs, from which these untouchables claimed descent. Their ideologues, originally linked with the Ārya Samāj in the 1910s, took from it the notion of forcible imposition of religion and 'projected it backwards to the vedic age to argue that the Aryan invaders had forcibly subjugated and imposed vedic Hinduism on the original Indians, the Adi Hindus, and deprived them of their *Bhakti* religion, which they had supposedly

turned it on its head, with the Aryans taking the part of the foreign oppressors and untouchables that of the indigenous nation striving for freedom.[49] Similarly, Ārya Samāj-educated women questioned the direct Aryan-Hindu filiation in order to argue against the status given to women in Hindu religion and society and yet maintain the Vedic ideal. Thus, they argued, whereas Vedic women were respected and educated on par with men, Manu's famous *śloka* according to which a woman always belonged to someone else, be it father, husband, son, had led to subsequent misinterpretations and eventually to their present disempowered status.[50] However, these sporadic voices hardly affected prevailing assumptions.

To summarize, in this section we examined how polemical debates with colonial historiography as well as literary elaborations created a historical *saṃskāra* and a master-narration of Indian history that was essentially Hindu history. Fictional literature in particular had several advantages over academic history in that it could, to use Kaviraj's words, 'utter what history could not spell'.[51] It could e.g., as we shall see in the following section, determine the meaning of events by choosing their order: thus, defeats could be downplayed as temporary stepbacks, or even valued as instances of heroic resistance, while temporary victories could become the foretaste of a future triumph. Even more importantly,

practised prior to the advent of the Aryans'. Similarly, the notion of the golden Vedic age was transformed into a golden Adi Hindu age: Adi Hindu leaders claimed that there had been ancient Adi Hindu kingdoms, capital cities, forts and a thriving civilisation. The Aryans then invaded the country and conquered them variously by brute force, repression, cunning and treachery. Being righteous, good and free of deceit, Adi Hindus were no match for the cunning Aryans, even though they were courageous. N. Gooptu, 'The Political Culture of the Urban Poor', pp. 97, 100. This study provides an excellent discussion of the historical, social and economic context of the movement. For an assessment of J. Phule's enterprise, see Rosalind O'Hanlon, *Caste, Conflict and ideology: Mahatma Jotirao Phule and Low Caste Protest in Nineteenth-Century Western India*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 1985.

[49] What bearing this historical vision was to have on the present was expressed by an untouchable member of the Legislative Council, J.P. Gavai, at an Adi-Hindu Sammelan held at Allahabad in December 1927: 'We do not need *svarājya*, because it will not resolve our situation. The experience of ancient Hindu rule proves that with *svarājya* we shall be even more enslaved'. One of the motions passed at the meeting urged the government to amend the *Manusmṛti* of passages offensive to Adi-Hindus.The editor of the Hindi journal which reported the proceedings, while visibly worried by the consequences of a separate movement of untouchables as subjects and not objects of reform, commented favourably on this last issue. Interestingly, however, he put the blame of the passages against women and untouchables not on Manu himself, but on his later Brahmin commentators; besides, he urged that the amendments be conducted by a group of 'reasonable, pious and just' scholars, and not by the government, thus pre-emptying the possibility of anything of the kind to happen; editorial in *Cāṁd*, VI, pt. 1, 4, February 1928, p. 430.

[50] After Manu, Buddha, Śaṅkara and the whole Hindu culture had considered women on par with animals, not with humans. 'Leafing through the pages of history, one's heart burns, boils, bursts with the fire of revolution' wrote Suśīlādevī Vidyālaṃkār, 'Ārya saṃskṛti aur striyāṁ', *Cāṁd*, XV, pt. 2, 5, September 1937, pp. 462-67.

[51] Historical narratives were a 'continuation of history, uttering what history could not spell... Novels had a deep internal relation to historical works. For they helped spell the same ideas only in a different manner or style: they tried to spell, as much as serious history sought to do, a self-respecting relation with the community's past'; S. Kaviraj, *The Unhappy Consciousness*, p. 111.

as *Bhārat-bhāratī* showed, fiction writers and poets could take advantage of a 'conceptual indeterminacy' concerning the subject, the 'we' of history and the meaning of *jāti*. In this way the Indian nation could gradually emerge as the Hindu nation out of the Vedic past, include regional powers, heroes and communities, decide how to interpret Muslim 'exceptions' and single out figures or events for the contemporary 'Indian' audience to identify with.[52] This vision of Indian history gave historical depth to the idea of a cohesive Hindu community. However, insofar as it attempted to gloss in the ideal over the actual differences, divisions and conflicts, it produced dangerous exclusions and gross oversimplifications - not in the least that concerning seven centuries of Muslim presence in India! What is noteworthy, however, is that this paradigm of Indian history has largely survived, despite partial critiques from other subjects.

In fact, the critiques by Adi-Hindu ideologues and Ārya Samāj-educated women show, paradoxically, the impact and great elasticity of the master-narrative of Indian history. Just as this view could accommodate both faith in the British rule (as in *Bhārat-bhārtī*) and complete rejection of it, as in the case of the later historians, it could also accommodate partial shifts of point of view and meaning without destroying the general paradigm. In fact, this view of history became, especially in the Hindi area, the foundation for the whole language question and a common historical *saṃskāra* for men of quite different political persuasions, from Mālavīya's Hindu politics to Gaṇeś Śaṅkar Vidyārthī's radical nationalism to Narendra Dev's socialism (see 5.2 and 6.3). The example of *upadeśaks* and *pracāraks* like Svami Satyadeva Parivrājak or Devīdatt Dvivedī, originally affiliated to the Ārya Samāj but later free-lancing on a variety of nationalist issues, from Hindi-Devanagari to *svadeśī*, from temperance to cow-protection, from *śuddhi* to caste reform, shows how this historical view gained currency across sectarian affiliation and the literacy divide.[53] In fact, we find the Aryan-Hindu myth accepted - though not necessarily in the Ārya Samāj version of the Vedic aeroplane, rocket, telephone, etc. - even by authors who would take a strong and active stand against communalism in the 1920s and 1930s, like Vidyārthī or Nirālā, or by those who would argue for a more nuanced interpretation of

[52] 'Fiction writers used the fuzziness of this idea of community to give their audience a community which had not existed before, by conceiving gradually a community called the nation, or selecting the appellation of the nation for one of these communities'; *ibid.*

[53] For an overview of Satyadev Parivrājak's long and chequered career, see Appendix; Satyadeva, Pandit Jīvānand Śarmā 'Kāvyatīrth' and Rājārām Śarmā were appointed by the Nāgarī Pracāriṇī Sabhā between 1912 and 1916 for Nagari propaganda: their speeches in villages, caste sabhas, temples etc. ranged from education to religion to nationalism, and crossed the divide between urban and rural publics; for an example of the confluence of issues and the rhetoric style of a precher, see Devīdatt Dvivedī, *Bhārat kī varṇavyavasthā aur svarājya*, published by the author with an introduction by Pandit Sundarlāl, Fatehpur 1929. The role and cultural synthesis of these preachers deserves separate study.

the medieval past. However, to dub this whole historical discourse as communal seems both simplistic and improductive.

What certainly seems true is that it took a self-conscious acknowledgment of its serious implications and an active effort to alter it, and generally speaking alterations were only partial. Besides, what seems more worrying is the persistence of this historical discourse even after Independence, once the changed political climate should have prompted a different construction of history and allowed a more relaxed self-analysis and critique of national identity.[54] In the field of literary criticism, too, Maithilīśaraṇ Gupta's *Bhārat-bhārtī* has been questioned as a poem, but its cultural message still has to be scrutinised.

[54] It is a mark of the strength of this discourse that it is prevalent even in the works of writers far removed from the sub-continent such as Nirad Chaudhuri and V.S. Naipaul. Naipaul's *India: A Wounded Civilisation* (1977) takes the view that India's past it's one of defeat and subjection, which cannot be contemplated without shame by Indians.

3.2 History as a mirror

In the previous section we saw how a national narrative of Indian history was created out of a selective use of western and Indian sources and categories, and how it identified ancient (Hindu) India as a powerful fulcrum of identity. If ancient Indian history provided an ideal of excellence, however, medieval history compelled historians and historical writers to grapple with a more painful and problematic past: a past full of decadence, defeat, division, subjection. Through another identification, that subjection mirrored the present state of submission. To find self-respect and dignity in that painful past would be to find self-respect and dignity in the present predicament. But how could one find pride in defeat? And how could one learn from it? Once again, fictional narratives offered, more than scholarly history, imaginative ways to answer these questions: they could 'work through' certain painful knots and still offer positive identifications by qualifying defeat, by imagining resistance, by introducing fictional characters and investing defeated heroes with a nationalist halo.

This section shows another way of engaging with history and another use of literature. The historical narratives examined here focus on *vīr-vīrāṅganāeṁ*, heroes and heroines: some of them had been local or folk-heroes for centuries, celebrated in folk ballads and drama, others were of more recent lineage. As we shall see, at this particular historical juncture they acquired a nationalist resonance and became part of the national master-narrative. Furthermore, these historical narratives popularised the categories and exclusions of the master-narrative; they became a kind of general historical grid that covered romantic and heroic exploits. So much so that 'historical novel' came to mean in Hindi little more than costume drama, where black-and-white characters, fervid imagination and diffuse nationalism took the place of complex historical detail and verisimilitude. It may be suggested that the predominance of imagination had something to do with the fact that historical novels were geared to juvenile audiences[1] - which enhances rather than decreases

[1] As Premcand himself said introducing Rāmcandra Miśra's *Prempathik* (Banaras, 1926): 'This is a historical novel. It shows the period of Maratha-Muslim conflict, which was a wonderful if brief period of Indian renaissance (*bhārtīy punarutthān*). Our literary age changes along with age. Historical novels are a favourite with adolescence (*kaiśor*), when our imagination sears to the sky and common, mundane things appear dull, lifeless and devoid of wonder. We hope that our youth will read with pleasure this tale of heroism (*vīr ras kī kathā*) and will dream to become another 'Mādhav' [the hero of the novel]'; *ibid.* The declared aim of this novel was 'to depict the heroism, fidelity, truthfulness and other qualities of Indian *kśatriya* girls'; *ibid.*, quoted in G. Rāy, *Hindī upanyās-koś*, vol. 2, p. 126.

the importance of the historical *saṃskāra* these narratives disseminated in impressionable readers.[2]

In this section we shall juxtapose some 'standard' examples of *vīr-vīrāṅganā* literature with something quite different: one of the very few novels which directly dealt with an Indian *vīrāṅganā* against British rule, Vṛndāvanalāl Varmā's *Jhānsī kī rānī lakṣmībāī* (1946). Though published after the period this thesis covers, we have chosen it because it was the product of decades of personal quest and 'objective' research, and because it addressed directly and originally the issues raised in this section, by holding the history of 1857 as a mirror to the present.

3.2.1 Historical Narratives of Heroism

Narratives of male and female heroism in Hindi in this period occur at the crossroads of several genres and concerns.[3] *Vīr-rasa* (heroic) literature was considered, in the reformist view of literature, one of the necessary features of a national literature. As such, narratives of heroes and heroines were seen as the most appropriate to carry a message of valour, virility and strength. The fact that Hindi literature in the centuries of 'Muslim rule' had been a literature largely of *śṛṅgāra* was taken as both a cause and an effect of political subjection, while the few examples of *vīr-rasa* were interpreted as marks of nationalist awareness.[4] This initiated the search in the literary past for a tradition of *vīr-*

We may recall also the earlier claim by Kiśorīlāl Gosvāmī (1865-1932), one of the first practitioners of the genre. As he wrote in the preface to *Tārā vā kṣatrakullamlinī* (1910?): 'In my novels, I have given precedence to imagination over history; at places, the history has been altogether set aside for the benefit of the imagination. Therefore the reader should understand my intention clearly; it is a novel, not history'; translated and quoted by A.S. Kalsi, 'Realism in the Hindi Novel', p. 118n.

[2] For a similar explanation regarding the appeal among youth of the RSS, see C. Jaffrelot, *The Hindu Nationalist Movement and Indian Politics*, pp. 68-70.

[3] See K. Hansen, 'The Virangana in North Indian History. Myth and Popular Culture', *Economic and Political Weekly*, XXIII, 18, 30 April 1988, Women's Studies, pp. 25-33.

[4] See Bhāgīrathprasād Dīkṣit, 'Vīr-śatābdi', in *Mādhurī*, VIII, pt. 2, 3, April 1930, pp. 354-358. In the article Dīkṣit tried to trace a tradition of heroic poetry in Indian literature since the Vedic period. It was the prominence of *vīr-rasa* during that time that had resulted in the Aryans colonising America, Java, Bali, Egypt, Bukhara and Mexico! But as soon as *śṛṅgāra* had set in, decadence had started, as was proved by the degeneration from Sanskrit to Prakrit and Apabhramsa. From this point of view, the 18-19th centuries were a golden era after centuries of darkness: 'In the Southern province, inspired by the preachings of Samartha Guru Rāmdās, Śivājī hoisted the flag of freedom. Thanks to their concerted effort, the society of Maharastra was awakened. They organised society according to Hindu ideals, which filled the whole society with moral strength' (p. 356). North India was not silent either: 'Mahākavi Bhūṣaṇ toured the whole of India with Śivājī as a model and brought tremendous awakening to Hindu society... Its direct consequence was that the Yavana empire broke into pieces', *ibid.* Hindi associations similarly valued heroic literature, and Viyogī Hari's *Vīr satsaī* (1927) a collection of poem of heroic content in Braj, was awarded the Maṅglāprasād prize in 1928. Another popular collection of *vīr-rasa* poetry for children was Lala Bhagvān Dīn's *Vīr pañcaratna* (1918).

rasa poetry that would confirm the nationalism and prowess of the Indian people; it also created the urge to produce heroic literature in the present. Biographies of *vīr-vīrāṅganās* belonged broadly to the genre of political literature, and made up for a large section of children-literature and journals; yet, if all anti-British traces were well concealed, they apparently entered school-libraries with relative ease, circumventing colonial censorship on nationalist literature.

Heroic narratives naturally centred around the exploits of warriors and kings. Within the general framework of Muslim sovereignty, these could only be, as other scholars have pointed out, narratives of Hindu resistance.[5] Historical narratives would therefore thematise both heroism and defeat (e.g. Maharana Pratāp), resistance and subjection, good rule and narrow self-interest (Durgāvatī), self-pride and the loss of honour (*apmān*), communal harmony and treason (Lakṣmībāī), foreign rule and national resurgence (Śivājī). These would be the values and questions on the ground, inscribed in the categories of 'we' Hindus and 'they' foreigners, and in the long perspective of a national history.[6]

Whereas Maharana Pratāp, Chattrasāl, Śivājī represented evident ideals of masculinity, heroines like Ahalyābāī, Durgāvatī, Lakṣmībāī transcended gender. They became the perfect nationalist icons for the present: they synthesized activity, heroism, wisdom, good rule, *maryādā*, freedom, Sarasvatī, Mother India. Moreover, the political ideal of the *vīrāṅganā* was, unlike that of *Rāmrājya*, one of action, mobilising heroism and self-sacrifice in the cause of a future *svarājya*.

Durgāvatī, an historical play on the Gond queen who defeated Akbar's troops twice before being herself defeated in 1564, written by Badrīnāth Bhaṭṭ in 1925, is typical of the genre.[7] Here the theme of the *vīrāṅganā*, popular with Sāṅgīts and Nauṭaṅkīs, is used for a 'serious' play on *vīr-rasa* intended for reading and not for the stage.

Durgāvatī, an ideal Hindu ruler and brave warrior, bears the brunt of Akbar's expansionist policy; though willing to reach a peaceful compromise, she is compelled to

[5] E.g. Partha Chatterjee, *The Nation and its Fragments*, pp. 102 ff.

[6] It was clearly less amenable to deal directly with Indian-British conflict; the few books that attempted to do so were immediately banned: e.g. Pandit Sundarlāl's *Bhārat meṁ aṅgrezī rāj* (Chand Press, Allahabad, 1929), and Ṛṣabhcaraṇ Jain's novel on 1857, *Gadar* (Delhi, 1930). From the nineteenth century, this had led partly to a transference of the antagonism with the 'villanous British' onto the 'villanous Muslim', see S. Chandra, *The Oppressive Present.* Perhaps the only other novel on 1857 in Hindi written in this period, R. Jain's *Gadar* was however hardly a 'historical' account; it ostensibly aimed at 'washing away the stain of shame from the Indians' forehead for the episode of the Kanpur Well'; Introduction, Ṛṣabhcharaṇ Jain, *Gadar*, Hindi Pustak Karyalay, Delhi 1930, p.5.

[7] Published by Ganga Pustak Mala, Lucknow, it was included in the syllabus for Intermediate exams in U.P. and Punjab. It was reprinted in 1929 and 1933; to my knowledge, it is not considered now a significant work. The novel contains the typical elements of the genre: the good, maybe too merciful ruler, betrayal, heroic self-defense before defeat. Interestingly, nothing is made of Durgāvatī being a Gond, i.e. 'tribal', queen.

defend her reign against the much too powerful Mughal once her able minister is made captive in Agra and one of her own courtiers, whom she had treated too mercifully, betrays her. Interestingly, Akbar is in the delicate position of just ruler and main villain: Bhaṭṭ solves the paradox by transferring most of the villainousness onto his minister Asafkhān and by presenting Akbar as a just but ill-advised ruler. While Durgāvatī's indomitable resistance is celebrated with clear nationalist overtones, Pṛthvīrāj of Bikaner, Bīrbal, Ṭodarmal, Mānsiṃh give Bhaṭṭ the chance to expound on the 'painful knot' of Hindus who sacrificed loyalty to their Hindu 'brothers' for the sake of a foreign ruler.[8]

The *vīr-vīrāṅganā* motif fitted well in the general trend of historical novels in Hindi, inasmuch as they, too, were more concerned with black-and-white characters, heroism and moral qualities rather than with actual historical detail. After an early spate of translations from Bengali historical novels,[9] in fact, the astounding success of the wondrous romance *Candrakāntā* (1891) drove historical novelists, geared as they were towards entertainment, to adopt its framework and several of its features. Thus historical novels turned into romances, with a thin historical backdrop, black-and-white characterisations and the Hindu nationalist message as a sub-plot. Exemplary of this trend, which was to continue well into the twentieth century and had illustrious adepts, were the historical romances by Kiśorīlāl Gosvāmī.[10]

[8] In an unusually irreverent editorial on 'Vartmān rājputānā', the editor of the women's journal *Cāṁd* held up a similar 'mirror' to Rajput 'nationalism'. At the time of the Mughals, they had shown little love for national independence and most of them had become Mughal generals, happily fighting their own 'brothers' and a national hero like Śivājī. 'With which words can we address those who made their sisters and daughters the servants of cow-eating Yavanas for the sake of their own fleeting wealth and pomp? We are writing these lines not with ink but with our tears' (p. 5). The editor discounted their Kshatriya lineage as fanciful and remarked that 'pure Aryan customs' were absent in Rajputana. He also criticised them as rulers: 'virtues like concern for the subjects (*prajāhit-cintan*), dutifulness, love for the people were extremely rare' (p. 3). This critique served to linked past betrayal with present patriarchy and authoritarian rule: 'Women were very respected in Rajputana, and their honour was their men's honour. But they were respected as *property*, as much as the houses of the lord or his servants' (p. 4). In an unsual break of Hindi self-censorship, the critique finally aimed at present Rajput rulers: they lacked both heroism and national consciousness (no ruler sympathised with India's independence movement), as well as good rule. Because of its almost total lack of education, democracy, freedom of speech, reform, political awakening, economic development, public health and for the presence of slavery, *begār* and widespread poverty 'present Rajputana cannot be counted among the civilised countries'; *Cāṁd*, 'Rājputānā aṅk', X, pt. 1, 1, November 1931, pp. 5-11.

[9] The earliest historical narratives in Hindi had been translations, mostly from Bengali: Bankim's *Durgeśnandinī* (1865) was translated, serialised and published first in 1882 (2nd part in 1884); R.C. Dutt's *Baṅgvijetā* (1874) was serialised in 1879 and published in 1886, *Mahārāṣṭra jīvan prabhāt* (1878) was first translated around 1889; G. Rāy, *Hindī upanyās koś,* vol. 1, pp. 306 ff. They aroused great interest among the Hindi literati, especially in the growing publishing centre of Benares, where translations, adaptions and borrowing from Bengali novels became a practice, so much so that eighteenth century Bengal, along with earlier Rajputana, became one of the usual backdrops, as in Kiśorīlāl Gosvāmī's *Hṛdayhārinī* and its sequel *Lavaṅglatā* (1904; comp. 1890-); R.S. McGregor, *Indian Literature in the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries,* p. 102.

[10] Author of perhaps the first short story in Hindi, 'Indumatī' (*Sarasvatī* ,1900), Gosvāmī was the prolific author of several historical romances. Among the other practitioners of the genre at the turn

Historical romance remained very much *the* historical narrative well into the 1920s and 1930s, even though social novels now occupied the centre-stage. Although their popularity has left almost no trace in literary histories, it testifies to the role such narratives had in popularising a brand of nationalist history that celebrated the inherent virtues of the Hindu community with heroic stories of Rajput kings and queens and of other *vīr-vīrāṅganāeṁ*, and stigmatised the 'Muslim' in the role of the villain.[11] Although Vṛndāvanlāl Varmā's first novels, such as *Gaṛh kuṇḍār* (1927) and *Virāṭā kī padminī* (1929), were very much in this mould, here we examine quite a different enterprise, one that stemmed from his engagement with a closer (in time) and more problematic history: Rani Lakṣmībāī's heroic struggle and defeat during the 1857 uprising.

3.2.1 Vṛndāvanlāl Varmā's *vīrāṅganā*

Vṛndāvanlāl Varmā (1889-1973), the most famous and accomplished historical novelist in Hindi of the post-1920 period, started his career with a historical romance, *Gaṛh kuṇḍār*. Indeed, he kept returning to this genre even when he turned to researched historical biographies.[12] It is against this backdrop of historical romances that his *Jhansī kī rānī lakṣmībāī* (1946) and the research leading to it acquire exceptional interest.[13]

of the century were Jayrāmdās Gupta (*Kiśorī vā vīr-bālā*, 1907; *Kaśmīr patan*, 1907; *Vīrāṅganā vā ādarś lalnā*, 1909, etc.), Kārtikprasād Khatrī, Gaṅgāprasād Gupta and others. The historian Munshi Devīprasād and Brajnandan Sahāy, Baldev Prasād Miśra and Thakur Balbhadra Siṃh were less sensational writers. Interestingly, even literati like Rāmnareś Tripāṭhī and the Miśra-brothers tried their hand at this genre (with *Padmāvatī vā vīrbālā*, 1991; and *Vīrmaṇi*, 1917). See G. Rāy, *Hindī upanyās koś*, vol. 1, pp. 136 ff; also R.S. McGregor, *Indian Literature*, A.S. Kalsi, 'Realism in the Hindi Novel'.

[11] In fact, translations of G.W. Reynold's *Mysteries of Old London* turned these novels into even more truculent dramas, as in the case of Rāmkṛṣṇā Śukla's *Mugal darbār rahasya* (Chand Karyalay, 1928), and Sudarśanlāl Trivedī's *Pyāsī talvār* (1936). Other examples form the post-1920 period are Govindvallabh Pant's *Sūryāst* (1922), Rāmcandra Miśra's *Prempathik* (1926), Bhagavatīcaraṇ Varmā's *Patan* (1927), Jamunādās Mehrā's *Baṅgāl kī bulbul* (1928), Rāmpyāre Tripāṭhī's *Dillī kī śahzādī* (1933); G. Rāy, *Hindī upanyās koś*, vol. 2, pp. 123 ff.

[12] For details on his life and works, see Appendix.

[13] The plot in a nutshell: the novel opens with an historical overview on the ruling house of Jhansi and its treaties with the British to focus on the present ruler, Gaṅgādharrāo, a lover and patron of the arts with little time or patience to rule, keen to keep friendly relations with the British resident. In Bithur, meanwhile, Manu (Lakṣmībāī after the wedding), the 13-year-old daughter of Moropant, adviser to the exiled Bajirao Peshwa, grows up with Bajirao's adopted sons, Nana and Rao, and learns military skills as well as reading and writing. She is the only one to remember and believe in the heroic stories of the *Mahābhārata* and the nationalist ideals of Śivājī; she hates the inanity of Indian rulers towards the British, and is much too forth-spoken for girl of her age. Once married to Gaṅgādharrāo, she keeps *pardā* but urges her servants (turned into friends, *sahelīs*) and women to train in military skills. The women, after some initial hesitation, accept enthusiastically. After the early death of her only son, Gaṅgādharrāo dies, too, in 1953, after hastily adopting a *dattak* son, who has to be recognised by the Lieutenant General. Meanwhile, the company assumes power in Jhansi, while the Rani quietly trains and works at organising a network with the rulers and people of Avadh,

It will not be inappropriate here to delve into the story of his engagement with history in some detail. Born in a Kayastha family, in which one ancestor had died fighting for the Rani in 1859, the son of a registrar kanungo, Vṛndāvanlāl Varmā went through a curriculum typical of boys from literate Kayastha families. While at home, he had grown up with her great-gradmother's stories of the brave, just and beloved Rani,

> that tradition, though wondrous, was also unclear; its outlines were vague and based more on devotion than on truth. Later the study of history and science decreased the value of that trust.[14]

Thus, the encounter with 'objective' history at school awakened doubts about those stories, but strong and angry reactions as well:

> In the 5th and 6th form we were given E. Marsden's *History of India* in English to study. The book was expensive for boys like me, but I had to buy it anyway. There I read that, since they belong to a hot country, the people of India always lost against invaders from cold countries. But now they will never be defeated again, because the British belong to a cold country. After they stay here they go back to their cold country, and here they spend the hot season on the hills. When they go back to England, a fresh batch of young Englishmen comes in their place: thus Indians will never be defeated again by anyone. This meant that our country would remain subjected to the British until the end of times. The heroic fight and death of Lakṣmībāi was all worthless. I felt all aflame inside and tore off that page from the book. When I got home my uncle [who provided for his education] found out about the torn book and I got thrashed. How could even an affectionate man like my uncle bear such a waste? He scolded me: 'What is the use of tearing a page of the book where it is written how the British cheated us all? That book must have been printed in thousands of copies...' That day my interest for history was awakened. I decided that I would study and research a lot and finally write something to expose those false books. From that day I also started doing more physical exercise - who knew, if one day somehow I would face an Englishman I wouldn't spare him a sound beating.[15]

Delhi and other princely states to fight for *svarājya*, with the help of Tatya Tope and the Peshwa court. On 4th June 1857, soldiers in Jhansi revolt, and though the Rani takes no part in the revolt, she is hailed as queen once the soldiers eliminate all British officers. When the soldiers leave for Delhi, the Rani is left in charge of the administration and of organising a new, popular army. Her emphasis on arms, training and cannons pays off when she has to defend Jhansi from an old claimant to the throne and from an attack from Orchha. They are, however, just small tests before Jhansi is surrounded and attacked by general Rose in 1858. After Tatya Tope's aborted rescue-attempt from Kalpi and a heroic resistance on the part of the whole populatiuon, the Rani has to flee when British troops finally break into the city (thanks to a traitor) and attack the fort. In Kalpi, the Rani tries to reorganise the army of the Nana, and after suffering a defeat in Kalpi, they manage to conquer Gwalior. The so-far calm Rani is tormented at the prospect of not attaining *svarājya* in her life-time until a Baba reminds her that every fight is a step towards the goal. In the ensuing battle against Rose she is killed with the remains of her valorous red guard, and her body cremated before the British can get hold of it.

[14] Author's preface to *Jhānsī kī rānī*, Mayur Prakasan, Jhansi 1987, p. 1.

[15] Vṛndāvanlāl Varmā, *Apnī kahānī*, Prabhat Prakasan, Delhi 1993, pp. 14-15.

After reading Max Müller's *What can India teach us?*, young Vṛndāvanlāl decided to write an Indian history of India, but could not write more than 20-22 pages. History could not be argued so easily, he discovered. Thereafter, he decided to write historical novels along the line of Walter Scott's *Ivanhoe* and *Talisman*. But again, when he started a novel set in Rajputana he realised he did not know the geography of the place; and when he tried to write on Rani Lakṣmībāī, he realised he lacked the historical material. His only written source was the Marathi account by D.B. Pārasnīs.[16] It was more accurate than the stories of his childhood, but also sided with the British view of 1857 as a Mutiny, and of the Rani as a valorous queen who had fought only to defend her own reign.[17]

Torn between the truth of his grandmother and the truth of historical texts, Varmā could not decide which one was 'true' until, he claims, as a student at a college boarding house in Agra he had a revelatory dream in which he was fighting a war for *svarājya* on the hockey ground on behalf of the queen! Despite the supra-rational encouragement, Varmā's scientific education forbade him to write only on the basis of that, and the whole matter remained in a corner of his mind until, now a 43-year-old vakil, in 1932 he found at the law court a bundle of 40-50 letters of an English soldier to the Lieutenant Governor dated 1858: they did not reveal much apart from the fact that the Rani had not fought only for self-defence or compelled by circumstances.

This second revelation in the form of letters and the historical document of an eye-witness prompted Varmā, already the author of two novels, into a quest that was unprecedented among Hindi historical novelists: he was not only going to *use* historical sources in his narrative, he was going to *look for* them. He would involve more and more inhabitants of Jhansi, living witnesses as well as their descendants, in an attempt to create a sort of community history of the Rani's fight in 1857-58.[18] More documents and accounts

[16] Reprinted in Hindi as Pārasnīs, *Jhānsī kī rānī lakṣmībāī*, Sahitya Bhavan, Allahabad 1964; we have unfortunately been unable to trace this book.
[17] See author's preface to *Jhānsī kī rānī*, p. 1.
[18] He discovered that a scribe at the Court was a descendant of Raghunāthrāo, the Rani's father-in-law, and had kept a diary of Nawab Ali Bahādur (the chief villain), where he disclosed his treacherous role and relationship with Pir Ali. Once gone over to the side of the British, Ali Bahādur had presented some *bayāns* to prove his loyalty to the British; Varmā got hold of them, too. He then found the first of his living witnesses, a Munshi Jurāb Ali who died around 1936 at the age of 115: he had been a *thanedar* at the service of the British in 1857, and his stories, though he had belonged to the other side, supported those of his great-grandmother's! As he found another living witness, Varmā started to 'bother' all the old men and women of Jhansi, 'but from the enthusiasm and devotion they expressed in telling their stories about the Rani I believe that they did not feel pestered'; *ibid.*, p. 3. He wanted to know about the participation of the people of Jhansi in the resistance, and found out about the various officers, cannoniers and castes in the Rani's popular army, especially about her legendary women's cavalry. Varmā found further evidence for the minor characters, including Motībāī the actress, while a document of the period proved that the Hindi written a century before was practically the identical to present-day Hindi; *ibid.*, pp. 3-4.

confirmed his grand-mother's stories. At this point, Varmā could refute the 'truth' of colonialist history, and find his own way of telling an Indian history of India. A letter from the Rani to a neighbouring Raja asking help for *svarājya* was enough to confirm Varmā's belief about the core question of his quest, i.e. whether the Rani had fought for her own sake or for the sake of the country. Varmā could thus engrain Lakṣmībāī - the icon of nationalist struggle - into a history of the people of Jhansi and into a documented study of the broad historical circumstances.

Crucial to Varmā's historical vision was the role of human will and intelligence. Thus, for him it was important to show not the great Lakṣmībāī, but the gradual transformation of young Manu into Lakṣmībāī. The message was; Indians were not born slaves or heroes; even a girl could become a heroine by force of will and the intelligent use of her abilities.[19] It is remarkable for a novel about 1857 that the actual description of the fighting, the best-documented historically, takes up only one third of the book, while the first two-thirds are devoted to preparations: of Lakśmībāī for her historical role; of the people of Jhansi to become a popular army; of the women of Khansi to become equal citizens of an empowered *prajā*.

In a gradual process of self-improvement and self-empowerment, Lakṣmībāī changes from a wilful girl (who behaves like a boy) into a dutiful but energetic wife. She first creates a stir by speaking out at her wedding, urging the officiating pandit to tie the knot properly! (p. 65) Afterwards, confined in *pardā*, she organises the women at the court into able fighters; after her husband's death she changes into a warrior - wearing military attire (p. 199) - and a strategist, preparing her army and weapons while the East India Company rules. After the 1857 uprising she turns into a just ruler, a leader of the struggle for *svarājya* and finally into a *vīrāṅganā*, ready to sacrifice her life for the nationalist cause. It is only in these last stages that the Rani acquires a kind of superhuman aura: both the older Nana and Tatya Tope touch her feet (p. 220) as she appears to them as Bharatmata, a nurturing mother to her people, as the goddess of independence, and as Durga fighting on her vehicle. She is thus ideally equipped to personify the feminine icons of martial prowess and independence.

The transformations of Lakṣmībāī are echoed in the people surrounding her: in her maids, in the women of Jhansi at large, and finally in her soldiers and the men of Jhansi,

[19] Although not excluding the theory of predetrmination (see Manu's extraordinary *janmapatrī*, p. 26), Varmā places much greater emphasis on the transformation of the spirited, fearless girl into a judicious, restrained and patient strategist and ruler.

who turn all into an army of heroes.[20] The servants-turned-friends of the Rani are her most immediate replicas: from daughters of an impoverished family to slaves to the queen, to *sahelīs* trained in the art of war and lastly to *vīrāṅgānāeṁ*, Sundar, Mundar and Kāśībāī follow and resemble the Rani in every way, to the extent that each of them at the moment of her death in fight is taken for the Rani herself. Especially in the characterisations, Varmā makes full use of imagination to invest the Rani, but also minor characters and ordinary people, with a historical vision and to endow their actions with nationalist purposefulness. In this way, their ordinary heroism and historical wisdom can redress the balance of defeat. Similarly, prophecies and dreams can frame contingent defeat in the 'long duration' of national resurgence. After her last defeat, Lakṣmībāī can find no rest until a *sadhu*, Baba Gaṅgādās, prophesises India's future independence to her: only in this way she can view her own fate and struggle as part of a gradual historical process whose fulfiment belongs to the future.[21]Thus, it is actually the British who are blindly self-confident day-dreamers:

> The British saw the smooth and even surface but did not know of the cauldron boiling underneath. They had grabbed India as in a dream, and thought they would keep it in a dream, and the dream would last forever. They never knew or realized that Hindustan may be conquered easily but cannot remain in their grasp for very long. Foreign rulers never took long to conquer this country; they sat on the throne with great pomp... but as far as ruling was concerned, it always remained confined to the cantonments. The truth is that its is impossible to rule over an unhappy people, here as everywhere... (pp. 205-6).

Varmā's historical imagination is at work also in his characterisation of the Rani, especially in two respects. Firstly, she is formally respectful of tradition, but nonetheless more preoccupied with the spirit than the letter of it. Thus, she strictly observes the rituals and her *dharma* (as a wife and then as a widow), but at the same time she introduces

[20] The women of Jhansi, exemplified by the *bakhśin*, the wife of the treasurer, Jhalkārī the Korin and the women who gather around the Rani at the two *sindūrotsavs* described in the novel (pp. 92-95 and pp. 324) are at first shocked by the masculine queen, but soon adhere with enthusiasm to her projects of complete militarisation and form a valorous women's army much to the surprise of general Rose (p. 343): the corp is formed predominantly with Bundelkhand women from all castes. The freedom and empowerment of women of all castes, one of the elements emphasised by the author (echoing the Rani) as a necessary requisite of *svarājya* (p. 173), is expressed most clearly in Jhalkārī, the low-caste woman-turned-officer who is another even physical replica of the Rani. 'If Lakṣmībāī had been successful in her struggle for *svarājya*, Indian women would not be in the pitiful condition many are now in' comments the author; *ibid.*, p. 475. The sting is turned here against the United Provinces, the new centre of Hindi culture and of the nationalist movement, but very conservative about women's freedom.

[21] After a particularly bad day during the siege of Jhansi, the Rani has a dream: 'A fair maiden with beautiful features, large black eyes and a red sari, covered by jewellery, is standing on the ramparts of the fort stopping the fiery cannonballs of the British with her tender hands. "Look, Lakṣmībāī, my hands have turned black by stopping the balls. Do not worry. The goddess of *svarājya* is immortal"' (p. 364). At learning of her dream, the battered townsfolk gain heart again. See also the Rani's prophecies on pp. 356, 373, etc., and Rose's prophecy on p. 403.

changes and widens the scope of a woman's *dharma* (see also 4.4). Secondly, she believes in a different balance between ruler and subjects:[22] her rule is reasonable and reformist, and seeks consensus. Her rule and the creation of a people's army imply a message of equality - reflected in her respect for all women and for lower castes[23] - as well as of the necessary empowerment of the common people, the *sarvasādhāraṇ*, one of the tenets of Gandhian nationalism.[24] In his imagination of the Rani as the ideal ruler, then, Varmā expresses not only how things could have been 'if', but also how he believes modern India should be like.

In a word, the novel reads like a chapter of the Indian history of India outlined in the previous section, the one Varmā himself wanted to write. It is pervaded by the same feeling of the young Varmā as he enthused over Marsden's textbook, to which it ideally replies. While the assessment of pre-British princely India is balanced and detailed, the indictment of British rule is as circumstantiated as it is total.[25] The annexation policy of the East India Company, its tyrannical and suave *bandobast*, the destruction of *pancayats*, the enslavement through education, the racial contempt, the innumerable humiliations suffered

[22] The contrast with her husband, Gaṅgādharrāo, is sharp: while he is a typical extravagant *raīs*, a lover of theatre, good-hearted but essentially selfish and capricious, she is thrifty, practical and mindful only of the good of her people (*prajā-hit-cintan*); in the novel, Gaṅgādharrāo's passionate involvement with the theatre is not only a nice historical touch, but also iluminates their basic difference, when Lakṣmībāi contrasts his *nāyikā-bhed* with Bhūṣaṇ's heroic poetry; *ibid.*, pp. 72 ff.

[23] After a dismissive remark of her general Gauskhān on the actress-turned-head-of-intelligence Motībāī, the Rani reflects scornfully: 'Is that daughter of a prostitute lesser than any respectable woman in self-sacrifice?! Oh Lord, social distinctions (*ūṁc-nīc*) even in sacrifice!' (p. 341). To another commandant she says: 'How good it would be to have no caste distinctions in our country!'. 'It is the God who made them' he answers: the ensuing silence voices all the queen's doubts; *ibid.*, p. 306.

[24] She reminds Tatya Tope several times to look for a base among the people: 'The people are the true force. I believe they are invincible. The Chatrapati [Śivājī] challenged such a huge empire only with the support of the people, not of the kings... The people are our true means. Rajas and Nawabs are worthy for one, two generations; the people's worth, instead, does not wear off generation after generation'; *ibid.*, pp. 131-32.

[25] The princely states, their relationship to the East Indian Company, Dalhousie's policy and the Company *bandobast* are described and discussed with great accuracy. In the princely state of Gwalior at the time of Raghunāthrāo: 'The rule was bad, the administration was bad, but village *pancayats* worked; the revenue was never fully collected; every villager was protected by the *pancayat*... Power was not so centralised... though society was not balanced enough and inequality was evident, economic links were strong. Wealth would collect in one place and then be shared out again. Each patron supported hundreds of dependents (*āśrit*) attached to him; patronage and its beneficiaries were part of a dynamic relationship'; *ibid.*, p. 5. At the same time, Indian rulers are presented as short-sighted and naive: while Raghunāthrāo hopes to keep his kingdom and the favour of the Company by entertaining the local British officers, they are shown as cunning and far-sighted. In fact, a discussion amongst them at the Club appears as a prophecy: 'We need more time. Now we need to get rid of dacoits and riots and increase trade and agriculture. The people will be grateful to us. We shall give petty jobs to the Indians who will learn English and teach them to revere the British. They, in turn, will spread this reverence among the people; the people will always be happy and will not tire of begging us. Our lads will make sure they will always be in terror of us! That terror will be our only weapon'; *ibid.*, p. 121.

by Indian subjects, all are taken into account.[26] The burning of Gaṅgādharrāo's library by British troops looting Jhansi in March 1858 is a symbolic climax: it finally explodes the myth of the white man's burden.[27]

The account and the reasons of the defeat belong to history, and there is no tampering with them; but the novelist can write against their grain a narrative of collective heroism, a future envisaged in prophecies and a personal thread of 'ifs', which hint that another history could have happened and could have been told. Colonial subjection, far from being part of a divine plan or of a cosmic cycle, or the proof of inherent British superiority, is shown to be the result of accumulated historical circumstances, some of which belong to the sphere of the humanly possible. Heroism, popular participation, a just ruler and a prophecy allow the novel to carry a positive message even while recounting a painful defeat.

If compared with the work of M.Ś. Gupta in neighbouring Cirgaon (3.1), Varmā's historical enterprise differs radically: it is regionally rooted; it weaves personal family memoirs with the memoirs of living witnesses and a diverse corpus of official and unofficial documents; it presents the ideal of *svarājya* and a larger-than-life character, but without gliding over the social fabric.[28] Detail and variety do not seem to be in the way of national unity, and each member, each gender, is allowed equal participation.[29] Though relying heavily on imagination, Varmā's novel is also fundamentally different from mainstream historical romances and tales of *vīr-vīrāṅganāeṁ*: romance features only slightly, and that

[26] When the Company takes over the rule of Jhansi in 1854, they dismiss the Raja's small army and dismantle the administration: 'Whereas so far hundreds and thousands of literate people could earn a living even on a small salary, now only few high officers and small *jagirdars* were employed by the Company at higher salaries. The higher posts were all filled by a handful of Englishmen at exorbitant wages... The entire court was dismissed - poets, artists, *dhrupad* singers, sitar players, dancers, craftsmen, farewell to all! In its place the Club, the Dak Bungalow and *salaam* with compulsory prostration for all Indians, high and low'; *ibid.*, p. 156.

[27] 'Whatever happened, it inscribed in history with indelible letters the bestiality of those barbarians'. The libraries in Alexandria and Rājgṛha were destroyed in a barbaric age, 'but in this age of science and civility...!' (p. 391). For the first and last time, the Rani weeps: war is meaningful only to defend one's life and dharma, one's culture and art, she had told her people (p. 314). Now the struggle seems useless, until her *vīrtā* shakes her up to her duty 'like a tigress'; *ibid.*, p. 392.

[28] There are detailed caste descriptions, and several subplots highlight caste conflicts (some historical) and the way to deal with them: while Gaṅgādharrāof solve one through a despotic ruling (chapter 8), Lakṣmībāī solves a similarly explosive communal issue (Sunni-Shia-Hindu) concerning rights of way in a procession by listening to the practical advice of a resourceful carpenter; *ibid.*, pp. 280-284.

[29] The use of mimetic techniques allows the author to give voice to the views of the people in the market-place (pp. 139-143), or of the soldiers in the barracks (pp. 225-227) - also an expression of empowerment through literature.

too by proxy and is sacrificed for the greater sake of the nation,[30] while heroism allows for nuanced and balanced descriptions of historical characters and circumstances.

To summarize, in this section we saw how folk and regional heroes became national heroes and fit into the master-narrative of Hindu-Indian history. Such *vīr-vīrāṅganāeṁ* provided positive examples of martial resistance during the painful medieval and more recent past, and were now invoked as patrons of the nation and models of militant, aggressive nationalism, transmitted through biographies, readers, plays, novels, ballads, poems and films. With them, the simplifications and exclusions metered out by this view of Indian history were also spread in a kind of diffuse historical *saṃskāra*.

We can now assume that perhaps the most poignant of such features, the stereotype of Muslim villainy, stemmed both from the plan of the nationalist history of India, and also from transferred anti-British feelings. In any case, Hindu heroism to assert itself needed an Other. Vṛndāvanlāl Varmā's example may again prove useful. In his more detailed and grounded works such as *Jhānsī kī rānī*, where anti-British resistance could be expressed directly and where in fact the depiction of 'communal harmony' was one of the aims, we find a greater array of Muslim characters and no sterotypes.[31] But in other works, when the British are not in the picture and the Hindu hero needs a villanous Other, the stereotype resurfaces.[32]

We may also remark that this was a particularly resistant view, one that could hardly change even under the pressure of historical circumstances. Especially at the time of the Khilafat movement and after the great riots of the 1920s, Gandhi and Gandhians became wary of anti-Muslim historical statements.[33] On the scholarly and semi-official level, the Hindustani Academy in Allahabad tried to bridge the widening gulf between Hindi and Urdu and Hindu and Muslim versions of Indian history by promoting lectures on Hindu-Muslim relations and interdependence under the Sultanate and the Mughals.[34] Although a

[30] Two of the *sahelīs*, along with the actresses-turned-intelligence agents Motībāī and Juhī, once the favourites of the Rani's late husband, carry out chaste romances with the main heroes, but any fulfilment of love is postponed until after *svarājya*; see e.g. *ibid.*, p. 381.

[31] Though the main traitor, Nawab Ali Bahādur, is indeed a Muslim, he is so because he is the natural son of Raja Raghunāthrāo (the Rani's father-in-law) and of a Muslim courtesan. Several of the Rani's loyal generals are Muslims, like the cannonier Ghauskhān.

[32] E.g. in *Gaṛhkuṇḍār* and *Virāṭā kī padminī* .

[33] G. Pandey, *The Ascendancy of the Congress in Uttar Pradesh*, pp. 148 ff. The Hindi text-books prepared by the Gandhian Dakṣiṇ Bhārat Hindī Pracār Sabhā in Madras show an attempt at presenting Mughal rulers in a more positive light, along with the usual nationalist fare; see Avadhnandan and Satyanārāyaṇ, *Hindī kī dūsrī pustak,* Hindi Pracar Pustak Mala, Madras, 18th ed. 1939, pp. 19-21.

[34] Between 1928 and 1933, Abdulla Yusuf Ali, R.B. G.H. Ojhā, Gaṅgānāth Jhā, Maulana Syed Sulaiman Nadvi of the Shibli Academy of Azamgarh, Tara Chand, Mohammad Amin Abbasi of Calcutta, Dr. Bhagvān Dās, Maulana Abdul Haq, Padmasiṃh Śarmā, etc. were invited to give lectures on subjects like 'Contributions of the Hindus to Muslim culture' and 'Contributions of the Muslims to

rapproachement was easier among the distinguished elite, united by a common Indo-Persian background, most Hindi journals either viewed such initiatives with suspicion, as strategic moves to construct a fake history of communal harmony. 'Good Muslims' were accepted as exceptions, but the subject of 'our history' remained Hindu.

This leads us to the next section, where we shall examine how the Aryan myth and this vision of history conditioned the way contemporary society was discussed and imagined.

Hindu Culture'; see *The Report of the working of the Hindustani Academy, United Provinces, Allahabad (1927-1933)*, Allahabad 1939, pp. 11-13.

3.3 The shape of society

If historical writing dwelt on the Aryan ideal and the foretastes of nationhood, Hindi journals of the 1920s resound with one obsessive call: *saṅgaṭhan*, organisation. Whatever the meaning given to the word, this call for (self-)organisation expressed a movement toward larger and cohesive units, be it at local, regional or national level, as well as toward a notion of, and an agenda for, a generalised and comprehensive picture of society. Thus, debates on society and social reform in Hindi in our period exhibit both a conceptual struggle and a mass-oriented, active and political edge. While *saṅgaṭhan* activities were characterized by defensive arguments about Hinduism in danger, debates over *saṅgaṭhan* in Hindi journals expressed a positive and constructive search for the wherewithal of social integration and nation-building.[1] As one article on *saṅgaṭhan* put it:

> A new political caste (*jāti*) has been formed: the Indian, which will accommodate Hindus, Muslims, Parsis, Jains, Christians for political aims. Likewise, a new *gotra* has to be formed with Brahmans, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas, Shudras, and with *brahmacārīs, gṛhasthas, vanaprasthas, sanyāsīs,* etc.: they are all Hindus.[2]

This section explores the terms in which society was discussed in the Hindi sphere, and how the historical consciousness outlined in the previous sections influenced the terms of social imagination. It starts by examining how editors and contributors groped with existing Hindi words and concepts to re-define society in terms closer to the comprehensive English term. However, this semantic search was not followed by an equally original theory and vision of society: rather, the Brahmanical *varṇa* view was reinforced in the new public sphere context. We shall then discuss how the issue of untouchability came to question the validity of this view and raised the unspoken issues of power, conflict and exploitation. Also, practical *saṅgaṭhan* activities such as the purification (*śuddhi*) of Muslim converts and untouchables quickly showed the limits and difficulties of *saṅgaṭhan* without social reshuffling. Finally, we shall see how a quite different view of society, the socialist view

[1] We are not directly involved here with the political outcomes of this preoccupation, namely the activities of the Hindu Mahasabha and the Śuddhi Sammelan from 1923 onwards; rather, we shall focus on the echo such arguments had in the Hindi press, and what other notions of society circulated. For Hindu Mahasabha politics, see C. Baxter, *The Jana Sangha: a biography of an Indian Political Party,* Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 1969, and C. Jaffrelot, *The Hindu Nationalist Movement and Indian Politics*. For a typical article on 'Hinduism in danger', see 'Hinduoṃ kā hrās', in *Mādhurī*, I, pt. 2, 4, April 1923 (at the time of the first meeting of the revived Hindū Mahasabhā).
[2] Mālavīprasād Śrīvāstava, 'Saṅgaṭhan', *Mādhurī*, III, pt. 2, 2, March 1925, p. 201.

based on class, became current in Hindi in the 1920s, but gave rise to a peculiar synthesis when colliding with the previous one.

The very semantic indeterminacy about the word society in Hindi debates reveals the tensions behind such attempts at redefining the notion, and the poles between which the debate moved: between an ordered picture of Indian society divided into *jātis* and *varṇas*, and society as a single, omni-comprehensive whole. In fact, two words were used in Hindi to indicate 'society', both with a number of significations and both used as equivalents for the English word: *samāj* and *jāti.*[3] The special issue *Samāj-aṅk* of the journal *Cāṁd* (November 1937) gives a good indication of this semantic indeterminacy: *samāj* meant a caste or a region (like in 'Mārvāṛ me jātīytā kā rūp' on casteism in Rajasthan),[4] a gender-specific group (like in 'Yukta-prānt kā mahilā-samāj'), or else society as a whole, as in the English term.[5] The editor tried to explain this semantic variance in historical terms: *samāj* was ideally the latter, and Vedic *samāj* had been the apex of progress in ancient times, but the present society, *vartmān samāj,* had broken up into a loose amalgam of smaller groups:

> Our society is no more the ancient and well-organised group which controlled political, religious, social and other institutions. Now various societies [i.e. society in a narrow sense] cannot rule over themselves. At present what we mean by society is only a particular *sampradāy* or caste whose members, spread over a varied geographical area, maintain certain similarities in behaviour and customs (pp. 9-10).

Semantic indeterminacy thus shows a tension among the general terms and referents of the debate: between the Aryan *varṇāśrama* system and the present heterogeneous reality, and about how *jātis* could be accommodated within the four-fold

[3] We have already mentioned the multiple layers of the word *jāti*: all through this period, *jāti* was used to indicate a caste or group of castes; as synonymous of a community defined either in religious or geographical terms; and as synonymous of nation, slightly different from *rāṣṭra,* which meant rather 'national state': all the three meanings could be implied in a same passage, distinguished only by the context. In his typically original fashion, Kiśorīdās Vājpeyī wrote: 'Nowadays people ask: which *jāti*? It is a mistake. There are four *varṇas* but one *jāti*: Hindu'; K. Vājpeyī, 'Āryoṁ kī varṇa-vyavasthā', *Mādhurī*, VI, pt. 2, 4, May 1928, p. 540.

[4] See also 'Mārvāṛī samāj aur hindī saṃsār', *Mādhurī*, VI, pt. 1, 5, Dec. 1927, pp. 782-3.

[5] The editorial 'Samāj aur vyakti', trying perhaps for the first time to define society in relation to the individual and not to collective groups, kept shifting among possible definitions of *samāj* - either as a closed, homogeneous *sampradāy* or as the interdependent ensemble of all individuals, based, at least ideally, upon just economic and gender relations; *Cāṁd*, XVI, pt. 1, 1, November 1937, pp. 3-10; the initial definition of society echoes that of a rousseauvian social contract: 'समाज ऐसे व्यक्तियों का समूह है, जिन्होंने व्यक्तिगत स्वार्थों की सार्वजनिक रक्षा के लिए अपने विषम आचरणों में साम्य उत्पन्न करनेवाले कुछ सामान्य नियमों से शासित होने का समझौता कर लिया।' [Society is a group of people who, in order to publicly protect their individual interests, agree that they will be governed by some common rules which will engender similarity in their dissimilar customs] (p. 3); it is the existence of commonly agreed codes that transforms any group into a society (p. 4). The problem arose when this individualistic definition confronted the other meanings of *samāj* and the reality of Indian groups.

order. It also shows a preoccupation with caste and class harmony, at least in the Vedic ideal. Finally, it betrays an uneasiness about how to make the transition from *jāti* in the sense of localised caste and community to *jāti* as nation.

The journal *Mādhurī* is a good forum to examine debates on society in the 1920s, since the call for *saṅgaṭhan* of the Hindu *jāti* appeared in every issue, and the journal accommodated several view-points on the subject. What most contributors to the debate implied, we shall see, was a literal belief, stemming directly from the Aryan ideal; it was belief in a picture of society as one, orderly and just *body*, to use the familiar metaphor from the *Manusmṛti*. A corollary was belief that a healthy society was characterized by the absence of conflict: caste, class or social conflicts of any other kind were the marks of an unhealthy society. It will hardly be surprising now that, given the background and the historical *saṃskāra* outlined in the previous section, most Hindi intellectuals, when writing about society, should look up to the four-fold *varṇāśrama* ideal as the 'essentially Indian' form of societal organisation.[6] Thus, a discussion to redefine present Indian society fell 'naturally' back on the Brahminical view.

'The only reason why the Hindu *jāti* has survived through its troubled history is the caste-system, created by our far-sighted rishis and munis to make the Hindu *jāti* strong (*sabal*), solid (*sudṛṛh*) and well-organised (*suvyavasthit)*' wrote Rāmsevak Tripāṭhī, later editor of *Mādhurī*, in 'Hindū-jāti aur varṇa-vyavasthā'[7]. It was a social theory (*kalpanā*) unrivalled in the world, echoed Kiśorīdās Vājpeyī and Balvīr.[8] Such a typical opening would

[6] As recent studies have pointed out, early orientalists and colonial ethnographers took the traditional Brahmin-centred classification in four *varṇas* as the original picture of Hindu society. Colonial administrators, called in to settle local caste disputes, objectified *jātis* into a grid of fixed and standardised categories from a variety of occupational, local, 'fuzzy' and partially mobile identities, and looked for historical genealogies in 'Hindu scriptures', thereby taking a partial and ideal vision of society by a particular group as the true and complete picture, and turning it into the law. In particular the 1901 Census tried to fit all local *jātis* into the traditional Brahman-centred four-fold classification, thereby initiating a frantic activity of caste ascendancy by caste associations, and also a totalising conception of caste instead of the earlier, to some extent relatively looser identities. For an overview and a discussion, see Rashmi Pant, 'The Cognitive Status of Caste in Colonial Ethnography', pp. 145-62. Whether to criticise it or to praise it, Hindi intellectuals would also refer to the four-fold classification as the original and essentially Indian society. The debate among English-speaking Indian reformers went much along the same lines; see S. Bayly, 'Hindu "modernizers" and the "public" arena: indigenous critiques of caste in colonial India'; paper presented at the SOAS Conference on the Modernization of Hinduism, London, 1993.

[7] R. Tripāṭhī, 'Hindū-jāti aur varṇa-vyavasthā', *Mādhurī,* V, pt. 2, 4, May 1927, pp. 525-8. The same view was held by Madan Mohan Mālavīya, e.g. in 'Varṇāśram dharma', *Abhyuday,* 1 May 1908, in P. Mālavīya, *Mālavīyajī ke lekh,* National Publishing House, Delhi 1962, pp. 174-75.

[8] K. Vājpeyī, 'Āryoṁ kī varṇa-vyavasthā', pp. 534 ff. See Balvīr,: 'पारस भूमि भारत की सभ्यता ने सामाजिक संगठन की उन्नति के उच्चतम शिखर पर अपनी विजयवैजयंती चिरकाल तक फअराई।' [The civilization of the holy land of Bhāratvarṣa has unfurled on the highest peak of progress the victory flag of her social organization] he claimed triumphantly in 'Sāmājik saṅgaṭhan kā bhārtīy ādarś', *Mādhurī,* IV, pt. 1, 6, December 1925, p. 775.

set the tone and the framework for the whole discussion of Hindu society; to talk of Hindu society meant to talk of the *varṇa*-system; even to criticise the inner division into a myriad of *jātis* led to appraising the original *varṇas*, of which *jātis* were but a corruption.[9] Present-day castes were compared or assimilated to the theoretical four *varṇas* without much talk of the qualitative difference between the notions: whenever arguments on contemporary society and caste-system moved to the theoretical ground, caste as *jāti* automatically switched to caste as *varṇa*.

The 'degeneration', and in fact the whole defense of *varṇa* as a category, was couched in rational terms.[10] In this ordered and rational division, conflict could only be the result of ignorance and corruption. The present proliferation of castes, class and caste conflicts were all explained as due to ignorance and oblivion of past rules, and offered a typical picture of Kāliyuga.[11] Tulsī Dās's description of Kāliyuga in the *Rāmcaritmānas* had contemporary echoes for Hindi intellectuals:

> वर्ण धर्म नहिं आश्रम चारी श्रुति विरोध रत सब नरनारी ...
> शूद्र द्विजन उपदेसहिं जाना मेलि जनेऊ लेहिं कुदाना ।
> There are no *varṇas*, no four *āsramas* left;
> men and women are keen refuting *Śruti;*
> Śūdras teach knowledge to the twice-born
> wear the sacred thread and take corrupt gifts.[12]

[9] Satyavrat Siddhāntālaṃkār, 'Hinduoṁ meṁ sāmājik saṅgaṭhan kī kalpanā', *Mādhurī*, VI, pt. 1, 2, September 1927, pp. 224-36.

[10] Following an argument spread in the Hindi area mainly by the Ārya Samāj, *varṇa* was explained as an originally flexible category, based not on one's birth (*janma-pradhān*) but on individual deeds (*karma-pradhān*). However, according to the Ārya Samāj philosophy graduate Satyavrat Siddhāntālaṃkār, a society based only on the division of labour would have bred materialism, unequal distribution of capital and social conflict, as the history of the West showed. Thus ancient 'Indian sociologists' had realised that man is not only an economic being and had created caste to ensure the full development of the individual. By explaining the etymology of *varṇa* as *varaṇ karnā*, to choose, Satyavrat could defend *varṇa* on subtler, psychological terms: thus, originally caste was chosen according to one's psychological predisposition (*manovaijñānik pravṛtti*). Closer to the notion of personal *dharma* (*svadharma*), this interpretation of *varṇa* loosened it from birth or occupation, but reaffirmed it as a rigid category on another basis: just as one should not escape one's *svadharma*, one cannot change one's predisposition. And since predispositions were also four, and were partly hereditary, caste by birth, earlier criticised, was finally upheld in a subtler, more psychological form. *Ibid*, p. 235.

[11] 'We forgot the rules - we disregarded the system and therefore today we are oppressed, enslaved, poor, helpless, desperate and dependent on others for everything'; Rāmsevak Tripāṭhī, 'Hindū-jāti aur varṇa-vyavasthā', p. 526.

[12] *Rāmcaritmānas*, VII, 98, 1 and 99, 1; quoted *ibid.* (incorrect reading). Rāmcandra Śukla's predilection for Tulsī rested partly on the view that when in Tulsī's time society (i.e. Hindu society) risked disintegration under the impact of Muslim rule and of different religious reformers, Tulsī had 'descended' and 'saved the *dharma* of the Aryas from disintegrating' Even now Indian society and the *dharma* of the Aryas (Śukla used both Arya and Hindu almost indiscriminately) risked disintegration under the pressures of many contrasting forces and the call of several different reformers, and in an interesting historical flight, Śukla warned that: '... there are many such revolutionaries in Europe... Since the higher classes did not fulfil their duty well, the lower classes were filled with envy, hatred

Historical and scriptural authority, as well as rational argument, gave what was a traditional Brahmin complaint against caste-contamination (*varṇa-saṅkara*) a generalised meaning involving all social change.[13] Conflicts were thus either explained as a consequence of historical corruption, or attributed to the evil influence of the West. To several Hindi intellectuals of this period, Europe appeared as a large cauldron of unrest, what with the World War, the Russian Revolution, the rise of social-democracy in Germany and Italy, the great strikes and conflicts between capital and labour, etc. As Kiśorīdās Vājpeyī wrote:

> In Europe there are large groupings, especially political ones. Because of these factions a poisonous hatred grows among the people (*prajā-varg*), and it breeds no good consequence. The people (*jantā*) are harmed by any kind of useless grouping. Therefore, the various conflicts in this country are not caused by the caste-system but by stupidity.[14]

The ideal Indian society, the *varṇa* system, seemed instead to avert both the mirage of equality, the danger of class conflict and the evil of materialism, and reasserted India's claim to spiritual superiority.[15] Even an article like Satyavrat's, which started by acknowledging the call for justice made by peasants, untouchables and non-Brahmins in India, and recognized in caste divisions the main obstacle to *svarājya*, ended with reaffirming on the theoretical plane that the caste system was the best theory of social organisation.[16]

and arrogance; Lenin took advantage of this and became the *mahātmā* of his time... One should not be deceived by this bestowal of power to the foolish people (*mūrkh jantā*). Leaders who act according to the real needs of the people instead do get their respect'; R. Śukla, *Gosvāmī tulsīdās*, Nagari Pracharini Sabha, Banaras 1983, pp. 19, 25, 35. Thus social order was all about keeping to one's place and one's *dharma*. Far from being just a great poet of the past, Tulsī was a cultural hero who had showed the way of negotiating reform and social order, *bhakti* and authority.

[13] 'Some Shudras pretend to become of higher caste by wearing the sacred thread; they are trying to create mixed castes and refusing to adhere to the Vedas and Shastras, thus drowning the whole Hindu society...' wrote Rāmsevak Tripāṭhī, while placing Tulsī's Kāliyuga in the contemporary Indian context; R. Tripāṭhī, 'Hindū-jāti aur varṇa-vyavasthā', p. 527.

[14] Kiśorīdās Vājpeyī, 'Āryoṁ kī varṇa-vyavasthā', p. 537.

[15] The caste-system in its original, pure form was suggested as the only solution for all conflicts, even for international ones. 'Several great thinkers of the West have tried to solve social problems in several ways' wrote Balvīr, 'but since they lacked the Vedic ideal their brilliant life-light died off after a brief glimmer at the onset of heavy clouds of adversities. Unrest continued. The reign of dissatisfaction continued. New movements were born every day'. Nor could Bolshevism or communism, the new stars, succeed, as 'human nature itself is based on natural unequality'. Progress is no cure either, since in its name the blood of workers is sucked everywhere: 'Europe, lost in the fever of materialism, will have to learn the lesson of the ideal society from India, the master of spiritualism, and the civilisation of ancient India will rule over the whole earth'; Balvīr, 'Sāmājik saṅgaṭhan kā bhārtīy ādarś', *Mādhurī*, IV, pt. 1, 6, December 1925, pp. 775, 776 and 779.

[16] Satyavrat Siddhāntalaṅkār, 'Hinduoṁ meṁ samājik saṅgaṭhan kī kalpanā', p. 236.

It was the attack on untouchability and the reactions to it which exposed the ambiguity and limitations of this discourse on society in public debate. Reactions were prompted by the symbolic acts aiming at assimilating untouchables in the Hindu fold undertaken jointly by the Ārya Samāj and the re-born Hindū Mahāsabhā.[17] Such symbolic acts of reintegration - like *śuddhi*, temple-entry or allowing untouchables to take water from the common well - were typically followed by reparatory measures and restrictive statements. These in turn could be used to publicly expose the whole enterprise of caste Hindus as mere hypocrisy.[18] 'Neither the Gurukul-factory can turn a Dher into a Brahmin, nor Mahatma Gandhi adopting a Bhangi girl can bestow high positions on untouchables' concluded laconically an old Lajjārām Mehtā in 1927.[19] All in all, debates and initiatives for the removal of untouchability in fact blew the wind out of the sails of constructive *saṅgaṭhan*.

'How much has been achieved in Hindu *saṅgaṭhan*?' asked an editor in 1925.[20] By the end of the 1920s it was clear that even the minimum social reshuffling *saṅgaṭhan* required for a Hindu-*jāti* to be formed hardly found a consensus. 'Even Madan Mohan Mālavīya, the founder of the movement, will not eat with "lower Mālavīyas" remarked sarcastically Janārdan Bhaṭṭ.[21] Radical intellectuals like G.Ś. Vidyārthī or Nirālā could thus

[17] These activities, as well as the Mahāsabhā meetings, received large echo in the Hindi press. Rūpnārāyaṇ Pāṇḍey, one of the editors of *Mādhurī*, had previously been the editor of the journal of the Bhārat Dharma Mahāmaṇḍal of Banaras; a strong advocate of Hindu *saṅgaṭhan*, he gave great attention to the subject. Among the many articles and editorial on the subject were Devkīnandan 'Vibhav', 'Hindū saṅgaṭhan', pt.1, *Mādhrī*, II, pt. 2, 3, April 1924, p. 350; Dayāśaṅkar Dube, 'Bhārat meṁ hinduoṁ kī daśā', *Mādhurī*, IV, pt. 1, 2, p. 146; 'Hindū jāti kī akṣamtā', *Mādhurī*, I, pt. 2, 2, February 1923, p. 216; Cāndkaraṇ Śārdā, 'Hindū-jāti kī durdaśā ke kāraṇ aur uske nivaraṇ ke upāy' *Mādhurī*, III, pt. 1, 3, October 1924, pp. 290-95.

[18] Gaṇeś Śaṅkar Vidyārthī reported derisively an incident at village Ujhyani (dist. Badayun), where a group of Chamars had earlier been dissuaded from converting to Islam by being admitted to the village well; however, after the symbolic gesture the wells had been quickly purified with Ganges water, and the crisis had reverted to the same point; G.Ś. Vidyārthī, 'Hindū raheṁ yā musalmān baneṁ?', *Pratāp*, 1 June 1925, quoted R. Avasthī, *Krānti kā udghoṣ*, vol. 2, Ganesh Shankar Vidyarthi Shiksha Samiti, Kanpur 1978, pp. 814-817. Thus, only a year after the programme of 'purification' of untouchables was launched by the Hindū Mahāsabhā, its limitations were clearly spelt out: this 'religious duty' involved provisions for education in mixed schools but not in those in Brahmin-only schools; entry into temples was accorded 'wherever possible according to *maryādā*'; untouchables were entitled a separate well in every settlement, but not access to the others. Teaching the Vedas, wearing the sacred thread and interdining with untouchables was 'against the Shastras and *lokmaryādā*'; conversions into Hinduism were allowed, but not within a caste. 'The uplift of untouchables does not mean that people from all *varṇas* should start eating from their hands. Uplift means to instill in them the taste for cleanliness and purity, to spread education as much as possible, and to think and tell them means to increase their income;' quoted in *Mādhurī*, II, pt. 2, 1, pp. 141-42.

[19] L. Mehtā, 'Hinduoṁ meṁ chuāchūt', *Mādhurī*, V, pt. 1, 6, January 1927, p. 826. In the article, Mehtā argued for a partial reform because caste Hindus needed untouchables for impure jobs.

[20] 'Hindū-saṅgaṭhan kā kārya kitnā huā?', editorial in *Mādhurī*, III, pt. 2, 1, January 1925, pp. 133-34.

[21] J. Bhaṭṭ, 'Hindū saṅgaṭhan kā ḍhoṅg', *Cāṁd*, IV, pt. 1, 4, February 1928, p. 438.

draw the conclusion that such timid debates on social reform that shut *jātis* out of the door just to readmit them through the window in the form of *varṇa*, and which were silent on caste discrimination, could only be overcome by initiatives by the low-castes themselves.[22] The fact that no untouchable or low-caste Hindu was among the participants to the Hindi debate carried obvious limitations.[23] Once again, it would be only through literature that the critique of untouchability would carry a more general argument about justice and individual rights in the Hindi sphere.[24]

In fact, it was only under the impact of socialist ideas after the Russian revolution that a radically different vision of society would be introduced and gain currency in the Hindi public sphere. While the call for *saṅgaṭhan* did express a kind of yearning to accomodate 'neglected sections' (*upekṣit aṅg*) of society - peasants, workers, untouchables, women - in the new vision of the nation-to-be, it was only socialism that provided a theoretical framework. In this respect, while Non-Cooperation was a turning point in the political imagination, the Russian revolution and the peasant movement in Avadh were, in different degrees, turning points for the social imagination of Hindi intellectuals.

Whereas national leaders welcomed the October revolution chiefly as an anti-imperialist struggle, for radical Hindi intellectuals it was a peasants' and workers' struggle against oppressive landlordism and capitalism.[25] 'The age that is coming will be the age of

22 'An unavoidable consequence will be a powerful wave of consciousness that will rise from all Hindu sub-castes of northern India which are presently considered worse than cats and dogs; it will be a wave that neither the Śaṅkarācārya nor Pandit Dīndayāl [of the Hindu Mahasabhā] and his friends will be able to stop. They will keep shouting that *dharma* is lost and *sanātan dharma* has been destroyed while the wave will pass over the heads of these frogs-in-the-well; it will advance not on the strength of some *śloka* of the Śāstras, but on the strength of the living inspiration of human *dharma*...' wrote G. Ś. Vidyārthī; 'Hindū raheṁ yā musalmān baneṁ', p. 816. See also Nirālā: 'Thus the hope of revival that is colouring our horizon will awaken first of all those *jātis* which fell asleep first - the *śūdra, antyaj* castes. The signs of awakening that they are showing nowadays are encouraging, while the signs brahmans and kshatriyas are giving are no signs of awakening but of stupor - of blabber in their sleep...' Essay collected in *Prabandha pratimā* (1940), quoted in R. Śarmā, *Nirālā kī sāhitya-sādhnā*, vol. 2, p. 239.

23 In a reply to Rāmsevak Tripāṭhī's article quoted above - 'Hindū-jāti aur varṇa-vyavasthā' - Santarām, the founder of the Jāt-Pāṁt-Toṛak-Maṇḍal, condemned the hypocrisy of *śuddhi* and Tripāṭhī's defence of the caste-system as partisan: had Tripāṭhī been a Camar or a Dong would he have said the same things? 'To say that Hindu society is still alive today thanks to the caste-system is like saying that the British rule Indian because the drink wine and liquors'; Santarām, 'Bulbulśāh aur varṇa-vyavasthā', *Mādhurī*, V, pt. 2, 6, July 1927, p. 812.

24 We may think here both at the early 'confessions'-indictments by Zahūrbakhś such as 'Achūt kī ātma-kathā' (May 1927) for the series 'the fire-pit of society' in *Cāṁd*, of which more below in 4.3. Also at Nāgārjun's novel *Balcanmā*(1952), also in the form of an autobiography, as well as Nirālā's sketches *Caturī camār* (1935) and *Kullī bhāṭ* (1939).

25 Kṛṣṇakānta Mālavīya, the editor of *Abhyuday* and *Maryādā*, G.Ś. Vidyārthī and Ramāśaṅkar Avasthī of *Pratāp* and *Prabhā*, Satyabhakta, Rādhāmohan Gokuljī, Rāmcandra Varmā introduced Bolshevic Russia to Hindi readers as a model for the liberation of Indian peasants and workers. See below 62. See also Rāmcandra Varmā's book *Samyavād*, Bombay 1919; Avasthī's *Rūs kī rājya-krānti*, Kanpur, Pratap Press 1920, and Vināyak Sītārām Sarvaṭe, *Bolśevizm*, Indore 1921. Quoted by Vīr Bhārat Talvār, *Kisān, rāṣṭrīy āndolan aur premcand*, pp. 179-193.

peasants and workers' wrote Premcand in an article 'Old age and new age' ('Purānā zamānā, nayā zamānā').[26] The Gandhian emphasis on a mass nationalist movement and the success of socialism in Russia fostered a view of society that was all-inclusive and egalitarian, where differences and conflicts were acknowledged and explained chiefly in economic terms, and where labour was given a particular dignity. [27] Section 6.2 will analyse in greater detail the changing attitudes of Hindi intellectuals towards the peasants and the economic question within *svarājya*, and the role of Congress Socialists in the Hindi area. Relevant here is to remark that this brought about an altogether different discourse on society in Hindi in the 1920s, articulated in terms of class and class conflict rather than in terms of caste and caste harmony.[28] In the 1930s, the arguments and vocabulary became decidedly economic, and the worker - whether peasant or labourer - emerged as the central subject.[29] 'Nowadays there are only two *jātis*', concluded one socialist pamphlet, 'that of patels, zamindars, thakurs, rajas and nawabs or rais, contractors, shopkeepers, money-lenders, bankers, house-owners, factory-owners, middlemen, agents, lawyers, officers, and that of the poor - peasants and workers.'[30]

This discourse was certainly important in justifying and popularising notions of social equality, social and economic justice and individual dignity. It also appeared to be able to make *jātis* and *varṇas* irrelevant by offering a vision of society where caste had no reason to exist.[31] However, as Puruṣottam Agravāl observes, the disappearance of caste

[26] Published in *Zamānā* in February 1919, now in Premcand, *Vividh prasaṅg*, vol. 1, Hans Prakasan, Allahabad 1962, pp. 258-69.

[27] However, discussing some of the first poems on socialism (*sāmyavād)* in Hindi journals, V.B. Talvār remarks that their content remained preheminently abstract: 'The music of bolshevism that echoes in Hindi poems of 1918-20 is a divine tune: bolshevism appears as pure as a mountain stream, as luminous as the light of the sun. It arouses feelings of love and equality. It further shows social inequality, the difference between rich and poor, the exploitation of peasants and workers at the hands of landlords and capitalists, and it prays god and calls on the forces of nature to destroy this system of inequality. It goes no further'; *ibid.*, p. 187.

[28] We may mention here the articles by Sampūrṇānand: 'Gāndhīvād aur sāmyavād', in *Viśāl bhārat*, April 1936, pp. 413-16; also 'Samājvādī samāj kī kuch viśeṣtāeṁ' and 'Rāmrājya aur sāmyavādī', in AAVV, *Samājvād kā bigul*, Kashi Pustak Bhandar, Banaras 1936, pp. 1-7 and 61-67. See also beow 6.2.

[29] See e.g. Prāṇnāth Vidyālaṃkār, *Bhārtīy kisān*, Rāṣṭrīy Sañjīvanī Granthamālā, vol. 1, Banaras 1920; Anon., *Ham bhukhṛ naṅge kyoṁ haiṁ?*, Kisān Mazdūr Pustak Mālā, Kanpur 1935.

[30] *Ham bhūkhe naṅge kyoṁ haiṁ?*, p. 5.

[31] E.g. the socialist utopia of Raghupati Sahāy 'Firāq', the Urdu poet whose works occasionally appeared in Hindi journals and who would sympathize with Progressivist positions, is a completely secular, caste-less society of perfectly equal and attribute-less individuals. After 20-25 years of international conflicts (*pralay*), the secular society that is established provides equal rights to all thanks to a welfare state; material progress - jobs, transport, habitation, food - ensures not only economic welfare, but the right of individual growth for all (after not more than 4-5 hours of work). This future society will grant universal education, and new social and gender relations: equal rights for women, no more *abalās*, even in sexual matters; free and healthy sex relations without any need for marriage; a true democracy with nationalisation of property, and no more class or caste divisions - i.e. difference will remain, but without exploitation. Firāq, 'Ab se sau baras bād', in *Mādhurī*, IV, pt. 1,

from secular and socialist nationalist discourse simply evaded the question.[32] In other cases, it simply implanted socialist aims on the typical Indian view of society, i.e. one of inherent social harmony. Thus, Bhai Parmānand tried to argue that socialism had always existed in India and equality was compatible with the four-fold division,[33] and even socialist intellectuals like Narendra Dev or Sampūrṇanand could hold a critique of society in economic terms *while* believing in the inherent goodness and harmony of ancient Indian society.[34] So great was the power of the golden image of the Indian past and its perfect societal organisation.

To summarize, the 1920s saw a rediscussion of the shape of society in the name of *saṅgaṭhan* or self-organisation. This was both a defense against the ostensible defections and decrease in numbers of Hindus, as well as an attempt to establish anew the peculiar characteristics of Indian society as a whole. Because the participants to the debate in Hindi were mostly from Brahmin and scholarly (pandit) backgrounds, and because of the hold the myth of the golden Aryan age and Hindu history had on their minds, the discussion did not really envisage contemporary society in substantially different terms from the Brahman-centred four-fold hierarchical division in *varṇas* - despite the fact that it took place in the open arena of journals. In this way, society was discussed purely in terms of 'Hindu society', and only as a degraded version of the original ancient model. This was both the strength and the weakness of the Aryan and Hindu history outlined in the previous sections. The strength, because it did offer a powerful, proud and pure image of Indian society, superior to the 'West'. The weakness, because it sacrificed the complexity and conflicts of the present to a faultless and rigid ideal.

Thus, although Hindi intellectuals realized the divisive force of caste divisions, they were unable to imagine other possible models. As a consequence, all elements that did not fit were ultimately discounted; what was left, once the model and aim were so clearly defined, was action, 'organisation'. Surprise and disappontment ensued when action and organisation did not follow automatically.

Shifting the discussion immediately on the theoretical plane of *varṇa* also allowed ritual practice and actual caste ties to slip out of public discourse. While the *varṇa*-system

4, October 1925, pp. 467-471. The picture would probably appear a true Kāliyuga to more conservative contemporaries, without social order, hierarchy and with free female sexuality!

[32] P. Agravāl, 'Jātivādī kaun', in Rājkiśor, ed., *Harijan se dalit,* Āj ke praśn No. 6, Vani Prakasan, Delhi 1994.

[33] In 'Hindū sāmyavād kyā hai?', *Mādhurī*, VII, pt. 1, 1, Aug.-Sept. 1928, pp. 343-45.

[34] See for example the articles in the collection edited by B.V. Keskar and V.K.N. Menon, *Acharya Narendra Dev. A Commemoration Volume*, National Book Trust, New Delhi 1971: 'Bhārtīy samāj aur saṃskṛti', 'Bhārtīy dharma' and 'Samājvād kā sāṃskṛitik ādarś'. In the first two, Narendra Dev explains that harmony (*samanvay*) is the characteristic feature of Indian society and culture; in the third one, he posits class conflict as necessary for self-development; see below 6.3.

provided theoretical order and solutions, the *roṭī-beṭī* (commensality and marriage) system of *jātis* was largely kept out of the public eye.[35] Similarly, few or no words were spent on the individual as a unit of society even on the discursive level. This may signal either empirical considerations of the limited space and meaning the individual as independent, attribute-less unit had in the Indian context, but also how debates on society usually left areas of empirical individual, ritual and family concern out of public discussion. It was only with radical women's journals, we shall see, that practices of the household and the family were made object of public scrutiny and linked to the general development of the *jāti* (as society and nation) and of the individual (see 4.3).

Finally, for all the critique of *jātis*, on the practical level castes and associations were also viewed as positive building blocks of society, if only they accepted to be orderly and reformed sub-groups of the larger *jāti*.[36]

While a new all-encompassing vision of society was not achieved, the call to defensive, anti-Muslim *saṅgaṭhan* had an easier appeal. The heroic examples of Hindu resistance during Muslim rule and Hindu-Muslim riots collapsed past and present, and the historical *saṃskāra* outlined eralier in this chapter acquired a militant edge and produced an ideological consolidation of caste Hindus around a martial, muscular ideal.[37] The question of Hindu self-defence, which appeared obsessively in the Hindi press throughout the riot-torn 1920s, ironically pushed the issue of societal reoganization completely aside, and defined *saṅgaṭhan* only in military terms. This coincided with the call of the Ārya Samāj

[35] See the interview of *Prem*, the organ of the radical nationalist school Prem Mahāvidyālay of Vrindavan, with Jamnālāl Bajaj after he had publicly taken food from the hands of some untouchable children in an ashram: in the interview Bajāj stressed that the *public* question of the removal of untouchability should not be linked to the *private* one of interdining; he had done so once *publicly*, but that would not be his practice; *Prem*, II, pt. 2, 1, March-April 1928, pp. 333-34.

[36] See e.g. the appeal to the various groups and castes in *Bhārat-bhārtī*, *Bhaviṣya khaṇḍ*, stanzas 74-83, pp. 177-79. In this, Hindi intellectuals reflected the pan-Indian trend by which new caste associations (from the late 19th century) sought to encompass supra-local groups and networks, to fit into the Brahman-centred four-fold classification of society - through ritual sanskritisation - and to pursue secular values of self-improvement through better education and job opportunities. Caste associations developed between 1880 and 1935 on the basis of the old (and disbandled) *pancayats* but mirroring (a) the colonial trend toward supra-local caste networks, coalescing castes and sub-castes, (b) modern associations devoted also to secular values (self-improvement, education) deriving its power and authority from a (purportedly) collective general will of caste members. For an overview, see J. Assayag, *The Making of Democratic Inequality. Caste, class, lobbies and politics in Contemporary India (1880-1995)*, Pondicherry 1995; also L. Carroll, 'Colonial Perceptions of Indian Soicety and the Emergence of Caste(s) Associations', *Journal of Asian Studies*, 37, 2, February 1978, pp. 233-50; and R. Pant, 'Cognitive Status of Caste'.

[37] This new Hindu front was the product of a convergence between the activism, muscular ethos and social critique of the Ārya Samāj with the political clout and religious conservatism of Madan Mohan Mālavīya - in a way the same Aryan-Hindu junction which characterised *Bhārat-bhārtī*'s historical message. In fact the Ārya Samāj, in the persons of Lala Lajpat Rai, and especially Svami Śraddhānand (of Gurukul Kangri) and Bhai Parmānand provided the core of *saṅgathan* activism. See C. Baxter, *Jana Sangha*, p. 17.

and the Hindū Mahāsabhā for the participation of lower castes in Hindu festivals and the need to form *akhāṛās* and volunteer corps,[38] while self-defence squads of students were also organised at time of riots.[39] However, as Nandini Gooptu suggests, we must be careful to infer that common participation in religious activities created or indicated a growth of a cohesive sense of religious communal solidarity among various Hindu castes.[40] True, radical Ārya Samājists like Bhai Parmānand and Svami Śraddhānand advocated the complete end of the *jāti*-system in order to build the one Hindu *jāti*, and associations like the Jāt-Pāṁt-Toṛak-Maṇḍal propagated intercaste-marriage as a way to break caste ties. Still, the majority of the Hindu front kept the ideological level of the 'Hindu nation' and the practical one of commensality and marriage separate. They maintained that the caste-system was compatible with Hindu *saṅgaṭhan*, just as the defence of Hindu interests was compatible with the cause of Indian nationalism.[41]

Thus, despite extensive debate and the introduction of a powerful counter-discourse of a class-based socialist view of society, the historical *saṃskāra* proved too strong to be exploded. It eventually inficiated even socialist ideas. India's own model of societal organization, the *varṇa*-system, was considered as much suited to present-day needs as it was at the time of the Aryans. Once again, only a radical re-interpretation of Indian history would allow a change of paradigm in the vision of society.

[38] 'Hindu volunteer corps, named after famous warriors, such as *Mahabir Dal, Bimsen Dal, Abhimanyu Dal* and *Mahabir Sena Sangh*, mushroomed in all the cities. While these organisations were often the extension of *shudra akharas*, a prominent element that emerged in their activities was an emphasis on defence against Muslims'; N. Gooptu, 'The Political Culture of the Urban Poor', pp. 136-37.

[39] E.g. small groups of educated youth were organised in self-defence squads in the Lucknow riots of 1924 by the Ārya Samāj *pradhān* Rāmsevak Tripāṭhī and by Śrīnārāyaṇ Caturvedī. The former was the author of several articles mentioned in this section, the latter was at the time principal of the Kanyakubja College; editorial note in *Mādhurī*, II, pt. 2, 3, April 1924, p. 350. The successful recruitment of mostly upper-caste youth by the Rāṣṭrīya Svayamsevak Saṅgh (RSS) in the towns of the province in the 1940s relied initially on the Ārya Samāj network of schools; see C. Jaffrelot, *The Hindu Nationalist Movement*, pp. 66 ff.

[40] N. Gooptu, 'The Political Culture', p. 140.

[41] See Indra, 'Hindū saṅgaṭhan kā ādhār', *Mādhurī*, II, pt. 2, 6, July 1924; and Lajpat Rai's presidential speech at 8th A.I. Hindu Mahasabha in Calcutta, 1925, quoted in *Mādhurī*, III, pt. 2, 3, March 1925, in which he upheld the right of Hindus to pursue their own goals while as part of the nationalist movement.

3. Conclusion

भारत के बच्चे बच्चे को हम अर्जुन भीम बनाएंगे।
इस देश के बाँके वीरों को शस्त्र विद्या सिखाएंगे।

हैं कतल किये लाखों हिन्दू मंदिर भी सभी गिराये हैं।
जो जुल्म किये हैं दुष्टों ने हम उनका मज़ा चखाएंगे।
भारत...

रग रग में खून है अर्जुन का हम हनुमान के साथी हैं
पापों की अधमी लंका का दुनिया से भ्रम मिटाएंगे!
भारत...

We'll turn every child of India into Bhīmas and Arjunas/ we'll teach the young heroes of this country to fight with weapons.
Thousands of Indians were butchered, temples were destroyed/ we'll teach those criminals a good lesson / We'll turn...
Arjun's blood is in our veins, we're Hanumān's companions/we'll wipe the blot of sinful Lanka from the earth/ We'll turn...
(Ārya Samāj *bhajan*)[1]

This chapter aimed to show the different aspects of the engagement with history in the Hindi literary sphere, and to demonstrate the role this engagement played in forming a historical consciousness that was crucial in the formation of widespread nationalist ideology. History was recognised as an important source of personal and collective identities; it was the subject of intense reflection and transformation through both 'high' and 'popular' literature, songs, religious and theatrical performances.[2]

A linguistic and conceptual novelty fashioned by Hindi historians and writers was the the historical subject 'we', which referred to a cohesive well-defined nation - almost exclusively Aryan-Hindu - the subject of Indian history - as opposed to the disparate regionalisms that colonial historians took as the main feature of India's past. Colonial historiography was faulted on this point: it was claimed that the history of 'we' as a nation could be traced back from the present day to the Vedic age in one continuous unbroken line. This particular history acquired a new narrative unity and a heroic resonance; any painful

[1] *Prakāś bhajan satsaṅg*, quoted in Lakṣmīnārāyaṇ Gupta, *Hindī bhāṣa aur sāhitya ko ārya-samāj kī den*, p. 192.
[2] The role of Ārya Samāj *upadeśaks* like Svami Satyadeva Parivrājak or Devīdatt Dvivedī is noteworthy in this respect. It points to the widespread circulation and relative elasticity with which the notions of Indian history outlined in the chapter could be adapted and interpreted for and by local, speicific audiences. On the other hand, this view of history was the backbone for other national histories, such as Hindi literary history, and through them it could pervade further as an historical *saṃskāra* in indirect ways.

and awkward moments in it - primarily instances of defeat and subjection suffered at the hands of alien invaders - could be dealt with the appropriate strategies of circumvention or elision.

Literature was the most effective means of disseminating this special vision of Indian history; and the popularity of Maithilīśaraṇ Gupta's *Bhārat-bhārtī*, which was said to be found 'in every house' in the Central Provinces, attests to the enormous appeal and prevalence of this particular historical *saṃskāra*. *Bhārat-bhārtī* was a crucial text in the sense that it neatly encapsulated all the leading articles of faith of the new historical imagination: the sense of an undivided past, the glory of the united Hindu nation, the straying from pure Aryan ideals, the consequent decline and decadence of the Hindu nation. Despite critiques by untouchable ideologues and Ārya-Samāj-educated women, this version of Indian history which was first popularised against a background of political and cultural anti-colonialism, continued to hold sway over a wide range of nationalist ideologies, from Mālavīya's Hindu conservativism to Narendra Dev's socialism.

Vṛndāvanlāl Varmā's *Jhānsī kī rānī* refashioned a more recent and fraught history and was a self-conscious attempt to endow the defeated side of the 1857 Mutiny with far more purpose and intelligence than had been credited to them by colonial historians. What were seen as random actions, prompted out of petty self-interest, were placed in the larger design of national regeneration; Rani Lakṣmībāī herself was seen as a just ruler with reformist tendencies.

The historical consciousness limned by writers like Varmā found new expression in discussions about the reorganisation - or, as the buzzword went, *saṅgaṭhan* - of Indian society in the 1920s. The quest for indigenous models here took a conservative turn as thinker after thinker held up the *varṇāśram* system as the ideal form of societal reorganisation. The heedless proliferation of castes was seen as a corruption of the orginal perfect model in which conflict and disharmony were absent. The Russian revolution of 1917 provided another kind of ideological framework for the discussions on Indian society and introduced and popularized notions of individual rights, and social and economic justice but it, too, could be eventually harmonized with the *varṇāśram* system, with the notion of a perfectly organized Indian society in the past. Thus contemporary discussions among Hindi intellectuals could not envisage any other future for Indian society than the one already blueprinted by the past. This meant that urgent issues of untouchability or women's rights were either evaded or addressed inadequately. It also became clear that organisation of Hindu society on the actual plane was not easily achieved, if not in times of extreme crisis such as communal riots.

What is remarkable about these ideas is their resilience. They not only survived the turbulent ideological times of the 20s and 30s but were carried over into the post-independence era by a distinguished array of writers and intellectuals. In some sense they

formed the basis of all debates on the notion of Indian society, both past and present. Once again the role of literature was crucial in rewriting history; the historical self-consciousness of the Hindi public sphere was mainly different from similar social and cultural enterprises elsewhere in the overall conservative, if not entirely status-quoist, nature of the intellectual opinion. The larger consequence of this was the serious diminishment of the sources of positive identity for Hindi society at large and the indirect boosting of the old Brahmanical order.

In the next chapter we shall see how the emergence of women's voices in the public sphere both employed and challenged the historical and social vision outlined in this chapter. They also insisted on comparing the abstract debate with the empirical ground of concrete action and actual reality. We shall see how, by adding a personal and emotional dimension to their claim, and by using the same rational arguments their male counterparts used but with other symbolic referents, women intellectuals argued for a reform of society on the basis of a universal, but gendered, right to individual development and public participation. They in turn would operate some exclusions of their own.

Chapter 4

Women and the Hindi public sphere

4.1 Women's Education and Access to the Public Sphere

It is only in the 1920s that women's voices started appearing in the Hindi press and in Hindi literature; it was undoubtedly part of the general process of the spread of Hindi literacy and education, print expansion and participation in the nationalist movement that followed the first World War and the Non-Cooperation movement (see chapter 2). However, women's access to the public sphere was fraught with different tensions, especially when it concerned 'respectable', upper-caste women. Not only was there generally severe interdiction to their appearing in public or having interaction with men and the outside world in general because of *pardā* (seclusion); women's lives and roles were hardly in their own hands. They were controlled at every step by guardians, elders, families. Nor were women considered independent individuals but, even more than men, always in-relation to some male mentor. Even reformers who from the nineteenth century onwards had advocated some kind of improvement in the status of women as necessary for the progress of the nation, had done so in terms of making them better wives and mothers.[1] Moreover, debates on the 'woman's question', as it was called, were profoundly affected by the symbolic identification of womanhood with Indianness, i.e. with India's peculiar spiritual essence, which made it superior to and essentially different from the West.[2] Women accessing the public sphere, whether through print, education or activism had thus to negotiate with both traditional and reformist notions of Indian womanhood.

This chapter examines the strategies by which women were first *granted* controlled access to the Hindi public sphere (education, the press); it also discusses how women took

[1] For an overview of nineteenth century debates and activities of 'women's reform', see Radha Kumar, *The History of Doing. An Illustrated Account of Movements for Women's Rights and Feminism in India, 1800-1990*, Verso, London 1993.
[2] P. Chatterjee, *The Nation and its Fragments*, pp. 6 ff.

up the critical instruments they had thus acquired to raise questions about themselves, their role and the norms of society, and to undertake public activities. In doing so, they were partly shaped by current symbols and notions of Indian femininity (propriety, *sevā*, *maryādā*, etc.), and partly refashioned them in the new spaces they had access to, whether in literature, in journals, teaching or political activism. There were some limitations, as we shall see. Although some of the issues women raised were wide- relevant to women in general, and although nationalist campaigns and peasant movements saw a significant participation of illitterate and rural women, the space Hindi women intellectuals carved within the Hindi public sphere was largely an urban and respectable one, and mirrored similar class (and caste) exclusions like the male Hindi sphere.

This first section outlines the impact of women's education in the Hindi-speaking area, and the issues it brought in its wake; these were partly different from those examined in the earlier section on education (2.5), but also led to similar public involvement in the nationalist movement. Even more than schools, we shall argue, it was the women's press which played a crucial role in acquainting women with the world beyond the familiar, with history and with contemporary India (4.2). Women's journals and literature were also crucial in raising questions about the family and women's status in the family from novel angles; most importantly, they argued for the need to acknowledge individual emotions as well as duties, something that received a great deal of attention in the new genre of social novels (4.3). This may account for the great popularity of the most prominent Hindi women's journal, *Cāṁd* (Allahabad, 1922), which became the most widely read Hindi journal *tout court*.[3]

As mentioned earlier, the question of women's actual access to the public sphere was not straightforward: if it led to economic independence or political participation, how was it to be compatible with a woman's *dharma*, her special place within the home? Nationalists believed that women would provide moral and numerical strength and were indeed necessary for the nationalist movement to succeed; yet the danger to the 'moral purity' of society was perceived to be great. Section 4.4 examines the imaginative strategies used to cope with this dilemma.

The Hindi-speaking area had remained largely unaffected by nineteenth century debates and initiatives for women's formal education in British India, mostly in Bengal and

[3] Figures for UP for 1927 show a circulation of 8000 copies for *Cāṁd* and of 7800 for *Partāp*, the most popular nationalist weekly; in 1930 *Cāṁd* issued 15,000 and *Pratāp* 16,000; no other monthly reached such figures; moreover, *Cāṁd* as a monthly was more likely to reach outside the province; *Statement of Newspapers and Periodicals published in the UP*, Government Press, Allahaba for the relevant years.

Bombay presidencies.[4] The few schools run by women missionaries had failed to attract girls from Hindu and Muslim families, who feared attempts at conversion, and there was otherwise little or no provision for formal education. The first stirs started in the late nineteenth century in Punjab, with Ārya Samāj educational enterprises.[5] In fact, most of the first vocal and active Hindi-educated women were Ārya Samāj graduates and students.[6] Overall, the situation started to change slowly only in the second and third decades of the twentieth century.[7]

Although debates on education for both boys and girls considered education crucial to counteract cultural colonization and to build the nation, yet debates on women's education and curriculum were firmly role-oriented. Nineteenth century debates did contrast the present 'ignorance' of Indian women with their education and high status in

[4] Radha Kumar, *The History of Doing*, especially chapter 2.
[5] See Madhu Kishwar, 'Arya Samaj and Women's Education. Kanya Mahavidyalay, Jalandhar', *Economic and Political Weekly*, XXI, 17, 26 April 1986, Women's Studies, pp. 9-24.
[6] Urmilā Devī Śāstrī, Candrāvatī Lakhanpāl, Rāmeśvarī Goyal, Pārvatī Devī, Vidyāvatī Seṭh, Hukmādevī Gupta, Satyavatī Viśārda of Jalandhar were either born or married in Ārya Samāj families and studied or worked in Ārya Samāj schools. For biographies of the first three, see Appendix. Candrāvatī Lakhanpāl was chairwoman of the Mahilā Congress Committee in Dehradun; she became Congress Dictator during Civil Disobedience and was jailed for one year; in 1932 she was President of the UP Provincial Political Conference in Agra. Ūrmilā Śāstrī belonged to the Mahilā Satyāgraha Samiti of Meerut; she spent six months in jail in 1930 and was elected MLA from Meerut in the 1936 elections. Vidyāvatī Seṭh was the first Hindu girl in the Province to take a B.A., in 1917, from Isabella Thoburn College! She resolved to remain an unmarried *brahmacāriṇī* to devote her life to women's education, and became headmistress first of Mahādevī Kanyā Pāṭhśālā in Dehradun, then around 1920 of the newly-found Kanyā Gurukul (Delhi, then Dehradun) and became politically committed. Pārvatī Devī was born into a remarkable Ārya Samāj family from Lyallpur, whose every member was a nationalist - one brother was Jaycandra Vidyālaṃkār; she herself was 'Prājñā' in Sanskrit. After being widowed, she dedicated her life to women's education and public and political work: first as a teacher and Ārya Samāj preacher, then since 1920 as Congress activist at the newly-found Svarajya Ashram in Meerut. Arrested for 'inflammatory speeches', she became famous for being awarded the highest sentence ever to a woman activist - two years; see *Viśāl bhārat*, II, pt. 2, 3, Sept. 1929, pp. 3635-366; and Manmohan Kaur, *Role of Women in the Freedom Movement (1857-1947)*, Sterling, New Delhi 1986, p. 152. Rāmeśvarī Goyal came from a remarkable Ā.S. and nationalist Agraval family (her grand-father had been principal of the D.A.V. college in Dehradun) settled in Jhansi; her mother Piṣṭādevī, was a renowned poet and Congress activist in Jhansi and educated all her nine daughters; Rāmeśvarī taught at the Ārya Kanyā Pāṭhśālā in Allahabad.
[7] By 1919 there were only 31 college students at the only girls' college of the Province, Isabella Thoburn in Lucknow; there were 38 anglo-vernacular middle schools with 4,126 pupils, and 54 vernacular ones with 5,071. Primary schools were much more numerous, 1137 in 1918-19, with 39, 315 pupils. *General Report on Public Instruction in the U.P.*, 1918-19, p. 17. In 1920-21, new intermediate classes were started at three institutions: Annie Besant's Theosophical College in Banaras, Muslim High School in Lucknow, and Crosthwaite High School in Allahabad; *Ibid.*, 1921, p. 24. Comparative figures for 1921 show that only 4 Brahmin, 1 Non-Brahmin and 6 Muslim girsl were attending college in 1921: thus, numbers were equally low at the higher stage; at the middle stage, Hindu girls were substantially more than Muslim girls (458 against 80), but still less than Christian ones (609); at the primary level, the percentage between Brahmins and Non-Brahmins shifted sensibly towards the latter (49,270 against 19,868), and a few girls from depressed castes also appear (1,127). The percentage of girls to boys in each category was roughly 1/10 at the lower primary stage, and plunged to 1/40 at the upper primary stage, 1/200 at the middle stage, and to 4/1000 at the high school stage. Overall numbers grew of about 50% in the next 8 years, hardly a break-through though. *Ibid.*, pp. 28-29.

India's golden past, but only to stress the importance of education for performing well their roles as wives and mothers.[8] Motherhood was in fact isolated as the central experience of women's lives and charged with a new nationalist significance: children were no private family affair but were the children of the nation and the makers of tomorrow's India. When, in the early twentieth-century, the debate reached the newly-forming Hindi sphere, it had already acquired precise cultural and religious connotations; it was a way to impose a new patriarchy. Education for women was decided by men in accordance with their role as mothers and housewives (*sugṛhiṇī*); their place should be at home; and their activities and behaviour should be in keeping with the rules of *maryādā*.

At the onset of the twentieth century, the debate on whether women should be educated at all, with all its speculations on women's education in ancient India, had given way to the question of which kind of education girls should be given, wrote Puruṣottam Dās Ṭaṇḍon in 1916.[9] How much of modern education should girls be exposed to?

The first problem persisted, however: the number of articles in favour of women's education throughout the two decades, and the poor numbers of pupils show that girls' education was far from an accepted or widespread practice.[10] But, interestingly, the second round of debates allowed a larger spate of views, with growing numbers of educated girls and women taking part: as we shall see, arguing about education became a way to argue for their right to define their own roles.

First of all, we must bear in mind that the actual impact and growth of formal schooling was extremely limited. Like everywhere else, girls' schools in North India were mostly an urban phenomenon, and attendance dropped drastically right at the primary stage, when most girls were married or taken out of school before puberty. Figures for the United Provinces were much lower than in Bengal, Bombay and Madras at this stage, while they became more similar for the middle and higher stages.[11] However, all in all only about 1% of the female population of the United Provinces underwent some formal schooling.[12]

[8] See Uma Chakravarti, 'What Happened to the Vedic *Dasi*?'.
[9] P.D. Ṭaṇḍon, 'Strī-śikṣā kī rīti par vicār', *Gṛhalakṣmī*, VII, 3, May-June 1916, p. 111. *Maryādā* (Allahabad 1910), a journal Ṭaṇḍon wa associated with, carried an article on the subject in almost every issue.
[10] In Bengal, for example, education for girls meant primarily training for housework, needling and tailoring and the various *vratas* in the vernacular - all role-indicators through which the patriarchal family 'educated' girls so that they could then become corner-stones of the institution. More formal education became more and more accessible and even desirable as it came to increase eligibility for marriage. Few were the primary schools, however, which taught the whole curriculum, since most girls dropped out earlier, before reaching puberty age; see Indrani Chatterjee, 'The Bengali Bhadramahila. 1930-1934', M. Phil. thesis, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi 1986, pp. 43-44.
[11] In 1914, the United Provinces lagged far behind the other provinces in the number of girls studying in formal institutions in, with a total of 55,049 girls instead of the 259,024 in Madras, 220,891 in Bengal, 149,107 in Bombay and 106,100 in Punjab; see 'Bhārat meṁ strī-śikṣā kā pracār', *Strī-darpaṇ*, XIV, 3, March 1916, p. 178. Almost a quarter of a century later, in 1940, the number of female pupils in the UP had reached 140,000 - not even that of the Bombay Presidency in 1914! Yet the figure was

Informal education at home, and especially women's journals and books supplemented or substituted formal education. *Gṛhlakṣmī* and *Strī-darpaṇ* (both est. 1909), the most important early women's journals in Hindi, were expressly meant as educative material; the name of the first, 'Lakṣmī of the house', leaves little doubt about the aims of such education.[13] In the period after 1920, publishing geared exclusively at female juvenile readers grew substantially, pointing at a parallel growth of female literacy (see 2.3). 'Useful literature for women' (*strī-upyogī*) was self-consciously didactic,[14] although the women-oriented book-market included also religious books and entertaining novels.

The significant presence of school- or college-going female characters in stories and dialogues in women's journals, and in journals generally from the late 1920s onwards, suggests a greater familiarity with the school experience, at least among women contributors, and isolates education as one of the experiences considered crucial in fashioning a feminine subjectivity: normally, schooled female characters are bold, speak and argue, have an individual life. Still, speaking of women's education means speaking of its limits and exclusions. It was and remained largely an urban phenomenon, excluding completely rural women and children of the lower strata and castes. Also, stratifications within the educated women partly mirrored those among educated males. Namely, some educated women of the area were part of the English-speaking elite; Hindu and Muslim female pupils replicated the Hindi-Urdu divide; finally, for many women it was active political participation, and not literacy, which drew them into the public sphere (see 4.2).

However, there was one major difference. Because girls' education was not envisaged (at first) to be conducive to employment but rather as an instrument of self-cultivation, Hindi was considered by patriotic reformers the ideal language of women's education thanks to its associations with religion. In fact, most educational institutions of the province were Hindi-medium, first among them the legendary Kanyā Mahāvidyālay in Jalandhar, in the predominantly Urdu-educated Punjab. It would in fact often be the case in an educated household that men would be educated in Urdu and English, while women would be educated in Hindi - the Nehru household being just one such case. Hindi was also

greeted as an 'unexpected success'; Govarddhandās Tripāṭhī, 'Hamāre prānt meṁ bālikāoṁ kī śikṣā', *Cāṁd*, XVIII, pt. 2, 1, December 1940, p. 49. Most of the data and debates on women's education, it should be noted, refer unfortunately only to the United Provinces and, partly, to the Punjab: Bihar, the Central Provinces and Rajasthan are practically excluded.

[12] G. Tripāṭhī, *ibid.*

[13] A fuller discussion on the term 'Gṛhalakṣmī' and role-oriented education will appear in the following section.

[14] For the influence of *strī-upyogī* literature on the development of the Hindi novel, see A.S. Kalsi, 'Realism in the Hindi Novel', pp. 27 ff. For a similar trend in Urdu, see C.M. Naim, 'Prize-Winning *Adab*: A Study of Five Urdu Books Written in Response to the Allahabad Government Gazette Notification', in B. Metcalf, ed., *Moral Conduct and Authority: The Place of Adab in South Asian Islam*, University of California Press, Berkeley 1984.

aided by the fact that women's education was divested of the need (and 'threat') of public employment. In the 1920s this translated into several educated women coming to the fore and acquiring a voice in the male-dominated Hindi sphere.

Let us now look more closely at these urban, schooled women. They can be divided into three broad categories: the few early women B.A.s and M.A.s, Muslim and Hindu in equal numbers, belonged as already mentioned to the English-speaking elite, usually the daughters of civil servants or professionals. They were the ones to be first photographed in journals along with public-minded Ranis as 'exceptional women'; their academic achievements would be extolled with great pride, but they were somehow different, in dress and life-style, from the readers' world.[15] The attitude to such women was actually a mixed one of pride, satire and perceived danger. To Satyāvatī Devī of the Ārya Samāj Kanyā Gurukul in Saran, women who had reached the top of the English education system had in fact turned their backs on 'Indian civilisation'. English education did not inspire patriotism, and 'our women (*strī-samāj*), brought up in the present atmosphere of English education, are getting further and further away from Indian attire and sentiments'.[16] Yet, their examination results were published with pride by women's journals.[17]

When in the late 1920s girls from Hindi backgrounds started being admitted more frequently at D.A.V. Colleges, at Allahabad, Banaras and Lucknow universities for higher degrees, Gandhian nationalism had already affected the code of dress. They could now enter 'the top of the English education system' equipped with homespun Khadi and Indian values.[18] Middle and higher education for girls grew substantially when non-sectarian and non-missionary schools for girls were set up in the 1920s, almost exclusively in the vernacular. The main institutions, which attracted girls also from other provinces, were

[15] E.g. Miss Nur Jahan Mohammad Yusuf M.A., Vice-Principal of the Lucknow Muslim High School, mentioned in *Cāṁd*: she was awarded a scholarship by the provincial government to pursue educational studies abroad; *Cāṁd*, III, pt. 2, 1-2, May-June 1925, p. 117. *Cāṁd* regularly published pictures and biographies of such women from all over India; the fact that some belong to one's own province did not make them either more accessible or less exotic.

[16] Satyavatī Devī, 'Striyoṁ ko kaisī śikṣā aur sāhitya kī āvaśyaktā hai?', *Mādhurī*, X, pt. 1, 6, January 1932, p. 788.

[17] See e.g. *Cāṁd*, III, pt. 2, 1-2, May-June 1925, p. 117.

[18] Miss Śakuntalā Bhārgava, B.A. was extolled as one such ideal Indian woman: meeting her 'serious and pure nature' (*gambhīr sāttvik svarūp*) was for the interviewer almost a mystical experience! ('I bowed my head in my mind before that goddess'.) Before taking admission at D.A.V. college in Dehradun in 1925, she had begged her father not to 'clamp her in the shackle of marriage'. With her father's full support, she took the Intermediate examination in 1927, and in 1928 a B.A. from B.H.U.; at the time of the interview she was studying for an M.A. in Sanskrit. Her countenance was described as 'very pure, simple and devoid of pretence'; she dressed in Khadi, spent little of her allowance for herself and gave the rest to needy students. Although she did not support 'radical social change' (*sāmājik krānti*) vocally, she was herself 'an image of it'. Recently, she had spoken against *pardā* at the Bhārgava Mahilā-Samiti. 'The importance of Kumārījī lies not only in the fact that she has 'acquired a B.A., but that she has established a high model of will-power, character and patriotism (*ātma-bal, caritra-bal aur deśprem*) in front of other women'; *Mādhurī*, VIII, pt. 1, 4, November 1929, pp. 768-770.

Kanyā Mahāvidyālay in Jalandhar, Crosthwaite High School (est. 1895) and Prayāg Mahilā Vidyāpīṭh (est. 1922) in Allahabad; Isabella Thoburn school and college in Lucknow; Indraprastha Girls' High School and college in Delhi. All these institutions started first as schools and later added higher level classes.[19] It is to these schools and this kind of vernacular education that the majority of women in the Hindi public sphere belonged: Candrāvatī Lakhanpāl, Mahādevī Varmā, Subhadrā Kumārī Cauhān, Vidyāvatī Sahgal, Tejrānī Dīkṣit, Rāmeśvarī Goyal, etc.[20] By caste they were almost exclusively Kayastha, Brahmin, Thakurs and Khatri, like their male counterparts; socially they belonged mostly to service families, had a background of active parental or brotherly or conjugal support - often against the wishes of the larger clan - and were pioneers in their own fields.

Although the curriculum was different from that of boys' schools, girls would be given a fairly comprehensive education; at the Prayāg Mahilā Vidyāpīṭh for instance, although maths, the 'traditional stumbling block for girls in middle schools', was made optional, girls were taught Hindi, history, geography and home science, while natural science, religion, English, other Indian languages, music, spinning, etc. were optional subjects. Creativity was also encouraged in writing, and the girls' contributions were published in the school magazine and in other journals.[21]

By contrast, primary education was, not exceptionally in the colonial system, the worst organized and funded, despite the fact that it catered for the largest number of pupils by far. The number of girls' *pāṭhśālās* kept increasing thoughout the two decades under survey, managed predominantly either by local boards or by private individuals with official grant-in-aid. 'Wherever you look', wrote Candrakumārī Haṇḍu in 1929, 'in narrow lanes, at

[19] For a detailed study of Kanyā Mahāvidyālay, a product of the Ārya Samāj educational project, see M. Kishwar, 'Arya Samaj and Women's Education'; for Crosthwaite school, see K. Schomer, *Mahadevi Varma*; for Isabella Thoburn, see the article by Kauśalyādevī, in the women's column 'Mahilā manorañjan' in *Mādhurī*, IV, pt. 1, 6, December 1925. The latter became part of Lucknow University, while classes for Allahabad University were held at Crosthwaite. The decision of the managing committee of Allahabad University, which had so far been co-educational, to have special arrangements for female students aroused heated public discussion and provoked two women's meetings in the city. One meeting, apparently more anglicized, objected to the decision arguing that in this way the university was taking a step backwards; the other, presided by a Mrs Suśīlādevī, supported the decision to have separate teaching arrangements on account of the *present* social situation, in that it would be an incentive to enrol. The editor commented neutrally: 'we are happy that there are enough educated women in our society who can reflect seriously and with full freedom on such matters'; in *Mādhurī*, IV, pt. 1, 1, July 1928, p. 129.

[20] See biographies in the Appendix.

[21] S. Agravāl and P.D. Ṭaṇḍon, 'Prayāg mahilā vidyāpīṭh', *Gṛhalakṣmī*, XII, 9, Nov.-Dec. 1921, p. 297. See also K. Schomer, *Mahadevi Varma*, pp. 215-16. Since *Cāṁd's* manageress, Vidyāvatī Sahgal, was a former teacher at Crosthwaite, students were encouraged to publish there; Mahādevī's first poems appeared in *Cāṁd* from the first issue. At Prayāg Mahilā Vidyāpīṭh, with Mahadevī Varmā as principal, literature and creative writing were giving a great impulse, and some 'progressive' books like Candrāvatī Lakhanpāl's *Striyoṁ kī sthiti* (1932, see below) were part of the curriculum. In 1933 the manager, Saṅgamlāl Agravāl, organised the first women's *kavi-sammelan*, which attracted many women who would otherwise not participated. Both Mahādevī and Subhadrā Kumārī participated, and chair-women became a new fashion at poetry meetings (see 2.4.).; *ibid.*, pp. 217-18.

the edge of open sewers, surrounded by buzzing flies, our delicate maidens (*sukumārī kanyāeṁ*) sit on a dirty rag writing on their slates'.[22] The educational environment they provided was therefore very different from that of middle and high schools, and they were a far cry from recognising girls' intellect as a national resource and an instrument of self-development, as nationalist educationists saw it.

> Come, reader, I'll now show you one of these schools. First of all the 1st form; the teacher says with pride: 'I teach 130 children!' Your clothes are dirty, but what can you do? You get fifteen rupees per month and have to survive on them. You have a long stick in your hand and show your discipline: 'Stand up!', 'Be quiet'. In this very moment you look like the terrifying image of Kali and silence descends upon them. The children are dirty, too: their clothes are dirty, their hands are dirty, their faces are dirty, their hair is dishevelled and their frightened faces appear devoid of any sparkle, of the natural joy of children. Their eyes betray no wonder, no playfulness. The teacher says: 'Read' and a child reads out as if she were a lifeless machine.
> In the second class children are committing tables to memory. They all shout '*do dunī cār, do tīy chah, do cauk āṭh*' and not one of them understands what she is saying. Two girls are standing with their faces to the wall: they did not know the lesson by heart. One is sobbing, the other is angry and plotting revenge. She had all the qualities which the country needs: a sharp intellect, a strong sense of purpose and she could not bear injustice. But the master's cruel behaviour is slowly turning her into a stubborn child.[23]

This sorry picture reflected both a lack of financial and human resources - for trained women teachers were scarce - but also a paradox about the meaning and scope of girls' education. How could educated women turn into school secretaries and manageresses when respectable women were meant to keep *pardā*, busy managing the entire household and becoming the mothers of the nation? The question was examined in a long series of articles and stories on whether women's education should be role-based or not.

'The education of each person should keep in mind what he or she has to do when s/he grows up... in a word, I believe that the ideal of the whole women's education should be of making them into *sugṛhiṇīs*', wrote Puruṣottamdās Ṭaṇḍon.[24] Since a woman's true *dharma* is *pātivrat dharma*, education should aim at strengthening that role, not at threatening it. Otherwise, Ṭaṇḍon continued, people would keep preferring non-educated but modest and dutiful women to those who were educated but overlooked their *dharma*.

Central to this view of role-based education was the preoccupation with male control over feminine subjectivity and with the boundaries of the role, that which in Hindi is expressed by the powerful concept of *maryādā*. The danger that education would bring a sense of self-importance and individual right was expressed as overstepping *maryādā*.

[22] C. Huṇḍa, 'Hamārī putrī-pāṭhśālāeṁ', *Cāṁd*, VII, pt. 2, 6, October 1929, p. 697.
[23] *Ibid.*, p. 698.
[24] P. D. Ṭaṇḍon, 'Strī-śikṣā kī rīti par vicār', *Gṛhalakṣmī*, VII, 3, May-June 1916, pp. 111-3.

Answering a Mrs Draupadī who had argued for women's right to freedom, *svatantratā,* in an article on 'Pātivrat' (*Strī-darpaṇ,* November 1913), Brahmadīn Saksenā voiced the worry of such reformers at the idea of individual freedom. What kind of freedom, he asked, unlimited or limited? 'We believe that the first kind of freedom is harmful, for reasons known to all [?!?]... We support limited freedom within *maryādā,* i.e. *we want to give* as much freedom as is necessary for a woman to become the *arddhāṅginī* of man, and for the happiness of the home'.[25]

Although role-based education was a notion shared by several women as well,[26] men would inevitably stress the controlling role of husbands or male reformers. Thus, for example, Ṭaṇḍon designed a curriculum for girls until the age of 16 or 17; 'after that her husband will probably be her teacher... and I think it is best to leave the care for her subsequent and higher education to him'.[27] Ṭaṇḍon's separate curriculum for girls was to take concrete form in the Prayāg Mahilā Vidyāpīṭh; however, as we shall see below, even role-based education led to a tension between the ideal and the reality of emancipation.[28] This was prompted by the need for women teachers as well as for employment for unsupported women, and by the Gandhian phase of the nationalist movement.

As Madhu Kishwar has shown in the case of the Kanyā Mahāvidyālay in Jalandhar, even a culturally conservative view of women's role could provide unexpected avenues into public participation during the freedom struggle. The rhetoric of womanhood as motherhood could carry nationalist overtones, with the nation as the highest Mother whom everyone was called to serve. As we shall see later in the chapter, the rhetoric of *sevā* became the most powerful tool to break the divide betwee the 'home and the world' while

[25] After all, Saksenā argued, education should always lead to greater happiness; if it led to quarrels or conflicts, it was a certain proof that it was wrong; 'Pātivrat dharma aur vartamān śikṣā kram', in *Strī-darpaṇ*, X, 3, March 1914, p. 174, emphasis added.

[26] In one of the many dialogues featured in women's journals to expatiate on a social question, a husband and wife debated the problems and benefits of education. Here it is the husband who tries to convince his wife to study, while the wife objects with all the usual arguments: what is the use to learn more than the basics? Her mother-in-law tells her off already every time she sees her with a book, etc. It is true that most women become arrogant or westernised as soon as they study a bit or either spend their whole time reading entertaining (and not didactic) novels, answers her husband, but this happens because they do not receive the right kind of education. 'Lord of my life!' his wife finally exclaims, 'from now on I will study according to you orders and will do just what you tell me to. Who am I but your slave?'. 'Prabhā', 'Strī-śikṣā yā sahdharminī-śikṣā', *Gṛhalakṣmī*, VIII, 8, Oct.-Nov. 1916, p. 339.

[27] P.D. Ṭaṇḍon, 'Strī-śikṣā kī rīti par vicār', p. 115.

[28] *Ibid.*; see also a dialogue between mother and daughter on the proper education for girls. The lower middle-class nature of this education is evident from the remark that thrift and willingness to learn to do everything are essential, because they have no servants. 'Why should I learn English? Will I ever live in England?' asks the daughter. 'Of course not' answers her mother, 'but in order to be able to *answer* properly in case you happened to be in company of some foreigners and they were to ask you questions in their own language'; Pyārelāl Gārg, 'Kyā kyā sīkhnā cāhiye?', *Gṛhalakṣmī*, IV, 3, May-June 1913, p. 149, emphasis added.

remaining within the limits of *maryādā* (4.4.).[29] Thus, despite their limited impact, schools were an important site to develop a public voice and literary expression for women, and a base for literary and political participation.[30] In fact, all the women who became vocal in the Hindi political sphere went through some formal education.[31] One of the aims of the Kanyā Mahāvidyālay was to prepare women preachers (*pracārikās*) for the Ārya Samāj.[32] Later, girl students from the Kanyā Mahāvidyālay were sent to sing songs at the opening session of the historic Lahore Congress of 1919; this wold become a typical feature, both at literary and political gatherings.[33] In several cases the patriotic atmosphere of the Mahavidyalay, or of Crosthwaite school and the Mahilā Vidyāpīṭh in Allahabad, became a prelude to political participation and activity during Non-Cooperation and Civil Disobedience. Even more than in the case of Hindi male writers, all women writers took active part in public life, either through constructive work (teaching, social work, etc.) or through direct political invovement.[34] The close link between public access and education is

[29] In a two-part article on the 'Need of women's education from a national perspective', Rāmrakh Siṃh Sahgal, the future founder of *Cāṁd*, drew a direct link between the revival of the ancient ideals of Sītā and Sāvitrī and participation in the nationalist struggle. Quoting extensively from *Wake up India* by Annie Besant, Sahgal subscribed to the idea that Indian women were not born ignorant but were bred ignorant. 'Our mothers and sisters should come out in the arena keeping in mind the stories of those heroic women'; R.S. Sahgal, 'Rāṣṭrīy dṛṣṭi se strī-śikṣā kī āvaśyaktā', *Strī-darpaṇ*, XXV, 1, July 1921, p. 13.

[30] Crosthwaite and Mahilā Vidyāpīṭh girl students in Allahabad were taken to Anand Bhavan, and Kanyā Mahāvidyālay [KMV] girls in Jalandhar were regularly taken to the annual sessions of the National Social Conference and the Indian National Congress, where they delivered speeches. In 1920 they took an active part in the movement: 'In fact, KMV girls and teachers seem to have been the first women political workers that Punjab produced... National leaders came to speak at both schools, and 'even the buildings, bowers, gardens and pathways on the campus of KMV were named after prominent nationalist leaders'; Madhu Kishwar, 'Arya Samaj and Women's Education', p. 18.

[31] E.g. Mahādevī took a master's degree in Sanskrit from Allahabad University, along with Candrāvatī Tripāṭhī and Rāmeśvarī Goyal; Vidyāvatī Seṭh was a graduate, Urmilā Devī was a 'Siddhānta-viśārdā' and 'Hindī-prabhākarā', Pārvatī Devī a 'Prājñā' in Sanskrit.

[32] Girls were taught the principles and texts of the Ārya Samāj, *sandhyā uccāraṇ* (utterance of morning and evening prayers), *havan* mantras, the *Rāmāyaṇa*, the *Manusmṛti*, the *Gītā* and a smattering of the *Vedas*. This accounts for the learned articles, full of shastric quotations, that women who had been through this curriculum wrote for Hindi magazines; *ibid.*, p. 15.

[33] See R. Kumar, *The History of Doing*, p. 62. Female pupils singing poems or hymns became a familiar feature at literary meetings.

[34] Subhadrā K. Cauhān became a full-time Congress activist along with her husband, Lakṣmaṇ Siṃh, in Jabalpur in 1920; she first went to jail during a Congress-flag hoisting *satyāgraha* in in 1922; she did Congress propaganda both in the town (where she was one still of the few women not observing *pardā*) and in the countryside: as a consequence, women formed about one fourth of the Congress in Jabalpur, a remarkable proportion; she took part in all the major campaigns, went to jail several more times and was elected MLA in the 1936 elections. S. Cauhān, *Milā tej se tej*, Hans Prakasan, Allahabad 1975. Mahādevī did not take an active political role, but after a visit of Gandhi during a fund-raising tour during Civil Disobedience, she took to wearing khadi, started teaching as a volunteer in two villages outside Allahabad and vowed never to speak English while on Indian soil; K. Schomer, *Mahadevi Varma*, p. 203. Śivrānī Devī was a child-widow when she became Premcand's second wife; she became involved with Mahilā Congress Samiti in Lucknow, and Premcand was very proud when she was arrested during Civili Disobedience; she also took to writing. Kamlā Caudhrī belonged to the Mahilā Satyāgraha Samiti of Meerut and went to jail in 1930 for six months; she became member of the Town and Provincial Congress Committee (and of the Constituent Assembly in 1947). For the political career of Candrāvatī Lakhanpāl, Rāmeśvarī Goyal, Urmilā Devī Śāstrī, see above fn. 6.

further highlighted by the fact that adult women's education expanded sensibly after each wave of the movement.

On a theoretical level, debates on role-based education, provided a different kind of space, i.e. the space to argue critically about women's equal abilities. On this basis, different arguments could be raised about the role, *dharma* and nature of women, and in favour of a *self-defined maryādā*. For example, the Ārya Samāj reading of Indian history could provide an argument for equal education for girls, against traditional customs as man-made, and even for their right to chose the marriage partner.[35] On account of the fact that respectful employment was a real necessity for many women, and that in more ways than one it could be a form of nationalist *sevā*, arguments about women's access to public space and to employment were raised. Like elsewhere in India, education became a pretext to speak about burning issues like *pardā,* mismatched-marriage, dowry, and increasingly women's rights and economic self-reliance.[36] Those who, like Sahgal, supported the view that education was important per se and a means of self-empowerment, argued that women should take education in their own hands, and extend traditional roles to the wider arena of society and the nation. Education was thus not plain literacy, but an awakening to self-respect and self-awareness.[37]

The issue of education as a means to employement was hotly debated, as it hit at the heart of women's dependence and home-bound role. It also conjured the image of the Indian woman's bad 'other': the shameless, flirtatious and competitive western(ized) woman. Thus, interestingly, reformers and women contributors first introduced it as a solution for 'helpless' (*abalā*) women - widows and women abandoned by their families, often with children - and argued it was the only respectable alternative to prostitution or conversion. Faced by these greater dangers, should not women of no means rather seek to support themselves through employment? As a proof, *Cāṁd*'s column *Ciṭṭhī-patrī* carried several letters by women, usually educated upto Hindi Middle standard, who asked for help

[35] The author recalls that girls were given equal education in the 'Aryan' age, and drew from the familiar examples of Sītā, Sāvitrī, Damayantī, Draupadī, etc. to argue against arranged marriages: all these heroines chose their husbands in *svayaṃvaras*. The Puranic *ślokas* against women's education were men-made, she argued, and the fall continued under Muslim rule; the practice of child-marriage, necessary at that time, survived however even after the danger had ended. The advent of English education only added fuel to the fire by making a boy's education so expensive that nothing could be spared for girls. Gopāldevī, 'Kyā paṛh-likhkar laṛkiyā kumārī raheṁgī?', *Cāṁd*, V, pt. 2, 6, October 1927, pp. 689-691. See also Subhadrā Devī's dialogue 'Pati-patnī kā kanyā ke viṣay meṁ vārtālāp': here, too, it is the (educated) father who argues in favour of higher education for his daughter - while his wife would like to see her married soon; he also argues in favour of a modified version of *svayaṃvar* and against *pardā*, because true modesty, he says, lies within; Subhadrā Devī', 'Pati-patnī kā kanyā ke viṣay meṁ vārtālāp', *Gṛhalakṣmī*, IV, 10, Dec.-Jan. 1914, pp. 519-523.
[36] See Veer Bharat Talvar, 'Feminist Consciousness in Women's Journals in Hindi: 1910-1920', in K. Sangari and S. Vaid, eds., *Recasting Women*.
[37] R.S. Sahgal, 'Rāṣṭrīy dṛṣṭi se strī-śikṣā par vicār'.

in finding teaching jobs. The editor supported these women vigorously, and often carried answers in later issues, giving the names of institutions or of gentlemen willing to marry them. It is noteworthy, in fact, that as a rule pleading women preferred self-support to remarriage - possibly aware of the social stigma and emotional traumas it involved.

Thus, the door to activity in the 'world outside' was first opened for women in distress, under exceptional circumstances. Even Prayāg Mahilā Vidyāpīṭh, founded by the first Congress municipal board in Allahabad with Puruṣottam Dās Ṭaṇḍon as chairman, balanced the ideal of an Indian, alternative, role-based education with the practical needs of the students. Although the curriculum differed from that of government schools, students were prepared for the Board of Education's Middle school examinations, because of the greater employment value of regular degrees. The Vidyāpīṭh was very successful in combining a focus on cultural identity with flexibility and practical sense. Following the example of the Sāhitya Sammelan, it started first as an examining institution, with sessions twice a year administered in Allahabad and in any centre with at least three candidates.[38] There was no age limit, and candidates could take one subject at a time: the formula thus allowed married girls to take up or resume their studies at home as and when they could.[39] The Mahilā Sevā Sadan, the first teaching and residential wing of the Mahilā Vidyāpīṭh in Allahabad (1930), catered initially for girls and women in need; it hosted mostly widows, girls from impoverished families and, increasingly, daughters and wives of men jailed during the nationalist movement.[40]

However, once the issue of employment had been raised, it was to remain central in women's debates throughout the period under survey, argued in all its possible facets: women teachers, doctors, nurses and lawyers were in great need; the duty towards the nation was as strong and primary as that towards the family; why limit a mother's love only to her own children, etc. Clearly, participation in the nationalist movement had opened a door which could hardly be closed again; and although the primacy of motherhood, the centrality of *pātivrat dharma* and *maryādā* were rarely questioned, the whole definition of a woman's identity and role was at stake.

[38] 'Gathering together large numbers of women from far away in one place [to teach them] would be very difficult, because of *pardah*, child-bearing at a young age, and lack of belief in higher education for women. In addition, the cost of attending a teaching university would be prohibitive. Especially in our country, which is so backward socially and economically, giving middle and higher education to as many women as possible at minimal cost can only be accomplished by an examining university'; *Viśāl bhārat*, July 1930, pp. 84-85, quoted by K. Schomer, *Mahadevi Varma*, p. 214.

[39] It 'recognized the fact that most girls had heavy responsibilities in the home and enabled them to pace their education at their own convenience'; *ibid.*

[40] For instance, Sampūrṇānand, Lāl Bahādur Śāstrī and Rajendra Prasad sent their daughters there; *ibid.*, p. 219.

Perhaps the most comprehensive argument in favour of women's self-definition of their role is contained in Candrāvatī Lakhanpāl's book *Striyoṁ kī sthiti* (1932).[41] Candrāvatī, herself educated in Allahabad and Banaras, married the Ārya Samāj scholar and professor Satyavrat Siddhāntālaṃkār, taught at Gurukul Kangri and became a well-known figure in Hindi thanks to her reply to Katherine Mayo's *Mother India* called *Mādar inḍiyā kā javāb*. In *Striyoṁ kī sthiti*, the chapter on education opens with an indictment of women's reclusion at home: thus, eduction for her could not be compatible with a punitive role.

> For centuries the arena of women's activities has been considered the home. Human society did not pause long to consider what was their relation to the world at large. For many the aim of their life has been to obey their husbands and to beget children. What need is there for education for such things? If they have to study it is enough to study just the amount they need to amuse their husbands. Women should know how to write letters, to sew and to cook; a woman has no other use.[42]

In her outspoken and persuasive style, Candrāvatī equalled this condition of women to slavery: as a man could buy a slave and own more than one, a husband in India could buy a wife and keep more than one. 'After keeping women enslaved for centuries and bringing them to their present state, men now say that this is the natural state of women', i.e. that women were naturally dependent on men and would naturally seek their protection (p. 125). To this Candrāvatī replied that women would still seek marriage, true, but not from a helpless position. She further questioned the notion of the woman as *abalā*, both physically and intellectually weaker than man, as a myth: their astounding progress in only two centuries proved that the contrary was true. Given men and women's equality in terms of abilities, to deny them opportunities outside the home amounted to a crime, to enslavement. Thus, girls' curriculum should be comprehensive and on par with that of boys, too.

Only at the end Candrāvatī raised the issue of the centrality of marriage: couldn't women be equally, or even more, useful to society otherwise? In any case, they should be allowed not to marry if they wished to. Moreover, employment was useful even for married women, since they could share the burden of expenses and provide for themselves in the not-too-rare event of widowhood or abandonment. To deny women education and the right to step out of their homes was an injustice to women and society. This, concluded Candrāvatī, was the right way to look at the question of education, i.e. from a woman's point of view.[43]

[41] Originally published by Gurukul Kangri in 1932, it was subsequently republished by the Ganga Pustak Mala after it awarded the Seksāriyā and the Sammelan awards in 1934.
[42] C. Lakhanpāl, *Striyoṁ kī sthiti*, Ganga Pustak Mala, Lucknow, third ed. 1941, p. 123.
[43] *Ibid.*, p. 141.

Thus by the 1930s a powerful women's voice on education and the right to self-definition had emerged in Hindi. Although for the great majority of educated girls, themselves a small minority, marriage continued to be the only end, the figure of the educated working woman - the unmarried teacher, the social worker or the political activist - started to figure in collective imagination and to gain social acceptance. In fact, a few stories by women authors in the late 1930s feature educated wives trapped at home as in a prison.[44]

All in all attitudes toward the 'educated woman' remained ambiguous. The western-educated woman was the object of disapproval and contempt: as someone who had overstepped *maryādā*, she messed up all family and social relations, was bound to end up badly, and compared unfavourably with the simple but innocent illiterate girl. This attitude was especially prominent in cartoons, even those in magazines like *Cāṁd* which fervently championed the cause of women's education: whether 'at home' or 'in the world', they seemed to say, women's progress must always carry the brand of Indianness.[45] On the other hand, college girls featured largely in romantic narratives without any moral stigma attached: Dhanīrām Prem, Pāṇḍey Becan Śarmā Ugra, Nirālā employed educated heroines as characters who possessed not only 'womanly virtues' but also wit, intelligence, passion and determination.[46] Educated girls made more challenging partners to male protagonists, or symbolised the modern sensitive girl as in Jainendra Kumār's *Tyāgpatr* (1937) (see 4.4).

To summarize, the question of women's education was first tied and confined to their prescribed role as 'reformed' housewives. For that purpose, it had to be different from boys', and also conducive to maintaining and enhancing those essentially Indian values of which women were considered custodians. However, simply by providing critical tools and a sphere of socialization outside the home, girls' schools grew out of the hands of early social reformers. They not only provided a new cultural content to traditional woman's roles within the home (mother, wife), but also opened new roles and new avenues of 'doing'.

Although formal education was severely limited to urban middle class women, it nonetheless produced women's voices through which a 'minority' point of view could be argued. Also, Hindi-educated women would provide most women political activists and

[44] See Tejrānī Dīkṣit, 'Jvālā', *Cāṁd*, XIV, pt. 2, 2, June 1936, and Tejrānī Pāṭhak, 'Maiṁ kaise haṁsūṁ?', *Cāṁd*, XV, pt. 1, 4, February 1937.

[45] See e.g. Kumārī Candrakiraṇ, 'Ejūkeṭed vāif', *Cāṁd*, XVIII, pt. 1, 3, August 1940, pp. 194-97. As usual, in this story, too, the cheated husband is as much an object of contempt as the brazen wife. One is reminded of Miss Māltī, the flirtatious English-returned doctor of Premcand's novel *Godān* (1936).

[46] See the witty heroine who rejects the protagonist's ardent love in Dhanīrām Prem's story 'Jalā-bhunā', *Cāṁd*, IX, pt. 2, 4, August 1931; or Ugra's Muslim heroine of the cross-religious love story in Calcutta in *Cand hasīnoṁ ke khutūt* (1927); and finally Nirālā's heroines in *Alkā* (1933) and *Nirupamā* (1934-35).

leaders, especially during the Civil Disobedience movement. Education brought in its fold the important question of employment and economic self-reliance for women, and provided new socially and politically active images of womanhood. Therefore, this section on education and its social basis formed the necessary prelude for examining all other issues concerning women and the public sphere. The next three sections will follow the process by which educated women expanded, challenged and redefined the role that they had been assigned in the economy of national regeneration. They did so, as we shall see, by widening the range of subjects a woman was meant to know about, by questioning social and moral demands particularly strict on them, and by redifining traditional women's roles and opening new ones.

Since this process took place chiefly through women's journals, we shall start by discussing the three mein Hindi women's journals in the next section: *Gṛhalakṣmī, Strī-darpaṇ* (both est. 1909) and *Cāṁd* (est. 1922), all published from Allahabad.

4.2 Widening Concerns: Hindi women's journals

The previous section has shown how women's education, though a major focus of public debate, was actually quite a limited affair. Especially at the primary level, badly organized and worse funded, it was even more unlikely to fulfil the task of disseminating a new cultural ethos than boys' education. Journals were, we may argue, much further-reaching and thus more important means of education, both for instilling public concerns and for spreading notions of a common cultural and political sphere. However, like education and literature for women, journals too were first meant to instruct girls on their roles within the household.[1]

Strī-upyogī literature, as it was called, was but the last example of a literature of moral instruction that had an old written and oral tradition in India. As historians have recently argued, the peculiarity of 19th century *strī-upyogī* literature in several Indian languages was that it combined religious and moral notions and values of *strī-dharma* with 'new', Victorian values and ideas about domesticity and womanhood. The main concern of this kind of literature was to reform women, teaching them virtues like modesty, thrift, pliability, obedience, simplicity, purity, and dedication - an Indian version of the Victorian.[2]

The first Hindi journals edited by women in the 20th century largely fell into this pattern and were in fact meant as educational material. *Gṛhalakṣmī*, started in 1909 in Allahabad by Mrs Gopāldevī and her husband Sudarśanācārya, a famous Ayurvedic doctor, reflected in the title its espousal of role-based education and of the new domesticity, where old forms of compliance and *strī-dharma* met with new values of education, thrift, home science, child-rearing, healthy cooking, etc.[3] This section follows the changes in Hindi

[1] E.g. Bhārtendu's *Bālābodhinī* (1874-78), the first women's journal in Hindi, followed this pattern, in sharp contrast with Bhārtendu's other journalistic enterprises: to female readers the editorial self dispensed information and ammonition, economics and *caritras* as ne role-models, but e.g. no Braj poetry, too dangerously close to *śṛṅgāra* even in the devotional mode, and certainly no discussion of the issues of social reform, many concerning women, that were being so forcefully debated in journals for the general public; Vasudha Dalmia, 'Hariścandra of Banaras', pp. 238-44.

[2] See K. Sangari and S. Vaid, eds., *Recasting* Women; Sumanta Banerjee, *The Parlour and the Street*; R. Kumar, *The History of Doing*; P. Chatterjee, *The Nation and its Fragments;* D. Chakrabarty, 'The Difference-Deferral of Colonial Modernity: Public Debates on Domesticity in British Bengal', in D. Arnold and D. Hardiman, eds., *Subaltern Studies VIII*, Delhi 1994. In particular, D. Chakrabarty has ingeniously interpreted the term *gṛha-lakṣmī* as a fraught combination of the religious merit of Lakṣmī, the goddess of wealth a bride was supposed to incarnate at home, and the modern nationalist project that saw the house (*gṛha*) as subordinate but part of the project of civil society; *ibid.*, p. 80.

[3] The journal, which started with 4000 subscribers, a remarkable figure for a Hindi journal in those years, and which prided itself of surviving on readership alone, never recovered from a fire that gutted the office; readership sank to 2500 in 1920, and reached a minimum of 1000 in 1923 before rising again to ca. 2000 in 1924, shortly before publication was stopped; see *Gṛhalakṣmī*, XV, 1, March April 1924, pp. 41-42. In the early 1920s it was mostly written and edited in Gopāldevī's name

women's journalism that led it beyond the *strī-upyogī* mould, and made it redefine the boundaries of what was 'useful for women'.

Let us first, however, examine more closely what *strī-upyogī* meant. Following the principle that education for girls was to be primarily moral and based on their future role as wives and mothers, *Gṛhalakṣmī* took it upon itself to emphasise the importance of education but also to prepare girls to compromise between their aspirations and the demands of family life.[4] The focus, needless to say, was completely on the household; a few curiosities and women's news would be the only items about the outside world. A typical issue would carry articles, short stories and many short dialogues with a moral message; a few historical pieces on *vīrāṅganāeṁ*, dialogues on child-rearing, girls' education and *pardā*, articles on *strī-dharma* and *pātivrat-dharma*, on tensions within the family and ways of solving them (i.e. by yielding to the elders' wishes), advice on how to avoid bad company and bad reading, etc. The editor only asked for recipes, for contributions from schoolgirls, and suggested ways of cleaning clothes.[5] All in all, *Gṛhalakṣmī*'s mission was moderately educational and reformist.[6]

Strī-darpaṇ (July 1909) by contrast, edited by women of the Nehru family (Rāmeśvarī, Rūpkumārī, Kamlā and Umā) and with a wide and competent range of male and female contributors, was more outspoken in its 'women's view' and in the defence of women's rights. 'It is the only journal which teaches women their rights along with their *dharma*' said the publicity in 1919, 'because husbands, brothers and fathers cannot promote the welfare of the country while treating women like animals'.[7]

Compared with *Gṛhalakṣmī*, *Strī-darpaṇ* covered a wider range of issues as *strī-upyogī*. Apart from the usual fare of articles against *pardā*, historical examples of female excellence, hygiene and health, it carried articles against role-based education, news of women's achievements in India and abroad, meetings of women's organisations, and both

by Thakur Śrīnāth Siṃh, then a young writer close to the Nehru family who would later join the Indian Press and edit *Bālsakhā* and *Sarasvatī* before launching his own women's journal, *Didi*, in the 1940s. Interview with Thakur Śrīnāth Siṃh, Allahabad, July 1993.

[4] Hence every issue carried articles in favour of girls' education, along with just as many on *pātivrat dharma* and on how education was not to breed conceit; see 'Striyoṁ ko mān karnā anucit hai', *Gṛhalakṣmī*, IV, 3, May-June 1913.

[5] See *Gṛhalakṣmī* issue of April-May 1913, IV, 2. The hybrid vocabulary of religious merit, Indianness (vs. the West) and women's equality is exemplified by the advertisment for the first volume of *Gṛhalakṣmī granthamālā, Gṛhiṇī*: 'According to the Hindu scriptures, the relationship between man and wife (*svāmī-strī*) [is such that] they together become one; no difference is left between them; a wife is the companion-in-*dharma* (*sahadharminī*) of her husband. But nowadays English education had made Indian husbands degrade their wives from the position of *saha-dharminī* to that of lover (*praṇāyinī*)...'; quoted in *Gṛhalakṣmī*, IV, 2, April-May 1913. In another note on Indian and foreign methods of cleaning pots and pans, *chuāchūt* is accepted as matter of fact; *ibid.*, p. 109.

[6] The series of books they published elucidates this further: the first five titles published (until 1913) included *Gṛhiṇī, Choṭī bahū, Lakṣmī-bahū* ('on a young and virtuous daughter-in-law who bears all hardships... very useful for schools'), *Prem-latā* ('a novel full of teachings') and *Ādarś bahū; Gṛhalakṣmī*, IV, 2, April-May 1913.

[7] From the publicity in the journal.

local and international news like the war in Europe, its cost for India, the revolt in China, etc. It looked with great interest and participation at women's awakening in nearby Bengal and Punjab, and compared it unfavourably with that in the United Provinces. However, it remained a limited family concern, never crossing the mark of 1000 copies.[8]

It was with the first World War, and then with the 1919-1921 nationalist movement that the content of both *Strī-darpaṇ* and *Gṛhalakṣmī* started to change. Political news appeared regularly, and both magazines espoused Gandhi's message and the movement wholeheartedly: articles and speeches by Annie Besant and Sarojini Naidu began to appear in *Gṛhalakṣmī* from 1918 onwards, and from 1921 translations of articles and open letters by Mahatma Gandhi. A new editorial column in 1922 carried more political news, which included lobbying by the All Indian Women's Conference (AIWC), riots, photographs and biographies of women activists. Non-Cooperation made *svadeśī* chiefly a womanly concern, urged women to come out of *pardā* to serve the country, and suggested that *deś-sevā* might be as high a *dharma* as *pātivrat-dharma*. Yet journals were reluctant to discount the centrality of *pātivrat dharma*. To a 'proud woman non-cooperator' who wrote in November 1921 that she wanted to serve publicly Mother India but was hindered by her husband, who held different views, the editors of *Strī-darpaṇ* suggested a compromise. While supporting the woman's wish, the editor suggested that she could serve Mother India at home by spinning *charkha*. Still, *strī-dharma* was widening its horizons.

The journals grew bolder on the home front, too. A new column of letters from the readers opened a space for 'true stories', and a 'newly-wedded bride' raised uncomfortable questions about women's dependence on male wishes and images.[9] The letters in particular, written by women in distress, revealed a less composed female self than that of the women contributors (see 4.3). They did not always meet with the editor's sympathy, and this points to the ambiguity that was typical of male or moderate reformist responses to female emancipation.[10] To an educated Brahmin widow who blamed men for seducing her, other readers responded by blaming her for lust and lack of self-control and suggested the example of another 'low-born' woman who had sacrificed her life rather than her honour.[11]

[8] In 1923 the journal moved from Rāmeśvarī Nehrū's hands to Kanpur, where it was edited by Sumati Devī and Phulkumārī Mehrotrā, possibly close to the Pratāp Press.
[9] 'Ek nav-vivāhitā vadhu', in *Gṛhalakṣmī*, XIV, 9, Nov.-Dec. 1923; XIV, 11, Jan.-Feb. 1924 and XV, 1, March-April 1924.
[10] E.g. the educated daughter of a Hindi writer from Calcutta complained of her mismatched marriage with a dumb and profligate village boy. She had written to her father asking him to marry her elsewhere or to let her live the life of a widow, but her father had replied angrily that he should have never given her an education, since 'the consequence of your education seems to be that you are resolved to disgrace me before everyone. Is this the aim of education?'. The editor sympathised with her ill fortune but also with her father, and urged her to adjust to the fact of her marriage: 'If you leave your husband you might create a scandal among the society of women (*mahilā-samāj*). No such example should be placed before our society; please think it over again'; *Gṛhalakṣmī*, XV, 1, March-April 1924, p. 30.
[11] *Ciṭṭhī-patrī*, in *Gṛhalakṣmī*, XIV, 4, Jan.-Feb. 1924; p. 118.

The image of the virtuous *and* educated woman, at ease both with her traditional *dharma* as well as with the new calls of the hour, ought not to be tarnished by human weaknesses.

By 1920, then, a rapprochement between women's journals and general magazines was taking place. On the one hand, women's journals featured a greater number of topical articles and had more established contributors.[12] On the other hand, by the 1920s all mainstream Hindi journals started carrying women's sections, usually with articles on problems like *pardā,* child-widows, education, and with short poems and pieces by women contributors. This was a sign that female readership was recognised, but still as a separate group with special concerns.

It was finally *Cāṁd* which not only broke the mould of *strī-upyogī* literature, but also located women's issues at the core of the quest for *svarājya*, just like socialists would do a decade later with peasants and the economic question. *Cāṁd* accomplished this by breaking the boundaries of first 'what women should know', and secondly of 'what women should say'. The first move, discussed in this section, encompassed a variety of strategies: (a) addressing women as protagonists and active subjects of Indian society and the movement for national regeneration, not only symbolically (as *vīrāṅganāeṁ* and Bhāratmātā) but also as empowered individuals. (b) making women equally knowledgeable about all sorts of political, economic, social and historical questions, with no censorship of any kind; (c) carrying news on women *satyāgrahīs* and leaders and identifying the journal itself with the nationalist movement: Sahgal's own passionate editorials, the official bans on Chand Press and his imprisonment strengthened the identification of the journal and its readers with the movement.

Cāṁd was started in Allahabad in 1922 by an enterprising Khatri of Lahore, Rāmrakh Siṃh Sahgal (1896-1952), who had a record of involvement with the Congress and of contact with the revolutionary group of Bhagat Singh and Chandrashekhar Azad. In size (100 pages) and get-up, it surpassed all previous women's journals and was more similar to mainstream Hindi literary journals. It took up all the columns and items of women's and mainstream magazines (letters, reviews, news, editorials, cartoons, blocks, etc.), added plenty of reading material in the form of poems, stories and serialised novels, and launched, with aggressive advertising, a large-scale operation similar to that of *Mādhurī*. It was soon recommended for public and school libraries by the Education departments of the United Provinces, Punjab, Bihar and Rajasthan, and it became the Hindi monthly with the highest readership, jumping from the initial thousand copies to eight thousand in 1927 and a remarkable fifteen thousand in 1930.[13]

[12] E.g. Viśvāmbharnāth Jijjā, Rāmrakh Siṃh Sahgal, Zahūrbakhś, Rāmsevak Tripāṭhī, Śrīnāth Siṃh, etc.

[13] Source: *Statement of Newspapers and Periodicals published in UP*, Govt. Press, Allahabad, for the relevant years.

With a number of attractive special issues (*Vidhvā-aṅk, Viduṣī-aṅk, Galpāṅk, Achūt-aṅk, Marvāṛī-aṅk, Kāyastha-aṅk, Rājputānā-aṅk, Samāj-aṅk*, etc.), literary contributions by the best and newest writers, the lack of moralist inhibitions against popular fiction,[14] long topical editorials and a strong sense of mission, *Cāṁd* decidedly changed the coordinates of *strī-upyogī* literature.[15]

The nationalism of *Cāṁd's* project started from its perspective: from the very beginning, the awakening and activities of women in the Hindi belt were seen as part of a country-wide, indeed a world-wide, phenomenon. Though most of the longer articles and special issues centered on North Indian women and society, the news section offered information, facts and figures on women from all over India and abroad as if they were part of the same, irresistible wave.[16] This both legitimised wome' s public initiatives and increased their self-confidence. Moreover, while addressing educated and newly-literate women, *Cāṁd* did not limit itself to their issues but touched on those of peasants and workers as part of the same project of social and political regeneration of *svarājya*.[17]

Cāṁd dedicated more space to news than any other women's journal. A sample from the April 1923 issue included: information on the Princely States; data on jails and prisoners, newspapers, the number of workers in Bombay province, funding for U.P. municipalities, the Indian police, public debt, import and export from India, etc. Scattered among tips on hygiene such seemingly 'neutral' news carried in fact a much wider and

[14] *Nirmalā* by Premcand was serialised here in 1925; Mahādevī Varmā's poems were published from the first issue; also Rāmkumār Varmā's poems appeared regularly; young Chāyāvādī poets like Ānandīprasād Śrīvāstava and Caṇḍīprasād 'Hṛdayeś' worked in the editorial board ('Hṛdayeś' until his death in 1927), as did popular writers like G.P. Śrīvāstava, Dhanīrām Prem and Catursen Śāstrī. Other assiastant editors were Nandikiśor Tivārī and, for a while, Bhubaneśvar Miśra.

[15] The variety and constant attempt at improvement can be gauged by the growing number of assorted clumns: starting with *Gharelū davāeṁ* (home-made medicines), *Pāk-śikṣā* (recipes), *Cuṭkule* (humour) and *Samācār saṅgrah* (collected news), over the years new columns were opened like *Ciṭṭhī-patrī* (letters from the readers), *Sāhitya saṃsār* (book reviews), *Hamāre sahyogī* (articles quoted from other journals) in 1925, *Śānti kuṭir* (spiritual snippets) in 1926; *Vinod vaṭikā* (humorous jokes and stories by G.P. Śrīvāstava) in 1927; *Dubejī kī ciṭṭhī* (humorous letters by V. Śarmā Kauśik in the style of Bālmukund Gupta's famous 'Śivśambhū ke ciṭṭhe'), *Saṃsār cakra* (news of the world), *Vijñān tathā vaicitrya* (science and curiosities), *Sinemā aur raṅgmañc* (the first column on films in a Hindi journal!), *Dilcasp mukadme* (interesting court cases), *Śrījagadguru kā fatvā* (against religious bigotry), *Kesar kī kyārī* (selection of Urdu verse by 'Bismil' Ilāhābādī) in 1931, etc.

[16] Apart from the editorial and the shorter editorial notes, there were separate news sections like *samācār saṅgrah* which contained a miscellany of events, laws, public achievements, political gatherings, examination results and postings of women from all over India. Naturally, bills concerning women were most closely reported, like the Sarda Bill and the Gaur Bill for inter-caste marriages; see *Samācār saṅgrah* in *Cāṁd*, VII, pt. 2, 6, Oct. 1929 and VIII, pt. 1, 6, April 1930.

[17] See e.g. the article by one graduate started by quoting Kabīr in order to say that there were many avenues to attain *svarājya*; Rāmeś Prasād, 'Kārkhānoṁ meṁ strī-mazdūr', *Cāṁd*, IV, pt. 1, 4, January 1926, p. 309. Similarly, 'A recent case before the Allahabad High Court has given an important victory to women' wrote the editor when a Koiri woman named Kauliyā was granted maintenance after her husband had 'divorced' her against her will and brought home a Chamar girl. The High Court reversed the decision of the *panchayat* and of the local magistrate, who had argued that 'men and women of this class (*śreṇī*) do not follow social rules and are naturally cruel; Koiris are not very civilized yet and follow their own social mores'. 'The decision of the first-class magistrate shows clearly that English justice does not care to protect the oppressed women of the Koiri caste' was the editor's remark; editorial note 'Patnī ke adhikār', *Cāṁd*, VII, pt. 2, 6, October 1929, pp. 735-736.

political education than was possibly achieved through schools by simply exposing women to news they would not encounter elsewhere.[18]

Implicit in this uncensored flow of information was the idea - crucial to the public sphere argument - that exposure to information itself develops critical attitudes and political consciousness by making public issues the concern of each affected reader. In this way, *Cāṁd* was fostering a civic and political consciousness for women not unlike what Mahāvīr Prasād Dvivedī had started doing with *Sarasvatī* in 1903.

Besides, *Cāṁd* was appreciative of any form of political initiative by women. Until 1930, however, much of *Cāṁd*'s nationalist message and propaganda was furtive, between the lines, hidden in small news items, while most of the emphasis was on social reform. In January 1929, Sahgal announced he would started serialising the book by the famous Congress activist Pandit Sundarlāl (1886-1981), *Bhārat meṁ aṅgrezī rājya*, a nationalist history of British rule in India. The book was immediately banned,[19] and the ban ended the official bonhomie towards the journal: in June 1929 *Cāṁd* was suddenly prohibited in schools and public libraries after having been recommended for years. It was also the first of a series of bails and bans[20] which, along with the burden of the political weekly *Bhaviṣya*,[21] would bring Sahgal to a financial crisis and eventually compel him to leave the journal.[22]

[18] The same issue, in another column, carried news of a case of *satī* 'in the kitchen' in a village of district Beinisal; of a widow-remarriage in Ambala district; of the election of Umā Nehrū as municipal councillor in Allahabad; on the harassment of peasant women in Mewar state at the hands of Indian soldiers; of a bill against the sale of brides in the Council of State; of a women's public meeting in Lahore to celebrate Gandhi-day with speeches by Pārvatī Devī, Durgādevī and Pūrṇādevī, a sale of khadi cloth and fund-raising for Tilak fund in the evening; *Cāṁd*, I, 6, April 1923., pp. 350-51. The May-June issue of 1923 carried an item on Mrs Dubburi Subbamma, condemned to one year strict imprisonment for non-cooperation work: 'she is a model for Indian women' (p. 532); two items on false *sadhus* who had abducted women; one on a meeting of women of the Socialist and Communist parties in the Ruhr district of Germany; and a foreign astrologer's comment on Gandhi's *janma-patrī*; *Cāṁd*, I, pt. 2, 1, May-June 1923, pp. 532-33.

[19] P. Sundarlāl, *Bhārat meṁ aṅgrezī rājya:* the publication of this hefty book, which was meant to become a nationalist text-book, was widely publicised in the Hindi press. The ban on it was itself a major political case and put *Cāṁd* on the black list of the government and in the good books of the nationalist movement: the 2000 pre-booked copies were printed on 18 March 1929 and immediately proscribed by the U.P. government, followed a week later by the government of the Central Provinces. Somehow 1700 copies managed to reach the subscribers and only 300 were seized on the railway or at the post office. The government then started a hunt for the remaining copies, provoking a country-wide protest. Even Gandhi called it a day-light robbery in *Young India* and urged people to resist the humiliation of a house-search. Seth Jamnālāl Bajāj was one of those who followed his advice. After the Congress accepted office in the United Provinces in July 1937, Sundarlāl wrote to the new government and the ban was lifted in November 1937. The second edition was not published by the Chand Press, as Sahgal had left the Press long before; this edition of 10,000 copies was published and was sold out even before publication; a Gujarati and Urdu edition came out at the same time. We are quoting here Sundarlāl's preface to the second edition, published by Triveṇīnāth Vājpeyī at the Omkar Press, Allahabad in 1938 (also of 10|000 copies), a copy in possession of the late Subhadrā Kumārī Cauhān.

[20] Like other Hindi journals, *Cāṁd* was caught in the repressive policy of the Press Ordinance of 1930: in July 1930, the Chand Press was asked to furnish a bail of Rs. 4000 (later reduced to 1000), and the publication of political poems on 'Satyāgrah saṅgrām' and 'Striyoṁ ke ādarś' in August-September 1930 drew another bail of Rs. 1000. Sahgal went to jail, and the May 1931 issued carried a picture of his release. Sahgal had long been in contact with revolutionaries: in 1931 his sympathy became quite evident, in tune with the sentiments of the people at large, when he published the

As it had been the case with *Sarasvatī* twenty years earlier, *Cāṁd* had managed to foster in its readership a feeling of identification with the journal. 'The welfare of women (*strī-samāj*) lies in our success' wrote Sahgal after the first six issues in April 1923, and identified *Cāṁd*'s readership as 'the enthusiastic supporters of social reform' and 'the proud souls of women's education'.[23] The response had been indeed enthusiastic, as figures and the mutual trust transpiring readers' responses suggest. Moreover, another strength of *Cāṁd* was that, as we have seen, it did not limit its audience to educated women (its actual readership), but spoke on behalf of *all* women, country-wide and from all social strata. As the next section will show, this changed the direction and meaning of social reform. Unlike previous women's journals, *Cāṁd* did not want to 'teach' or reform women but to reform 'society' on their behalf. Its approach was thus not the moralising one of 'uplift of women', *strī-uddhār*, but a radical critique of society from a strong women s voice. Albeit with a male editor and sub-editors, *Cāṁd* succeeded therefore in becoming an important forum for women's self-awareness and politicisation within the Hindi sphere.[24]

After Rāmrakh Sahgal resigned,[25] Navjādiklāl Śrīvāstava of *Matvālā* fame became the editor until he was dismissed in September 1935, followed by Mahādevī Varmā between 1935 and 1938, and after her by Catursen Śāstrī. Although they were all able editors, and in their hands *Cāṁd* remained a very attractive journal, the magazine however lost its political

photographs of the death-sentenced in Sholapur in February 1931 (IX, pt. 1, 4), and in the special issue on political martyrs, *Phāṃsī-aṅk* (November 1931), which was immediately banned. See *Cāṁd*, VIII, 2, 6, October 1930, and IX, pt. 1, 1, November 1930, especially the editorial on 'Ordinance tug', p. 2. The new motto of the journal proclaimed: 'Spiritual *svarājya* is our aim, truth our means and love our method. As long as we remain steadfast in this sacred resolve we do not fear the number and strength of our adversaries'.

21 Started in 1930 for a few months under the editorship of Sundarlāl, with a distribution of 11,000, *Bhaviṣya* also fell victim of the Press Ordinance.

22 The financial crisis led to a confrontation between the two Sahgal brothers: Rāmrakh the editor and daring nationalist, and Nandgopāl the manager, sophisticated and on better terms with the British authorities. To save the journal and the publication department, the Chand Press was made into a Company Ltd. in 1932 with shares of Rs. 10. The new board of directors included, apart from the Sahgals, local merchants, professionals and taluqdars; seconded by Nandgopāl, it put pressure on the editor to change his policy; a year later Sahgal resigned. From 'The Chand Press, Limited Allahabad. Directors' Report and Balance Sheet for the period ending 31st May 1933', p. 1, and interview with Ashok Saigal, Allahabad, October 1994.

23 Women, continued Sahgal, had the duty to foster *Cāṁd* as their own child, and to let it die would be like infanticide: 'If you really want to save the millions of women drowning in an ocean of ignorance; if the heart-rending cries of thirty-five million Indian widows affect you somehow; if you want to destroy the evil customs of child-marriage, dowry, etc., which are eating the tree of Indian society from within, come and join us in the arena...' Editorial note in *Cāṁd*, I, 6, April 1923, p. 495.

24 All the readers of *Cāṁd* consulted confirm that *Cāṁd* was prized by the women of the house but read by the whole family, men included. For a positive assessment of the journal see Premcand's note of January 1933, now in *Vividh prasaṅg*, vol. 3, p. 424.

25 'I did not start this institution with profit in mind. My only aim was to serve the country and society, and I am pleased to say that I have sincerely fulfilled my vow in the past eleven years - but then I was the sole proprietor. No one had the right to interfere in my policy; I did what I wanted to, and because of my daring I threw hundreds of thousands of rupees in the fire...' wrote Sahgal in his resignation note in January 1933 protesting against the 'commercial policy' of the new company directors. Rāmrakh went to Lucknow to revive *Karmayogī*, and *Cāṁd* remained in Nandgopāl's hands. Quoted in Premcand's note in *Vividh prasaṅg*, *ibid*.

edge and social militancy after Rāmrakh Sahgal's exit. With Mahādevī *Cāṁd* became more of a women's magazine (she insisted on having women contributors) and also a more literary one. Sahgal's ambitious project, its ever-expanding range of concerns, turned into a sophisticated and well-informed journal for educated women, aware of social problems and committed to political freedom but within the limits of a middle-class notion of womanliness, in which *maryādā* was redefined by self-respect.

To summarize, this section has sketched the trajectory of Hindi women's journals from their almost exclusive focus on the home, which redefined women's role and *dharma* essentially in terms of Victorian domesticity and India's 'essential' spiritual virtues, to a wider scope of concerns; it also discussed their importance in providing a public voice for women on a range of social and political issues.

Through *Cāṁd* and other women's journals we can follow two processes going on in the Hindi public sphere. One is the gradual challenge to the category of *strī-upyogī*, which would lead to questioning male definitions of women's role. By widening women's concerns to include more and more public issues, journals were crucial in politicising women. Journals saluted women's empowerment and initiatives as an integral part of the nationalist project, partly removing the ambiguity about men's response and their urge to control; they also helped developing critical tools and a political and historical consciousness through which women could question the double-standards of patriarchy and claim participation in public life. This process of expansion and radical criticism produced, as we shall see in the following sections, a redefinition of women's roles both within the family and household and in the public domain.

Another process, reflected in *Cāṁd*'s development in the 1930s, shows however that once the radical edge was lost, this redefinition amounted to the making of a modern middle-class culture; this definition accepted and reflected its class (and caste) excusions and gender limitations. This change, apparent also in other Hindi mainstream journals, transpires in the language used - a more sophisticated and controlled *āryabhāṣā* - in the taste (more attuned to Chāyāvād and foreign poetry), and in the more limited and abstract range of concerns.

However, the drastic drop in readership that followed the exclusion of the popular, the semi-literate, the rural and small-town public, not represented on its pages anymore, leaves a question open. Did the choice in favour of sophistication and a genteel, urban middle-class culture deprive Hindi of its wider role and a larger area of influence?

Cāṁd's contribution to breaking the *strī-upyogī* mould was not limited to providing political education. Another important contribution, which will be discussed in the following sections, went into the direction of challenging social and family norms from a platform of 'basic' human values. This involved recognising women as emotional beings (4.3), questioning their home-bound role and envisaging new public ones (4.4).

4.3 The Right to feel

In the previous section, we have mentioned how *strī-upyogī* literature envisaged women as totally self-sacrificing. Educative literature focused exclusively on their duties and never on their needs. True, even in this way a feminine subjectivity was tenuously acknowledged, but only to be plied and trained. At first crudely, through dialogues or rigid juxtapositions of the 'good' and 'bad' daughter-in-law, sister etc., this persuasive literature addressed young female readers and asked them to choose which model to follow.[1]

Women's journals, we noticed, partly took over this educating role, with both male and female contributors insisting on duties and ideals. Indeed, stressing women's ideals was a strong plank to argue for women's worth, and remained a constant element even when redefining women's roles (see 4.4). However, by publishing letters and 'true stories', journals also provided a space for another voice. This section analyses this other voice, and the way *Cāṁd* in particular provided a space for other dimensions of women's lives to be expressed and for their emotional needs to be supported.[2] In this way, *Cāṁd* played an important role in introducing and popularising a notion of the 'right to feel' *tout court*, which in turn highlighted tensions between the individual and the society, and requested a renegotiation of social and familial norms.

In particular, this section will analyse the strategies and arguments by which the 'right to feel' was first introduced, and how it gave rise to a genre of sentimental literature that tematized the tensions between individual aspirations, normative ideals and social rules in a blend of romance and social critique. This sentimental literature, which had a lot to share with commercial film narratives, was devalued and marginalised by literary critics, who deemed it lurid and commercial.

The starting-point of this process was again, as in the case of education and employment, widows (see also 4.4). The pressure to adhere to a life of heavy duties with no emotional bonds or rewards was particularly heavy on them, especially on child-widows. In upper caste, affluent households, widows would become and be treated as qualitatively different beings from married women, the *suhāginīs*. While reformers from the 19th century

[1] It would be hard to understand otherwise the popularity of novels such as those by Nazīr Ahmad; see C.M. Naim, 'Prize-winning *adab*'.
[2] See in the previous section the letter of a 'fallen' (*patit*) Brahmin widow who was pitied and reprimanded by the editor and readers of *Gṛhalakṣmī*.

onwards had directed their efforts to the sphere of law and public demonstrative action,[3] women's journals and fictional narratives explored and thematized this qualitative difference and re-claimed widows as women, or at least as human beings. As we shall see, the helplessness and commonality of the experience of Hindu widows became a metonymy for the condition of Indian women in general.

Hence, while male reformers concentrated on widow-remarriage or appealed piously to the families to treat widows humanely,[4] women's articles and testimonies spoke of a different agenda. They insisted on the need to retain one's place in one's family; on the need for respectable employment and a place to stay, and on the right to keep one's property; if 'fallen', to receive the same treatment as male seducers or unlawful partners. Also, insisting on preventive action, the fate of widows was linked to general women's issues such as child-marriage, dowry and mismatched-marriages.

It is therefore not surprising that *Cāṁd* should dedicate its first special issue to the condition of widows after only six months of publication, and that it espoused this second approach. 'The aim of this issue is not to shock or to encourage widow-remarriage' wrote Sahgal in the editorial.[5] 'In our society widows are considered useless and harmful. If widows were treated with respect and affection by their families, 75% of them would happily lead a pure life' (pp. 565-6). The main question is that of the means of subsistence, wrote Bhagavatī Devī: while divorce was important, and widow-remarriage possible only for young and beautiful child-widows, employment was the only answer to widows' begging (and prostitution); it required the complete repeal of *pardā*.[6] Importantly, *Cāṁd* made even taboo issues public in order to force a rediscussion and redefinition of notions and norms concerning widows - and, by extension, women - to justify preventive action (on dowry and child-marriage), and to offer and justify respectable alternatives.

Letters and first-person fictional narrations on widows introduced a sense of urgency and a powerful element of personalisation. This meant that the reader was forced to come face-to-face with the cruelty women experienced; it also meant these life-stories

[3] The question of widows had loomed large in the minds of social reformers since the nineteenth century: for its sheer number, especially in cities like Calcutta and Banaras, for the dangers of conversion, abduction (whether forced or consensual) and breach of chastity, and for what has been called a very modern sentiment of outrage; Radha Kumar, *The History of Doing*, chapter 1.

[4] See I.C. Vidyasagar's campaign to lift the ban on widows'-remarriage in the 1850s; in the Hindi area, in 1915 a section of the Ārya Samāj started in Lahore a Vidhvā Vivāh Sahāyak Sabhā, an association to help widows remarry, which branched out in Benares and Kanpur in the 1920s; it ran an ashram for widows who wanted to remarry, organised their weddings and published a monthly in Urdu, *Vidhvā sahāyak*; see *Cāṁd*, I, pt. 1, 6, April 1923, pp. 532 and 562-5; and VII, pt. 2, 6, October 1929, p. 746.

[5] 'Vidhvā-aṅk', *Cāṁd*, I, 6, April 1923, p. 553.

[6] Bhagavatī Devī, 'Nārī-samasyā', *Cāṁd*, VIII, pt. 2, 6, October 1929, pp. 701-3. She ended on a pessimistic note and expressed her disbelief in any swift change, since 'Indian women lie in drugged stupor'. The editor disagreed: changes would not take centuries but only a few decades.

legitimised women's voices, their right to suggest solutions to their own problems, a new sense of individual worth and emotional life, the need for kin relationships to be instrinsically affective. Also, such narratives allowed a bold critique of social and family norms. While looking indulgently at widows' breach of chastity, *Cāṁd* harshly denounced double-standards for men and women: 'Isn't it astonishing that men command child-widows to remain chaste for life, when men themselves cannot even keep the vow of monogamy: do men think that women are made of clay, or iron?'[7] These 'true stories' of abandonment, sale of brides, polygamy, familial corruption, unlegalised marriages and sexual relations suddenly belied the ideal of the Aryan family and drew attention to the existence of women's sexuality and emotional needs, often thematizing the thin line between marriage and prostitution - at least from a woman's point of view.

Let us now turn to some of these first-person narratives, first true ones and later fictional ones. A young Khatri widow of 17 from Delhi, who considered *Cāṁd* her guide (*pathpradarśak*), wrote in March 1923 of the need to make the issue a political one in order to overpower kin resistance:

> My father is a firm *sanātan dharmī* and a member of the Bhārat Dharma Mahāmaṇḍal. But because I was widowed only 21 days after my wedding he took pity on me and decided to re-marry me. My husband was ill at the time of the wedding (I was 8 at the time, he was 35 and already twice a widower). I have studied up to English Middle examination. Our relatives have started cursing my father and threaten to outcaste us.

The letter ended with the hope that soon widows like her would be able to bring 'a huge movement in front of Gandhijī and his followers and compel them to keep the pitiful condition of their widowed sisters in mind when they undertake political agitation'.[8]

A woman from Rajputana spoke about the need for a respectable place and employment: a friend of hers (?!), a woman of 25 with two children, educated up to Middle examination, had been abandoned by her husband. She now asked for information about any 'institution' which might shelter her.[9]

A woman from Mathura district raised instead the issue of a *bahū*'s insecure status even within the household: after her marriage her elder brother-in-law had made some advances, which she had sternly rebuffed. Thereupon both her husband and mother-in-law had tried to convince her to give in ('both are sons of my womb' her mother-in-law had said, 'you should consider them one and the same'). The brother-in-law was the family's bread-

[7] Ramāśaṅkar Avasthī, 'Vidhvāoṁ ke do āṁsū', *Cāṁd*, I, 6, April 1923, p. 485.
[8] 'Ciṭṭhī-patrī', *ibid.*, pp. 496-497.
[9] 'Ciṭṭhī-patrī', in *Cāṁd*, IV, pt. 2, 6, October 1926, pp. 604-5.

winner, while her husband was a good-for-nothing fellow who danced with theatre companies and *ras maṇḍalīs*'.[10]

A 'sister' from a princely state wrote about the need to acknowledge female sexuality: still unmarried after 20 because her parents could not offer enough dowry, she had been unable to 'contain her youthfulness' and had 'married' in secret a boy she fancied. After three happy years she had born him a child and, forced to leave her parents' house, she had moved in with her lover. Her father and his well-wishers, however, convinced her to move back with them, with the promise to marry them together properly; they then threw out her lover and now threatened to marry her off to a 40-year-old![11]

An 'unfortunate' Gujarati *vaṇik* girl married at 11 in an uneducated and lowly family, voiced a more general critique of women's lack of rights in a Hindu family, and raised the issue of women's self-definition of their ideal. She wrote of her husband's beatings and general irresponsibility. When her brother had come to take her back, he was abused and sent away. 'I have no right on my family property. Hindu society and Hindu law do not help... To serve your husband according to the tradition of the Vedas is fine, but only when you've chosen him'.[12]

A widowed child-bride from Central India, married into a wealthy household, wrote of the desperate helplessness of a widow's fate. The mother of two children, respectively of 3 years and of 4 months, she was approached by her younger brother-in-law after the death of her husband. To try and 'protect her *satītva*' she had even run away once, but he had her abducted; he then raped her and after 10-15 days handed her to a Muslim ('Yavan') man, who took her in a *burqā* with him on the train to Bombay. The other passengers in the train got suspicious and finally managed to save her. She was now sheltered by a very charitable but poor man, but for how long? She was also tormented by the 'well of sin' she had fallen into, and it consumed her day by day.[13]

These letters thus raised a powerful critical voice: they spoke of domestic cruelty and insecurity, repressed sexuality, the lack of alternative homes and respectable ways of survival for widows, abandoned wives and single women. These are only a few instances, but testify to Sahgal's ability in making *Cāṁd* a confidante which could be trusted for help and support however 'shocking' one's revelations were. After Sahgal left *Cāṁd*, in fact, fewer and fewer letters were published. His genial intuition that letters created a rapport of

[10] 'Ciṭṭhī-patrī', in *Cāṁd*, XII, pt. 2, 1, May 1934, pp. 99-100. The editor asked 'someone from Mathura' to help her.
[11] *Ibid.*, pp. 100-101. This letter highlights many social evils - of dowry, oppression, etc. - commented the editor (no more Sahgal); she had erred by marrying in secret but should now stick to her decision and take refuge with the law.
[12] *Cāṁd*, XV, pt. 2, 1, May 1927, pp. 86-87.
[13] *Ibid.*

mutual trust and support between the journal and its readers, and allowed a space for solidarity, got lost as *Cāṁd* became a more literary and genteel enterprise. Also, the persuasive potential of such letters gave rise to a whole genre of fictional letter-confessions with a first-person narrator. In *Cāṁd* these went even further in boldly depicting sensational (in a way, titillating) cases concerning women and the family while holding 'society' responsible. These well-cut, melodramatic narratives often had a sentimental sub-plot as well as voicing a 'women's critique' of society, echoed and supported by the narrator. Let us now examine one such fictional letter.

In 1926-1927 Zahūr Bakhś (1897-1964), a teacher and prolific writer for children, started writing for *Cāṁd* a series of 'first-person confessions' under the telling name of 'the fire-pit of society'.[14] The first of them, 'How I became a fallen woman?' ('Maiṁ patit kaise huī', *Cāṁd*, January 1926) can well show the sinews of the genre and deserves to be analysed in some detail. Breach of chastity is shown to be but a 'natural' consequence of a mis-matched marriage; the girl's feelings are asserted to be important and legitimate, and so is her right to define her own *strī-dharma*; further, her gradual debasement is directly attributed to society's hypocrisy and to the lack of any alternative respectable livelihood for the single woman: thus, responsibility is constantly lifted from Kamlā's shoulders, and she is given a forum to express herself.

The 'pitiful story' (*karuṇ kathā*) of Kamlā, the daughter of a relatively well-off Brahmin compounder, is told to the narrator 'in her own words'. She was taught how to read and write until the age of ten; at fourteen her marriage was arranged with a suitable boy, but since the dowry requested was too high, arrangements were broken off. After her elderly father retired, embittered by the experience, an aunt (*buā*) intervened, suggesting a 'middle-aged' (50!) and rich bridegroom, ready to pay even for the wedding expenses. The wedding is the first trauma for the girl: 'everyone around me looked happy, but I was sobbing inside the house. No one cared to ask me how I felt!' (p. 276). She has strong feelings: *anger* towards her 'greedy father' and aunt and *disgust* towards her ugly husband. At the time of *vidāī* she begs her mother to keep her, even as a servant, but her incensed father warns her not to vent her feelings: 'It seems that you will sully the reputation of both families. I warn you, never let a word like that slip out of your mouth or I'll pull your tongue out' (p. 287).

[14] Zahūr Bakhś, 'Samāj kā agni-kuṇḍ'; it included also 'Ek musalmān kī ātma-kathā' (Nov. 1926), 'Maiṁ musalmān kaise huī?' (Dec. 1926),'Maiṁ isāī kaise huī?' (March 1927), 'Achūt kī ātma-kathā' (May 1927). The common points among them were that the convert or 'fallen' protagonist was unrepentant, and that the downfall or conversion of the individual had been caused by the injustice of Hindu society. Zahūr Bakhś was a pupil of Kāmtāprasād Guru's and taught Hindi at Sagar Municipal Primary School from 1913 to 1948; see Kṣemcandra 'Suman', *Divaṅgat hindī-sevī*, Shakun Prakasan, Delhi 1981.

Thus, formally Kamlā is refused the right to speak, even to feel: it is only the story that allows her to express her feelings, both through the story itself (a confession) and through her thoughts and comments on the events. Now for example she thinks: 'Very well. Pull out my tongue if you want. But my name is not Kamlā if I don't disgrace you'. She will accept *strī-dharma*, she adds, but only if it comes from the heart, not when imposed upon her (*ibid.*).

At her husband's, the first act of answering back earns her the first beating, but a young and handsome cousin of the old bridegroom intervenes in her favour. He, too, was mis-married to a 5-year-old girl! With only the three of them in the house (husband, cousin and Kamlā), the cousin is quick to start his amorous advances. Whereas *strī-upyogī* literature would have him cast as a villain with the virtuous girl giving up her life in order to keep her *satītva*, the confession-genre takes quite a different turn.[15] Here the passion between the boy and girl of the same age is but *natural*, and the young bride responds easily and with little guilt; 'afterwards I felt a little bad, but then I thought that it had been no fault of mine and felt satisfied' (p. 278). The affair grows more and more obvious, until the angered husband poisons the cousin in secret, and when he threatens Kamlā she leaves for her parents' village, where she moves in with an uncle. This uncle, a widower, has a Thakurain mistress - men are allowed! - who deceives Kamlā and lets her be raped by a a friend of theirs, a young Muslim contractor: thus rape takes place with the consent of the family! A helpless Kamlā accepts her new fate and moves in with the Muslim contractor, thus breaking her *dharma*; but he has another wife, who is furious to find Kamlā when she comes back from her parents' house. Kamlā is thrown out of the house under the impassive eyes of her Muslim lover. Instead of going back to her murderous husband, she runs away with another Muslim young man to Kanpur, the city of anonymity, where they survive selling off her jewelry. When he finally disappears, Kamlā joins a group of Arabs and in December 1916 leaves with them on a ship to South Africa, where she is signed in as an indentured labourer. A 'loose woman', five times pregnant and with five abortions ('I had forgotten to say this out of shame, but now that I am spelling out everything clearly, why hide it?', p. 280) but still attractive, she is noticed there by the white overseer, and is gang-raped by him and twelve other men. Too ill to work in the fields, she has to resort to prostitution, pleasing 15-20 men every day. Back to India, she can now only beg in the streets...

[15] Alternatively, we may recall the fate of Nirmalā, the heroine of Premcand's homonymous novel (serialised in *Cāṁd* in the same period), who is almost repudiated by her elderly husband because of a suspicion that she may be having a liason with his elder son (from a previous marriage); in turn, this leads to the son's estragement and eventually his death. A real tragedy!

There can be little doubt that this descent into self-debasement, with Kamlā's gradual loss of caste, family, *dharma*, country, freedom and self-respect, and the shocking directness with which it was described, did not fit in the usual canons of 'women's literature'. Yet the moral attached to it located it within a literature of social reform: 'A promising child of India was sacrificed to the sexual greed of that old wolf! Bribed by money the pandits happily disgraced the holy mantras of the Vedas...' (p. 281). The fault was not the girl's, but society's.

By bracketing a 'loose woman' as the victim of society, and her confession as a moral tale, such a narrative could first of all break taboos about mentioning the facts and about the parents' involvement and responsibility in the girl's ruin. Secondly, it allowed the female character to raise questions and judge the system from her position as a 'fallen' woman. This strenghtened a point only implied in the readers' letters: that it was not only the educated and virtuous woman upholding 'Aryan' ideals who had the right to speak out. Moreover, whereas the virtuous woman's address was a civilised plea, the fallen woman's one was an indictment, an aggressive confrontation that demanded a response.

More than articles and discussions on social reform, we may argue, it was these hybrid genres (confessions, epistolary novels, social novels),[16] mixing reality with fiction, instruction with entertainment, that allowed taboo issues concerning women to be raised, and that too directly and with the heightenened impact of a melodramatic narrative. The personalisation - it was not about 'Indian women', it was about Kamlā, an ordinary girl the readers were asked from the beginning to identify with - allowed no critical distance; it asked instead for participation and approval, even along the various turns in Kamlā's downfall. The final comment demanded a public condemnation of domestic cruelty and socials hypocrisy.

Reactions were, predictably, equally strong. It was the aggressive attitude of confrontation and the justification for female sexuality that aroused the strongest objections by those who favoured a conciliatory approach to social reform. It was not only a reluctance to make certain practices public,[17] a fear of spoiling the image of a caring and loving Hindu family and society (especially when a confrontation was going on with the images of Western and Muslim societies), but also a resistance to the very strategy of confrontation.

[16] See *Vidhvā, yā abhāginī Kāminī kī ātmakathā*, the novel serialised in *Cāṁd* from April 1923 which presented also information and statistics on widows in India.

[17] The 'shocking' special issues of *Cāṁd* on Marvaris, Kayasthas and on Rajputana caused an uproar and a barrage of protests from those influential pillars of society and their supporters. The *Mārvāṛī-aṅk* of November 1929 e.g. created such a furore that it brought a defamation case on Sahgal. Ghanśyāmdās Biṛlā spurred even Gandhi to write against the issue; Banārsīdās Caturvedī proposed a motion condemning it at the Hindī Sāhitya Sammelan meeting in Gorakhpur and Rāmnareś Tripāṭhī came out with a booklet on *Mārvāṛe ke manohar gīt* (Allahabad 1930) in protest against the 'dirty light' thrown on Marvari literature by *Cāṁd*.

Moreover, the fact that the 'social' framework allowed for murky stories of adultery and mesalliances to be presented as women's literature, and also their huge popularity, convinced moralist reformers that it was all a plot to corrupt readers under the cover of social reform.

However, the romantic and sentimental element in such social narratives grew even more. Epistolary novels were another genre which gave vent, through first-person narrators, to a critical female voice and plots justifying feelings and romance. In *Smṛti kuñj,* a novel serialised in *Cāṁd* throughout 1926, a child-widow is transformed into a romantic heroine.[18] The casting of a widow is not unusual in such narratives, and can be explained in various ways. Firstly, a widow evoked immediate sympathy; secondly, as mentioned earlier, it could well symbolize the helpless condition of women in general; thirdly, as a marginal character, it allowed the grey area between duty and the 'right to feel' to be explored with maximum dramatic effect.[19] Even when norms did not get broken and the widowed heroine did not fulfil her romance, such as in Jainendra Kumār's *Parakh* (1929), an argument in favour of her self-worth and right to feel was made; this showed that norms themselves were opened to discussion. Also, romance as such clashed with the system of arranged marriages and forced writers to find fictitious ways to let the romance bloom without turning the lovers into villains. This meant looking for marginal or extreme situations and characters (widows, good prostitutes, students; and colleges, fairs, trains, parks, etc.), where the scope for individual feelings and individual personalities was fractionally more.[20]

In the story 'Mātṛmandir' by Dhanīrām 'Prem', one of the most popular writers of the period and now virtually forgotten, the female narrator and protagonist, a 16-year-old widow from Aligarh, Phūlmatī, is allowed a successful, if troubled, romance.[21] The story shows well this blend of romance and social critique, as well as the use of contemporary, verisimilar details to enhance familiarity and provide additional appeal for the readers.

[18] Presented by the editorial note as a 'beautiful *article* which *describes* the oppression of society', the novel starts as a straightforward romance between two middle-class students until we discover that the protagonist, who has just confessed of being in love with her brother's friend (who studies at D.A.V. college in Lahore), is a child-widow. Her feelings, which so far seemed quite natural, acquire a provocative edge. The romance becomes a melodrama, with 'fiendish society' as the villain which keeps the two lovers apart. 'There is expiation for all sins in Hindu society, but not for this'; *Cāṁd*, V, pt. 1, 1, November 1926, pp. 48-50, emphases added.

[19] See the fate of Kaṭṭo, the child-widow protagonist of Jainendra Kumār's first novel, *Parakh* (1929): moved by her sorry fate and her innocence, Satyadhan at first decides to marry her instead of the wealthy Garimā; he later goes back on his decision, and there is a suggestion that his friend Bihārī might marry her in his sted. In fact, a kind of spiritual union takes place between them, but only to allow Kaṭṭo to pursue her *dharma* as a servant to Satyadhan and Garimā, and Bihārī to follow his fate as a self-styled renouncer, forsaking his inheritance to embrace the 'simple life' of a peasant.

[20] See the talented and educated Kanak, the daughter of a courtesan and heroine of Nirālā's first novel, *Apsarā* (1930).

[21] First published in *Cāṁd*, the story was then included in the collection *Vallarī*, published by the Chand Press in 1932; the page numbers refer to this volume.

When a heavily veiled Phūlmatī gets separated from her heartless mother-in-law at the crowded railway station on their way to Banaras, and is saved by a young man who buys her a ticket and looks after during the journey, his kind words are 'the first sympathetic words after years of insults. I felt an unknown joy within me...' (p. 49). In Banaras, where the girl is under somewhat less strict control, she meets the young man again. He is a college student and member of the local Ārya Samāj of the same caste. Although she remains steadfast to her duties at first and refuses to acknowledge her own feelings, she finally responds to his love: 'My heart had been crushed, but it was still a heart... I was a widow, but my body was made of flesh and blood. How could I then turn my back to that source of hope?' (p. 58). Back at home, she gives her 'everything' to Murārī, to use the euphemism of the period.[22] The sacred books she is given to appease her mind fail to quench her thirst (p. 71), and she feels like living again. A first happy conclusion to their romance - since Murārī talks of marriage, overcoming her doubts with Ārya Samāj arguments - is avoided when Murārī retreats: after they have agreed to elope together after her pregnancy is discovered, Murārī stands her up. His stern uncle comes instead, bearing a letter in which Murārī admits that he is a coward but will not be able to marry her.

The tragic ending - hinted at as Phūlmatī heads straight to the river in order to drown herself - is avoided only because the thought of her future baby stops her. Sheltered by an old Muslim woman, she becomes a Muslim after a while, although she keeps to her Hindu customs: 'No mother, I did not become a Muslim for this [i.e. to remarry]. I converted only to take revenge on the Hindus' (p. 87). Sixteen years later, during a Hindu-Muslim riot, Phūlmatī's child Abdul, a staunch Hindu-hater, takes part in the fighting. A wounded Hindu on the run takes shelter in Phūlmatī's hut - it's Murārī, repentant and himself a widower! As they embrace (he is still her 'god'), Abdul breaks in to find his mother with a Hindu man:

'खबरदार! हाथ न चलाना।' 'क्यों' 'यह तेरे बाप हैं '
'I warn you, do not touch him!' 'Why?' 'He is your father.' (p. 92)

Father and son are reunited, and the denouement is completed when Murārī's uncle enters, too, fatally wounded by Abdul. He is happy (!) to pay with his life for the injustice that was once committed against Phūlmatī and entrusts them to build a house for unwedded mothers with his inheritance. This is Mātṛmandir: five years later Phūlmatī and Murārī look out of the window of their new home to an idyllic future. The ending is thus both a picture of domesticity (the idyllic couple) and of social reform (Mātṛmandir).

[22] 'Why should I lie, I merged myself with Murārī; I had started loving him' she confesses; *ibid.*, p. 66.

To summarize, this section discussed the issues raised by women's letters to radical journals such as *Cāṁd*. Such letters offered a picture of sexual and moral harassment within the 'ideal' Hindu family, making taboo issues public. At a time when a middle-class morality was gaining coinage which did not allow (at least publicly and in principle) polygamy, incestuous and various marriage alliances and placed great emphasis on the high ideal of *strī-dharma*, these letters revealed a more fluid and precarious reality for women as wives. Letters, both real and fictional, introduced also the notion of a 'right to feel' that was to have a great appeal.[23] In fact, once again first through widows, the right to romance gained recognition and developed into a full-fledged novelistic genre which we may call here 'social romance', since the argument in favour of social reform framed what was actually a love-story.

Women's letters and such narratives showed the underside of *strī-dharma,* and voiced the argument that such a demanding *dharma* should have certain redeeming conditions attached, namely a recognition of women as human individuals, and for them to have the right to re-define their own role and *dharma*.

The ideal was thus reconfirmed, but together with the need to explore and redefine both women's worth and their sphere of activity and access to the public world. The last section of this chapter discusses this redefinition of women's roles and sphere of activity at the level of imagination, and partly at that of actual action. Once again, as we shall see, widows and marginal women were at the forefront in this process. It is no chance that at the head of ashrams such as Dhanīrām Prem's Mātṛmandir or Premcand's *Sevā-sadan* (1919), or G.P. Śrīvāstava's *abalāśram* in *Dil kī āg urf diljale kī āh* (2nd ed. 1936) - to quote but three of the most popular writers of the period - are widows or 'fallen' women.

Finally, we may argue that the popularity of the 'social romance' stemmed from the fact that it allowed, through a variety of strategies, to legitimise individual feelings, both of men and women. This at a time when it was their duties and *dharma* that were constantly being reaffirmed. It was the novel's verisimilitude, not realism, that allowed a space for emotional fantasy to take place. Epistolary novels were especially apt for this purpose; their multiplicity of subjective visions suggested that the standard norms of conduct were also relative, less definitive than they were constantly reaffirmed to be.[24] In fact, after placing such narratives in their historical context, we may infer that their popularity suggests that a

[23] Though it seems that it was male novelists who practised more the romance genre than women writers, poetry in Chāyāvādī style allowed a score of women poets, Mahādevī first, to pour out individual feelings and imagine romantic liasons; for Mahādevī, see K. Schomer, *Mahadevi Varma*, especially chapter nine.

[24] See e.g. Pāṇḍey Becan Śarmā 'Ugra''s sensational romance between a Hindu boy and a Muslim girl in *Cand hasīnoṁ ke khutūt*, one of the bestsellers of 1927. See F. Orsini, 'Reading a Social Romance: Pāṇḍey Becan Śarmā Ugra's *Cand hasīnoṁ ke khutūt* (1927)', paper presented at the 14th European Conference on Modern South Asian Studies, Copenhagen, August 1996.

negotiation of norms concerning familial roles and duties was indeed going on, as the many articles, letters in Hindi women journal's on the subject attest. However, we may also notice that male writers were more likely to explore the area of romance, while women writers were more concerned with the strictures on women's rights to feel, in essence with the tensions of womanhood.[25]

[25] The latter is is a point Sudhā Cauhān makes about her mother's writing: she wonders why Subhadrā Kumārī wrote about women 'trapped in the cruel family discipline', while she herself enjoyed great freedom and respect from her husband, the Congress activist and playwright Lakṣmaṇ Siṃh Cauhān; Sudhā Cauhān, *Milā tej se tej*, p. 141.

4.4 Images of womanhood

In earlier sections we discussed how literature for women, with its gallery of good house-wives, mothers and daughter-in-laws, was all about providing prescriptive, role-models of womanhood. These characterizations also reflected the symbolic association between womanhood and Mother India, and indirectly with Sarasvatī, Lakṣmī, etc., as well as the essentialist juxtaposition between Indian womanhood and both Indian malehood and the materialist West with its fickle western woman. We then noticed how other critical voices emerging through women's journals and through literature pointed to the need to give more space and credence to women's interiority and to redefine their roles after negotiating the question of respectful access to the public world. We should now add that, even more than education or journals, it was the nationalist movement and Gandhi's leadership the single most influential factor in bringing women in the public sphere, and also in shaping their political image.[1] In fact, as a feminist scholar has remarked, it was only by the late 1920s that Gandhi was persuaded to call women to come out of their homes and join in the Civili Disobedience movement.[2] Alhough he was initially reluctant to allow women to take part in salt *satyagrahas*, thousands of ordinary women did, in towns and villages.

By exploring traditional and new images of womanhood in women's journals and Hindi literature of this period, this section seeks to reveal the tensions and issues at stake behind such redefinitions and the changes they were indirectly reflecting. As we shall see, image means several things at the same time: (a) a prescriptive model, role-based and role-oriented, aiming at shaping the readers' consciousness;[3] (b) a self-representation or

[1] As Madhu Kishwar points out, Gandhi had realised in South Africa the vital importance of the cooperation of women in a popular movement. In India, by employing loved symbols, by devising programmes revolving around 'seemingly trivial but essentials details of daily living' like cloth, salt, *chuāchūt,* etc. that would involve women first at home and then also in the open, and by envisaging new, brotherly relations between men and women (even husband and wives), 'he helped women find a new dignity in public life, a new place in the national mainstream, a new self-view and a consciousness that they could themselves act against oppression'. Moreover, he 'helped ensure the entry of women into public life without their having to assume a competitive posture *vis-a-vis* men'. Gandhi's charisma, whether in personal contacts or by far, and his holy persona and authority proved irresistable inducements to action or to breaking taboos. M. Kishwar, 'Gandhi on Women', *Economic and Political Weekly*, XX, 40 and 41, October 1985, p. 1700.

[2] 'He sought to restrict their participation to mass picketing of drink and drug shops, as to him this was an issue ideally suited to women, not only because they suffered from their husbands' patronage of such shops, but also because the issue was one of purity and of morality'; *ibid.*

[3] As Indrani Chatterjee reminds us, 'The use of the word "image" assumes that there will follow the reflection of "reality". This is only half the truth. It is now equally important to stress that images also create the world for us, they shape our consciousness'; 'The Bengali Bhadramahila', p. 57, opening her chapter on 'Ways of Seeing'.

reflection, as the case of the *svayaṃsevikā* (woman volunteer) will show; (c) finally, a certain scope, even within established images, for redefinition according to different values and through careful strategies; this is the case, as we shall see, with Jainendra Kumār's housewives. Also, new images were introduced: in this case, we shall observe which positive traits were necessarily upheld in order to justify them. In all cases, we shall notice how the values of Indian womanhood - modesty, sexual chastity and moral purity; steadfast self-sacrifice and nurturing (*sevā* and maternity) - remain conspicuously present in all these images, irrespective of whether they were created by male or female writers.[4] Only once these values were confirmed could issues be raised about the space and right to emotionally meaningful relationships (4.3); about acknowledging and developing women's individual intellectual capabilities; and about their *kāryakṣetra,* i.e. public activism and employment. Especially in the last case, it is worth noticing how the issue was tackled at the margins: as for education, it was upheld first as a means for lone, helpless women, and it was justified under the notion of *sevā*, service.

Let us then look briefly at how 'the ideal of *sevā-dharma*' could legitimize women's activities outside the home, and redefine her role within the household.[5] This, as we shall see in the course of this section, was a crucial argument both for the *svayaṃsevikā* and the teacher - both working outside the home - and for greater freedom of movement for housewives.

Indian society is based on *sevā-dharma*, wrote the editor of *Cāṁd*: the caste system in its originl form, even the four eras of Indian history could be read along the lines of *sevā* and *svārtha* (self-interest), in a progression from the former to the latter. The arrival of '*yogeśvar* Gandhi', however, marked a turn of direction: 'we are very happy to see that the goddess of *Sevā* is coming again in the lap of our beloved Motherland' (p. 8). This primacy of *sevā* in turn established women as central and active subjects: 'The women of our country have always been committed to *sevā-dharma*. Truly, a woman's life is the concrete image of *sevā*' (p. 9).

However, *sevā* should now be redefined to challenge the traditional division between household and the world: it should not be considered only in practical terms (i.e. housework), and should not be restricted only to the family. After all, Sahgal continued, Sītā was not only Rām's wife, king Daśaratha's daughter-in-law, queen Kauśalyā's favourite daughter-in-law: she was also Ayodhya's queen, 'the gem of society' (*ibid.*). In much the

[4] Typically, if any of these attributes is missing in the description of a woman's character - if a perfect woman slips out of chastity, if she refuses to nurture anyone, if she tries to acts like a man, if she oversteps her *maryādā* or moves out of her prescribed area (for which *lakṣmaṇrekhā* is a most significant term), then we can be sure that she cannot be good after all and that something awful is going to happen to her.

[5] See 'Sevā-dharma kā ādarś', editorial in *Cāṁd*, III, pt. 2, 1-2, May-June 1925, pp. 3-13. The following quotations are taken from the article, with page numbers in brackets. This argument echoed Gandhi's plea for the participation of women in the movement.

same way, to serve only one's husband was harmful, for it bred possessiveness, jealousy and indifference to the fact that Motherland, too, had a rights over her husband and sons: 'In the old times Gandhārī had blinded herself, nowadays women try to blind their husbands' (p. 11). Thus, the entry of women (*ramaṇi-maṇḍal*) in the public sphere was considered both desirable and necessary for the fate of the nationalist movement: 'it is indispensable that they should *enter* the *arena* of *sevā*' (p. 12, emphasis added).

Widows, re-claimed to common womanhood as we saw in the previous sections, were once again put forward as the possible vanguard in this direction: 'we believe that *sevā* is their main *karmakṣetra*'. Free of domestic responsibilities and in need of some engagement, widows would be ideal for service, 'and our huge potential of women's energy, now closed between for walls, could be unleashed by their example.

> We have to activate women's energy again and apply it for a successful revolution. We envisage an invincible *nārī-maṇḍal* which would set an example and stir the whole country with new ideas, new enthusiasm and pure sacrifice. It will be a golden day for Indian history, when the women (*devī*) of the Aryan nation, firm in the pursuit of truth, made invincible by their feeling of victory and animated by a disposition to serve, contribute to the progress (*uddhār-sādhnā*) of our society and our country. (p. 12)

It was therefore an idiom of service that would allow women to step out of, without losing respectability, traditional roles and places. As a matter of fact, this article contains *in nuce* most of the images of womanhood current in Hindi fiction at the time. Let us now turn to them in some detail. We can broadly identify five categories of women's images in the works of both male and female writers across several genres: (1) historical women, *vīrāṅganāeṁ*; (2) reinterpretation of traditional heroines like Sītā and Sāvitrī; (3) widows and good-hearted prostitutes; (4) *svayaṃsevikās*; (5) housewives. All of them were portrayed has having some kind of access to the world outside the home, positively valued as a kind of *sevā*.

There is no need here to dwell at length on the first category (see 3.2); we may only recall that, especially to women readers, *vīrāṅganāeṁ* decried the notion of *abalā*; they showed that women had equal intellectual and strategic skills and that women, too, had contributed to national history.[6] At the same time, such heroines still displayed womanly

[6] Thus Vīr Padmāvatī, the beautiful and talented sister of an impoverished Kshatriya of Bhopal, versed in home sciences as well as in the art of war, has to don a male disguise and find employment with the Scindhia army once left alone. After she has successfully fought against the British, she is found out, regains her brother and finds a father and a bridegroom at the Scindhia court. In the story of Cāṁd Bībī of Ahmadagar, married to Ali Adil Shah of Bijapur, the same combination of womanly virtues and phsysical and intellectual training is there, and her long involvement in public affairs after the death of her husband is all described under the sign of service. A brave and loyal warrior, and a good strategist, Cāṁd Bībī is 'asked' to take part in the succession conflicts in Ahmadabad, and she defends the kingdom against prince Murad as her duty to her motherland. Depicted as a '*kulṭā strī*' to the Mughal prince by a traitor, she nonetheless holds her ground with patience ('*dhīraj kī mūrti*');

virtues of sexual and moral purity, self-sacrifice and a nurturing and kind nature. Although safely too distant in time and rank in order to provide concrete examples of female leadership, these stories still conveyed the message that women were potentially powerful and able to hold their own in the men's world. *'Khūb laṛī mardānī vah Jhansī-vālī rānī'* ('She fought *like a man* she did, the queen of Jhansi') ran a popular song that became the refrain of the most famous poem on Rani Lakṣmībaī by Subhadrā Kumārī Cauhān.

Sītā had long been considered the quintessential ideal of Indian womanhood. Interestingly, as the article on *sevā* in *Cāṁd* quoted above declared, new aspects of Sītā were underlined in order to provide legitimacy to women's access to the public, political sphere.[7] 'Until there are *satī*-women like Sītā in India, there will be no Rāmrājya', Gandhi used to tell women in his speeches.[8] Then, in the same breath, 'until women take part in the public (*sārvajanik*) life of India the country will not progress. Only those women who are pure in body and heart, whose body and heart follow the same goal can take part in public life'. Thus moral purity, wilfulness and the model of Sītā were conflated to provide a blueprint for women's participation in the nationalist movement.[9]

It was when discussing contemporary society that negotiating women's access to the public sphere became more problematic. The existence of *pardā*, the supremacy of *pātivrat dharma*, the negative image of the 'free' westernised woman made even the ideal of 'service to the country' difficult to imagine or incarnate for urban and 'respectable' North Indian women. The attempt was made through three 'characters', either by giving new meanings to old roles or by introducing new roles altogether. As we shall see, it was a fluid process, and meanings changed considerably over the two decades. The first 'character' is that of the widow and/or prostitute, the second that of the woman volunteer, and the third that of the educated wife, the heroine at home.

We have already discussed at length in the previous sections the strategic importance of widows in the discourse on women's issues: the act of re-claiming good-hearted prostitutes and widows as women mirrored that of re-claiming women as full-fledged human beings.[10] Then they could appear as human potential that could be

Satyavatī, 'Vīr Padmāvatī', in *Gṛhalakṣmī*, IV, 8, Oct.-Nov. 1913, pp. 398-402; and Gaṅgāśaṅkar Miśra, 'Cāṁd Bibī', in *Gṛhalakṣmī*, IV, 3, May-June 1913, pp. 126-131.

[7] See e.g. Rādhā as the ideal *samājsevikā* in Hariaudh's *Priya-pravās* (1914), and M.Ś. Gupta's Urmilā and Sītā in *Sāket* (1932).

[8] Quoted in the note 'Mahilā-pariṣad meṁ mahātmājī', in *Mādhurī*, III, pt. 1, 1, Jan. 1925, p. 125.

[9] This 'obsession' of Gandhi's has been repeatedly pointed out and deplored by feminists such as Madhu Kishwar and Radha Kumar. Here we may remark that it mirrored a widespread concern for respectability that was particularly important in the redefinition of women and women's roles from the nineteenth century. See S. Banerjee, 'Marginalization of Women's Popular Culture in Nineteenth Century Bengal', in Sangari and Vaid, eds., *Recasting Women*, pp. 127-79.

[10] See e.g. Gulāb, the holier-than-thou protagonist of 'Veśyā kā hṛday' (A prostitute's heart) by Dhanīrām Prem (1904-1979), one of the many stories of good-hearted prostitutes. Gulāb slowly overcomes the righteous disgust young Keśav, the son of a pujari studying in Lahore, has for her. His hate (*ghṛṇā*) slowly turns into compassion and finally into love. An icon of *sevā*, she spurs Keśav to agree to the match his father has arranged for him in the village, and when he instead resolves to

harnessed to the nationalist cause, provided they made the right choices and behaved like respectable, nationalist subjects: this potentially radical, revolutionary argument was, thus, circumscribed by notions of 'respectablity'.

Of equal importance was their strategic importance in raising the issue of women's place in the public world, both literally and metaphorically. Widows and prostitutes posed similar problems to Hindu social reformers: once a woman lost her ritual purity there was literally no place for her in Hindu society. Excluded from the inner space of the home and from her natural and acquired family, she found no support, knew no trade and became easy prey for procuresses. While showing the cruel rigidity of social and family norms that affected all women, the fate of the lone widow was also a kind of sinister warning to women readers: the same could happen, it was argued, to any woman who by chance or misfortune was left alone out of the sphere of the home. Unable, because of ignorance or *pardā*, to direct and behave herself in public, she would soon be lost.

This set of questions is examined in Premcand's first major novel, *Sevā-sadan,*[11] set in present-day Banaras. Perhaps the first Hindi novel to thematize politics and municipal councils, and to include public speeches and meetings, it revolves around the question: where should we keep prostitutes?[12] The question is both literal and metaphorical: in the literal sense, it follows a public proposal to move prostitutes from their *koṭhās* in the centre of town to the outskirts, where they would attract fewer clients and 'pollute' less the atmosphere. In the metaphorical sense, it explores the question of public access and respect for ordinary women and for prostitutes, and the dilemma of how a 'fallen' woman can be restored to some place within Hindu society through the story of a respectable wife, Suman, who turns into a courtesan (Sumanbāī).[13] The moment she steps out of her husband's house, she steps out of her socially respectable and ritually pure role as a 'Lakṣmī of the house'. Her odyssey and only partial retrieval of respectability through a new socially useful role - that of manageress of an ashram for reformed prostitutes - is long and arduous. In the end, the encounter between Suman and her former respectable friend, Subhadrā, is a thin bridge launched across two separate worlds. Suman is exultant: the dire penance she had to

elope with her she leaves the night before. Her farewell note, in which she writes that she left to let him follow his duty and that she will love him forever, is the thing Keśav, now a *pujārī* and married, worships most, 'even more than the image in the temple'. First published in *Cāṁd,* the story appeared later in the collection *Vallarī*, Chand Press, Allahabad 1932, pp. 97-132.

[11] For Bakhśī's comment on the popularity of this novel, see P. Bakhśī, *Merī apnī kathā,* p. 65. Written in 1917-18 and published in 1919, its first edition sold within a year. Here pages numbers refer to the reprint by Rajkamal Prakasan, Delhi 1994.

[12] *Ibid.,* chapter 15.

[13] The novel follows the disastrous effects that this has on her family (her husband becomes a *sadhu*, her father commits suicide, her younger sister is refused as a bride) and the difficult attempts to find a place for her.

endure for her momentary slip is nothing in front of even the smallest recognition and respect.[14]

It is noteworthy that in Hindi fiction of this period the first women to take up employment out of the home in the name of social and patriotic *sevā* were marginal women: widows, former prostitutes or daughters of prostitutes or girls under duress.[15] In this perspective, we can see the use of the image to play out the possibility of strong women characters involved in public activity, either as self-supporting entrepreneurs or political activists.[16] In a similar fashion, it is the (pure) daughter of a sophisticated courtesan who best corresponds to Nirālā's ideal of the 'new woman' - educated, refined, sensitive, independent and bold - in his first novel, *Apsarā* (1930). A true Chāyāvādī heroine, Kanak displays her potentialities of intelligence, initiative, sensitivity and self-sacrifice to the full, in ways that would have been impossible in the case of respectable girls, before she eventually undergoes *śuddhi* (purification) and becomes a modest Hindu bride. Finally, it is a proud, intelligent and independent courtesan of a fictive classical past the heroine of one of the most popular novels of the 1930s, *Citralekhā* (1934) by Bhagavatīcaraṇ Varmā. Outside the pale of marriage but not of society, Citralekhā can argue, choose, prove all her power in a remarkable individual progress that will lead her, like Jainendra Kumār's Kaṭṭo in *Parakh*, to a self-defined life of self-sacrifice for the benefit of others. Once again we find the ideal reconfirmed, but it is invoked this time with a new self-styled role and moral universe.

The figure of the *svayaṃsevikā,* the nationalist activist, raised very similar issues of public access and individual choice, and verys similar values (of *sevā* and *tyāg*) - only this time with reference to the empowerment of ordinary, respectable women. In this case, fictional images reflected a historical process, provided incitement and offered motivation

[14] The same proposition was made by a 'distinguished courtesan' of Banaras during an interview published in *Cāṁd*'s special *Veśyā-aṅk* (February 1927) and reprinted in August 1927. There were about a thousand prostitutes living in *koṭhīs* in Banaras, and ten thousand on the street or in 'hotels', she said; 99% were Hindu, many Bengali. The main reasons for prostitution were widowhood and social injustice: 'Young girls from very fine families are thrown out of their houses if only they slightly step over the limit, or they are brought to pilgrimage centres and left there'. At the suggestion that institutions like training ashrams might help prostitutes willing to reform, the courtesan laughed and said: 'If only. But look at how Gandhi's movement collapsed... With only part of the money thus raised you could have set up at least 25 big ashrams for one to ten thousand reformed women'. She was willing to donate money, but what was missing was social willngness to give them 'a place in society... and the chance of a life of social service'; 'Veśyāoṁ ke udgār', *Cāṁd,* V, pt. 2, 4, August 1927, p. 455.

[15] E.g. Tārā, the educated and supposed daughter of a prostitute in G.P. Śrīvāstava's *Dil kī āg urf diljale ki āh*, (Chand Press, Allahabad 2nd ed. 1936), who in the course of the tortuous plot establishes an *abalāśram* and works as a teacher; or Phūlmatī in Dhanirām Prem's story 'Mātṛmandir' (1932); see above section 4.3.

[16] Tārā is told in *Dil kī āg:* 'Your *ashram* has shown alone more benefits than scores of Women's Associations, Pardā-Clubs and speeches'; p. 271.

and inspiration for political participation.[17] Until 1920 only a handful of educated, upper-caste women from distinguished families had undertaken any kind of public activity.[18] 1919-20 instead saw a substantial participation of women, especially in Lahore, the seat of the first Congress after Jallianwala Bagh. Women held separate public meetings, processions, hawked khadi and lit bonfires of foreign clothes. Although the 1920-21 movement, one activist recalls, did not show the kind of mass participation that Civil Disobedience would a decade later, the fervour and anticipation with which women joined the movement was greater in the 1920s. For all of them, R. Kumar comments, 'there was a sense of great achievement by women, of new spaces opening up for them'.[19] Moreover, most of the few women active in 1920 would later become full-time activists, local Congress leaders and Congress Mahilā Samiti presidents.[20] While these women leaders were mostly educated, peasant women also took part in peasant agitations and were present at public meetings.[21]

The 1930 Civil Disobedience movement saw the highest participation of women in public political activities. The choice of salt as a nationalist issue had possibly as much to do with such success, together with a decade of mass political propaganda.[22] As Gandhi himself observed, the movement had also the merit of cutting through class divisions: 'thousands of women, literate and illiterate, can take part'.[23] Women from different backgrounds would find themselves shoulder-to-shoulder in processions, picketings, *prabhāt pherīs* and jails, and were celebrated as national heroines (the new *vīrāṅganās*) in the Hindi press: the sphere of women's political activity extended, as Madhu Kishwar observes, from the household to the market, from the street to the jail. [24] Altogether about three thousand

[17] The question of women's politicization and political participation in the Hindi area is a topic that requires a separate study and cannot be undertaken in the framework of the present thesis. What follow are just a few points drawn from existing studies and the available material.

[18] As the case of the women of the Nehru family shows, they were the ones who would later move highest in the arena of constitutional politics; see the article by J. 'Nirmal' on women in the UP legislative Assembly in the *Kāṅgres ministrī viśeṣāṅk* of *Sarasvatī*, November 1937, pp. 462-64; also Manmohan Kaur, *Role of Women in the Freedom Movement (1857-1947)*, Sterling, New Delhi 1986.

[19] R. Kumar, *The History of Doing*, p. 83.

[20] See above 4.1. fn. 6.

[21] Rural women 'joined protest activity during certain phases, and their participation brought a new vigour and militance to the movement'; Kapil Kumar, 'Rural women in Oudh 1917-1947: Baba Ramchandra and the woman's question', in Sangari and Vaid, eds., *Recasting Women*, pp. 355 ff. However, the role of women during nationalist and peasant campaigns deserves further study. M. Kishwar mentions appropriately Raja Rao's novel *Kanthapura* (1937), which shows us 'how the movement looked like and meant to ordinary rural women... and suggests why rural women did not come to acquire leadership of the kind that could have influenced the direction of the movement'; M. Kishwar, 'Gandhi and Women', p. 1698.

[22] 'To manufacture salt in defiance of British laws prohibiting such manufacture, became a way of declaring one's independence in one's daily life and also of revolutionising one's perception of the kitchen as linked to the nation, the personal as linked to the political'; *ibid.* p. 1696.

[23] Quoted *ibid.*, p. 1698.

[24] *Prabhat pheris* were 'a religious practice familiar and popular among women. In the mornings groups of women would leave their homes and walk to the temple. On the way they would sing devotional songs. But now the songs were changed: political themes were substituted for traditional religious hymns'; V. Agnew, *Elite Women in Indian Politics*, Vikas, New Delhi 1979, p. 57. Since it was

women all over India served prison sentences during the Civil Disobedience movement.[25] Yet women activists remained generally more restricted in their movements: very few urban, educated women could tour the countryside and establish contacts with village women like male activists did.[26] In particular, for educated women activists nationalist work seems to have gone hand in hand, in most cases, with the concern for respectability. This would translate e.g. into an aloofness from 'lesser' activists and fellow women prisoners in jail. [27] Several witnesses speak also of a sharp distinction and discrimination among political prisoners of class A, B and C.[28] Hence, peasant women who took part and were jailed during peasant struggles, after nationalist meetings, and the ordinary, uneducated urban housewives and girls who took part in agitations, picketings and processions during Civil Disobedience and after - remained silent C-class women, with whom educated women activists and leaders felt little in common.

All these issues surface in narratives about women volunteers, *svayaṃsevikās*. What is important to notice is that whereas before that date images of women moving in the public sphere were either removed in time and space (the historical *vīrāṅganāeṁ*) or confined to marginal and stigmatised groups like prostitutes and widows, after 1930 public and political presence of 'respectable' women gained much greater social acceptance, and we find positive images of women volunteers or independent-minded. Interestingly, in stories with such characters, political, economic and gender issues overlap in new ways.

In the short story 'Svayaṃsevikā' (1931) by Rājbahādur Varmā in fact, gender, political and caste issues overlap in the transformation Kesar undergoes. From a poor and

a religious custom, the government was reluctant to prohibit it. However, *prabhāt pherīs*, especially by young and muscular Congress activists and members of Congress *akhāṛās*, became an aggressive way of claiming urban public space, and a typical source of communal tension.

[25] M. Kishwar, 'Gandhi on Women', p. 1697.

[26] 'Apart from this paucity of urban women activists going to work in rural areas there was also a dearth of rural women who could develop into full-time workers. Many rural young men who went to nearby towns to study, would get exposed to, and drawn into nationalist activity, and would then return to their villages, motivated to spread the message there. Rural women had relatively much less access to education, much less mobility and contact with urban areas. Thus, existing differences in the social possibilities open to men and to women led to the development of fewer women activists and consequently, lesser mobilisation of women'; *ibid.*, p. 1698.

[27] When Urmilā Śāstrī, Professor Dharmendranāth's wife and an activist in Meerut, first went to jail in 1930, she deplored that the other common wards were not 'good society' (*acchī sosāiṭī*), and hated their vulgar entertainments: 'There are several kinds of songs and dances, but I had never seen nor heard such obscene songs and dances in my whole life... It is not that I am against *nṛtya-gān* [as opposed to *nāc-gānā*], they are high forms of art. They were widesread in ancient India, and they were especially linked with religion during the Bhakti period. But the kind of song-and-dance I am describing now was really utterly vulgar and obscene, no civilised (*sabhya*) person would have liked it'; Ūrmilā Śāstrī, *Kārāgār*, Atmaram and Sons, Delhi 1931 (reprint 1980), pp. 37-38.

[28] E.g., when Subhadrā Kumārī Cauhān was arrested in 1942, there were two A class prisoners with her, Jamnālāl Bajāj's daughter and daughter-in-law; Subhadrā was a B class prisoner, along with a few other educated women and thirty girls from the Women's Ashram in Wardha; C class prisoners had several children with them. Subhadrā resented the differential treatment a lot, and even more the 'natural' way prisoners accepted the class difference implied. As Subhadrā remembered, A and B class women did not treat those in C class very well, and refused to share their meals or support C class prisoners' protests; Sudhā Cauhān, *Milā tej se tej*, pp. 212 ff.

illiterate Paswan (untouchable) servant in a small estate (*ṭhikānā*) in Marwar, Kesar becomes the captain of a squad of women volunteers during Civil Disobedience in Bombay.[29] Gender and caste oppression are both solved through empowerment by way of nationalist participation. Kesar is initially a typical *abalā*, threatened by the young and westernized (i.e. spoilt) master of the estate.[30] She patiently endures overwork, insults and even beatings, but her self-respect does not allow her to yield to the master's desire; the ensuing tension endangers her whole family. Only nationalist education can provide her with a possible way out: her teacher is the wife of a *purohit*, who in her few years at the Ārya-Kanyā Pāṭhśālā in Ajmer has acquired a little education, learnt *havan-mantras* and several Ārya Samāj *bhajans*.[31] Kesar visits her occasionally during the year, join in the bhajans and listen to stories about Gandhi and the freedom movement.

In the time of crisis, when the master's advances become more pressing, Kesar visits the purohit's wife once more. The bhajan she sings has for Kesar a double meaning: Rāvaṇ is both the Thakur and the British, national pride and female honour overlap.

> अरे रावण तू धमकी दिखाता किसे
> मुझे मरने का खौफ़ो-खतर ही नहीं ।
> क्या तू सोने की लंका का मान करे
> मेरे आगे वह मिट्टी का घर नहीं ।
> Who do you think to threaten, Rāvaṇ?
> I have no fear to die.
> You may flaunt your golden Laṅkā,
> for me it means less than a mud hut. (p. 96)

Kesar is incredulous at first: how can simple mortals challenge the wicked and powerful?[32] Nothing can overcome the simple strength of honour and *dharma*, answers the purohit's wife, and 'it is better to lose one's life than to lose one's honour' (*ibid.*). Although the purohits' wife does not understand Kesar's reference to her personal predicament, her words inspire Kesar to action. First she weeps at length, then pays a silent homage to Gandhi's image - they are, the purohit's wife and Gandhi, her real parents - and when at

[29] Rājbahādur Varmā, 'Svayaṃsevikā', in *Cāṁd's Rājputānā aṅk*, November 1931, X, pt. 1, 1, pp. 90-99 The issue contained also reports of the peasants' movement in Bijauliya, Mewar, and of their songs:see Āśāsiṃh, 'Jāgrat Rājasthān ke katipay gīt', *ibid.*, pp. 113-19. The word used for Kesar is *bandī*, which derives from the verbe 'to close' and means both female servant and slave.
[30] Whereas the old Thakur was a benevolent patriarch, the young master, educated at Mayo College, has been taught to disregard the traditional relationships of interdependence with sardars, clerks, peasants and servants; see also the difference between 'old' and 'new' zamindars in Premcand's *Premāśram*, and its discussion in V.B. Talvār, *Kisān, rāṣṭrīy āndolan aur premcand*.
[31] When Mahatma Gandhi left Sabarmati Ashram for Dandi and the country had started agitating, the purohit's wife was in Ajmer. Since then she had started to read newspapers and to subscribe to a monthly and a weekly journal (*Cāṁd* and *Pratāp*). She also brought a picture of Mahatma Gandhi from Ajmer and hung it in her room; R. Varmā, 'Svayaṃsevikā', p. 95.
[32] Kesar expresses down-to-earth doubts: 'Oh yes, how can slaves dare! Do they have swords or guns? The slightest disobedience and poor women are thrown in jail, forced to pound flour and those who do not accept to lose their honour are marked with hot iron. What can they do then?' *Ibid.*

night she receives the final summons from the master she jumps out of the mansion instead of yielding and runs away on the first train.

We see her next at a massive demonstration in Bombay: Gandhi, other leaders, fifteen thousand male and three thousand female volunteers have already gone to jail, but the enthusiasm of the volunteers and of the crowd has not subsided. Picketings and demonstrations are both exhilarating moments and tests of patience and strategy. Women volunteers have assembled at the house of Hansa Mehta (a historical character) to chose the captain of the day. Several girls volunteer, but it is Kesar *bahin* who is chosen (p. 98). In only two weeks the leaders have recognised her qualities: endurance, self-sacrifice and hard work.[33] She has also empowered herself through education: in only two months she has learnt to read and write Hindi and a few words of English. Walking in front of her squad in a saffron sari with the Congress flag, Kesar is truly a new icon of 'Rājput vīrāṅganā'. The thakur, in Bombay with Kesar's father, sees her picketing a shop. When she starts singing the same old bhajan, her father is overwhelmed with pride, the Thakur with shame, while cries of *'Mahatma Gandhi kī jay'* and *'Kesar bahin kī jay'* pierce the sky (p. 99).

The icon of the *svayaṃsevikā* includes then the qualities of *sevā*, self-sacrifice, modesty, moral and sexual purity, as well as the heroism of the *vīrāṅganā*; at the same time, political participation is presented here as a way to empowerment, a respectable public role and, in fact, public moral authority. Kesar's case is particularly interesting in the context of the letters mentioned in the previous section: thanks to the nationalist movement, the road away from sexual and caste and economic oppression does not lead into prostitution, but to a new role, an active and fulfilled life and a new (political) community.

In a later story on a similar theme by a woman writer directly involved in the movement, gender and political issues again overlap: just like for peasant activism the struggle for political *svarājya* carried within it a promise of social change, in the case of women escape from patriarchy also came under Congress garb. In the story 'Balidān' (Sacrifice, 1937) by Śivrānī Devī, Premcand's widow, a famous and dedicated woman activist believes that partial political empowerment through the electoral victory of 1935 will include the empowerment of women.[34] However, after the electoral victory and a *julūs* which consecrates her as an icon of Mother India - she is both fittingly modest (she insists on walking along with the others) and strong ('it seemed as if Mother India's soul had entered Prabhādevī', p. 112) - there comes disillusion. Prabhādevī's proposal that women should be granted equal rights in everything - politics, property, society, religion, etc. - is heavily defeated in the Assembly also thanks to her fellow Congressmen. Prabhādevī resigns

[33] 'To keep standing for hours on end in the heat, to work for two days without food or drink, to sleep on the bare ground and endure quietly all sorts of hardships is normal for Kesar', *ibid.*, p. 98.
[34] Śivrānī Devī, 'Balidān', in *Cāṁd*, XVI, pt. 1, 1, *Samāj-aṅk*, Nov. 1937.

and turns to a 'higher' kind of politics, and to a completely female political audience. She resolves to lead a public hunger strike: at a public meeting in Lucknow's park she denounces the rigidity of society, and it is as if 'countless *duḥkhinīs*, silent for innumerable years, had started expressing their thoughts through her mouth' (p. 113). She instructs other women volunteers to go to the villages and organise rural women, and all pledge that 'until women are given their proper place, [they] will not sleep in peace' (p. 115). The crowd is moved to tears; many prostitutes are in their midst, repentant but afraid to come out. To Gandhi, who eventually pleads with her to desist from the hunger-strike (his own weapon), she says: 'Bapuji, my game is over, I am going. But we have won'. Her funeral, attended by fifty thousand people, 'is the funeral of the *Manusmṛti*, too. Everyone said that scores, nay innumerable lives were sacrificed over the *Manusmṛti*' (*ibid.*). As in social romances, the blend of verisimilar setting and fictive characters and resolves allows for a number of imaginative moves and choices to be made; they may serve as inspiration and persuasion to the readers.

What is noteworthy in this story, a powerful example of political (and feminist?) propaganda, is that the activist-leader is not an exceptional woman, and that the ideals of *sevā* and *tyāg* serve to carry quite a radical message: political participation is by now an accepted fact, and the issue of women's emancipation is to be considered on par with national emancipation.[35]

'A woman's development should not be confined to the *antaḥpur*' said writer Uṣādevī Mitrā at a women's meeting in 1931, no doubt echoing a widespread feeling; 'but we should not forget that we can think about "outside matters" only after properly fulfilling the duties of the home': a woman's highest duty is that of rearing children for the service to the Motherland.[36] The presence of positive images of women engaged outside the home should not blind us to the fact that the centrality of the home, of motherhood and wifehood as women's *dharma* was never challenged openly until, perhaps, the end of the two decades. What we see, rather, is a redefinition of the image of the *gṛhiṇī* in Hindi fiction of the 1930s: on the one hand she is invested with emotional and intellectual depth, on the other hand she is shown to have some space for freedom and choices within the household, and in her relationship with the outside world and the world of men. With an interesting shift, literature posits the sensitive and aware *gṛhiṇī* as a full-fledged individual *subject* who

[35] Political participation is here accepted even in Lucknow, in the United Provinces, rather than in the more 'advanced' Bombay. We may also note that the absence of any male relative avoids the question of male control of female initiative, and Prabhāvatī's resolve is only her own.

[36] Uṣādevī Mitra, 'Striyoṁ kā sthān', speech, place unknown, quoted in *Cāṁd*, IX, pt. 2, 6, October 1931, p. 750. Similarly, in a loose-ended dialogue between two married sisters by Rāmeśvarī Nehrū, a dissatisfied wife wants to take up social work and do *sevā* 'to the whole world' rather than for one man alone. But this is your *dharma*, replies the other sister, and if you want to sacrifice yourself, *gṛhasthī* is the real *tapovan* of a wife; Rāmeśvarī Nehrū, 'Pātivrat dharma', *Cāṁd*, XVIII, pt. 1, 1, 1940, pp. 23-27; for an earlier statement on the same lines, see editorial 'Vivāh aur sāhitya' in *Cāṁd*, V, pt. 1, April 1927, pp. 582-584.

chooses the house as her *tapovan*. Maybe the reality remained the same - of women ceaselessly adjusting to whatever given situation - but at least some imaginative space was created through literature for individual self-determination. Typically e.g. strong indications are given that the *maryādā* of the *gṛhiṇī* character is largely self-determined, the result of individual convictions and choices and not (only) of traditional social norms.

Perhaps the most powerful examples of a new kind of domestic heroine are those by Jainendra Kumār (1905-1988), who was inspired in this respect by the strong and nurturing women characters by Sharatchandra. Although we may argue that here is another picture of womanhood by a male writer, the popularity of Jainendra and Sharatchandra with generations of both male and female readers proves, for one thing, that it was a picture that held a significant fascination for both sexes.

Sensitive, educated and loved by her respectful and liberal husband, Sunītā, the protagonist of Jainendra's novel by the same name (1935), still feels unfulfilled. Nothing is wrong on the surface, and her strong-minded devotion to her duty will not allow her to even feel a tinge of regret, but it is as if her potentialities as a woman have not been awakened. It is the arrival of a long-lost, eccentric friend of her husband's, Hariprasann, that does so: Śrīkānt, Sunītā's husband, is all set to 'normalise' him, i.e. find him a job, a wife, teach him the value of money and the virtues of mundane contentment. There is a vague aura of danger around Hariprasann: he is involved with a group of terrorists, but Sunītā lets herself be attracted (in the most indirect way at first) to him, and even her happy-go-lucky husband encourages their intimacy to the extreme, because he feels that she might be more effective than himself in leading Hariprasann onto the proper path.

In a dramatic climax, left alone with Hariprasann one night, Sunītā agrees to be the inspiring figure, the icon of Mother India, for his group of young revolutionaries:[37] in the dramatic showdown, her moment of extreme abandonment (naked in the forest!) is the epiphany of her inner (spiritual) strength. Hariprasann, who was actually in love with her, cannot touch her: her *maryādā* is too strong for him to break through.

What is important to note is that Hariprasann is instrumental in Sunītā showing her strength, her *śakti* even in the modest and housebound attire of a housewife. Throughout the novel, Sunītā shows a remarkable impermeability to influence: her pliancy conceals a patient and inflexible capacity to hold her own ground. Hariprasann is also instrumental in Sunītā exploring her identity as a woman beside her role as a wife, and this identity is a wholly spiritual, mystical one:

[37] The reference to Bankim's Devi Chaudhurani is explicit: Hariprasann wants Sunītā to dress up for the occasion, and says: 'Let the youth of our group see that their Devī Caudhurānī is also a goddess of beauty. Beauty is an aspect of the godhood of god, beauty is power (*śakti*), beauty is the ideal'; J. Kumār, *Sunītā*, Purvoday Prakasan, Delhi 1990, p. 208.

> We have given the names Hariprasann and Sunītā. These names are not false, but they are only names. Sunitā is a woman [*strī*, we find *nārī* elsewhere], Hariprasann a man (*puruṣ*). If we dig much below those names there remains only a woman, only a man. Relations and names have a certain existence in our normal behaviour, but if we go deep down in the spirit (*prāṇ*) of creatures (*prāṇ*) all these things remain as if on the surface. (p. 126)

Thus, even within the 'conventional' image of the housewife, a new dimension of attributeless individuality could be introduced. In fact, the strength of Sunītā's gendered individual nature is a certain 'naturality', the habit to act without thinking heavily on an intellectual level (p. 125): as a woman, she *knows* what is right and is strong without having to display her power. The last incarnation of the Indian *vīrāṅganā* is a quiet and nurturing *gṛhiṇī*, who from within the home can perform a variety of functions:

> What is the use of a wife who is only faithful to her husband? [Hariprasann challenged her.] I need her as an image, who may be unfaithful but unbending, who will shine among adversities like a lightning in the jungle. I need a mother as well as a slave (*dāsī*). But I need most of all a *mantra* of enthusiasm, who will have so much love as not to fear violence, who can watch red blood flowing. (p. 148)

In the showdown, Sunītā shows Hariprasann that she is all this - transcendent mother, servant, wife and an individual too - but without losing her domestic demeanour, her *dharma*.[38] Thus Jainendra's heroines are icons of woman's strength and strong-will under demure, unthreatening appearances: while the ideal is not questioned, a strong element of individual choice and self-definition is introduced.

Finally, it is interesting to note how Jainendra's heroines corresponded to the ideal woman as presented by *Cāṁd*, forced to finally spell out what it meant by it after almost a decade of publication. The fact that *Cāṁd* had refrained from doing so until then had no doubt helped: it had prevented the journal from being labeled - as either reformist, radical, social, political, etc. - and had allowed it to cover a wide range of identities and aspirations, while its blunt attacks on sections of Hindu society had left many wondering and uncertain on the exact aim of the journal.

Cāṁd's ideal, wrote finally the editor, is man-woman equality; *Cāṁd* asks men to respect women, to recognize their '*alaukik śakti*' (supernatural force) and let it develop.[39] The editorial further defined for the first time *Cāṁd*'s ideal woman:

> (1) She should be free from the present ignorance, bad influences and ill feelings; (2) She should be expert in domestic work as well as a faithful and devoted wife (*satī-sādhvī*); (3) She should not observe *pardā*, but this does not mean that she should go out laden with jewels, unnecessarily attracting men's attention; (4) She

[38] The difference between Precand's Suman and Jainendra's Mṛṇāl, the aunt who is rejected by her husband in *Tyāgpatra* (The Resignation, 1937), is that Mṛṇāl does not let herself be 'saved' nor does she criticise the society which has outcasted her with little fault of her own. Mṛṇāl holds to her own truth with no compromise, seeks modest employment and finally dies quietly in what appear outwardly like a descent into hell.

[39] Vṛndāvandās, 'Cāṁd ke prati asantoṣ', *Cāṁd*, VIII, pt. 1, 6, April 1930, p. 700. The following quotations are taken from this article.

should be educated and learned - enough at least to follow the developments of the present age and profit from knowledge; (5) She should be free from the fetters of the present day and should have the full right to express her opinions at home and to realise her aspirations; (6) She should know how to live a life of *sevā* and sacrifice, and behave affectionately towards her mother- and sisters- in law at home; (7) She should know how to fight oppression and to defend herself with her own hands; (8) She should keep in good physical health and exercise and walk in the open air; (9) Singing and keeping merry are her ornaments, but only songs that become a respectable woman; (10) She should be as virtuous as a heroic wife and corageous as a mother of lions (*siṃh-jananī*) and bear sons who will free India from the chains of servitude'. (*ibid.*)

The editorial did not spell out, nor rule out, commitments and public activities; rather, it took public access, education and freedom of expression for granted. On the other hand, the focus was clearly on redefined household role and relationships, and on a self-fashioned *maryādā*. Some space for artistic and emotional expression and initiative also fitted in this picture of an educated, aware and modern middle-class woman. At the end of the two decades Mahādevī Varmā's overview of the 'modern woman' did include political activists and women teachers.[40] These modern women had recognised their own strength and ability to act and create, although their own development had not been matched by an equal effort at adjustment by men.

Old-fashioned men look down upon them with contempt; modern-minded men support them but are unable to help them actively and the radicals encourage them but find it hard to take them along. Truly, modern women are more alone than old ones .(p. 267)

Thus, the burden of finding a place within the family and social fabric fell again on those women: it was up to them to 'remember their womanhood' while finding different places within society, to face opposition and solitude and to build bridges of compromise between old and new roles, themselves and the social world around them.[41]

To summarize, the door opened through education, journals and participation in nationalist campaigns brought along new tensions. In this section we explored the tensions and issues revelead by old and new images of womanhood in Hindi fiction. What we see is a strategy by which the repeated emphasis on the ideal of Indian women's spiritual

[40] Mahādevī Varmā, 'Ādhunik nārī kī sthiti par ek dṛṣṭi', in *Cāṁd*, XVI, pt. 1, 3, January 1938, p. 267.
[41] According to Mahādevī, the danger for the educated woman was to remain caught between two worlds, with 'the call of the new age in front of them, and behind them the burden of several conventions' (p. 268). What she worried about was the fate of women after they came out of their homes during the movement: in the struggle they had realised their strength, opposed male lies about women's frailty and incapacity, and they had hardened themselves; however, 'society admires their self-sacrifice but fears their rebellious harshness. You cannot find in them the beautiful and wholesome image of life as before, and even several partisans of modernity look at them with dubious eyes' (*ibid.*). Mahādevī seems to place at least some of the blame on women themselves! Mahādevī herself, one of the first women to pursue an independent career as a lone principal and writer in a men's world, appears to have carefully struck a balance between her individual activities and aspirations and social mores and expectations.

superiority because of their *tyāg*, *sevā*, modesty and self-effacedness did allow the interdiction about women's public access to be questioned and, at times, overcome. By making women's spiritual and human strength a necessary human resource for the nation, issues concerning gender discrimination could be presented by women writers as being of crucial importance for attaining true *svarājya*.

On the home front, the same ideal of womanhood could introduce notions of individual choice even within the confinments of the role of the *gṛhiṇī*, and raise issues of emotional and spiritual fulfilment.

Still, in the absence of a sustained movement, women's presence in the public sphere remained sporadic and in the overwhelming majority of cases secondary to the house-bound role. Thus, empowerment and self-development through education and free access to information, while opening new avenues of individual exploration and introspection, became reduced to a sophisticated respectability. *Cāṁd* itself reflected this trajectory: its passionate campaigns on various fronts - against social and caste oppression, for women's and political emancipation, all made part of the 'woman's question' - eventually narrowed down to a composed, urban, modern middle-class culture, reflecting an economically comfortable, educated, high-caste *gṛhiṇī* identity.

4. Conclusion

It is now time to pull the strings of the previous sections together, in order to see what the advances in education, the press, literature, and the debates on women's issues can suggest about the peculiarity and extent of their participation in the literary and political spheres. This chapter sought to explore what happened when a subject different from that of the male intellectual acquired a public voice, and moved from being an object of public discourse to being a subject capable of autonomous reflection, introspection and interaction in the public sphere. To this aim, we examined male and female voices on women's issues to see whether they differed, and if so, in what respect. We saw that although women's voices were largely shaped by dominant values and expressed them to a certain extent, they generally saw issues like education and the family in a different light. In the first case, men viewed it as essentially functional to a reformed housebound role; women instead emphasised the widening horizon (especially through women's journals) and the individual empowerment education brought about. Women further linked education with the issue of respectable employment and took up teaching in the name of 'social service'. In fact, while the values of subservience, nurturing and self-sacrifice (*sevā*) were reinforced as norms under the banner of women's "nature", at the same time the ideal and the activities of *sevā* could subvert segregation and the traditional division of spheres, providing important means of self-worth. Thus, in the case of the family women strongly objected to moral double-standards for men and women, often with articulated historical and social critiques, and claimed that the family should be an affective unit which acknowledged women and, to some degree, their right to feel, to belong and to be heard in the family unit. Literature was especially important in spreading such notions and legitimising varied roles such as the woman volunteer (*svayaṃsevikā*) and the housewife; it was also important in showing even housewives as subjects of feelings, thoughts and resolves. Therefore, a sustained reaffirmation of the spiritual qualities and moral duties of women served as a strategy to question women's segregation within the household and provide positive role-models; nationalist campaigns seem to have provided just the right opportunity to overcome such segregation. For women, then, the promise of national independence came to signify the promise of greater empowerment.

However, a few further observations will limit this picture of empowerment through education and information, i.e. through access to the public sphere. First of all, and

this criticism stands for the present study as well, it is untenable to speak of 'women' as a general, undifferentiated category. While it is true that women were held as a universal, homogeneous category (*strī-samāj*) in contemporary parlance and that they, too, used the same term,[1] this obscured and still obscures the fact that speakers and addressees of women's journals, schools etc. were a partial, urban or semi-urban, section, on the way to becoming solidly middle-class. They claimed to speak for all women, partly because some of the issues they raised concerned women across caste and social differences, and partly because, according to a common strategy, this claim increased the impact of the statement. However, the concentration on dowry, widow-remarriage, education etc. reflects upper- and middle-caste concerns and morality; other issues like labour conditions and security, bondage, sexual harassment by figures of authority etc. were hardly taken up. This selectivity suggests that women's journals and intellectuals represented only the middle-to-upper section of classes amongst women and silently excluded all other women subjects. Thus, the process of education, critique and gradual access to the male-dominated public sphere, which in so many ways mirrored that of Indian intellectuals vis-à-vis the Raj, was similarly limited in extent and happened under the aegis of genteel, middle-class, upper-caste respectability. So much so that, again, we may read the whole process as the making of the modern middle-class Indian woman: educated, tasteful, respectable, nationalist-minded, able housewife and mother. This, we may repeat, happened to the exclusion of all other female subjects.

Secondly, while Gandhi's nationalist style, with its extension and reversal of values and with its higher moral legitimacy allowed for a certain relaxation of norms concerning public access and allowed even absence from home in the event of picketing and arrest, there were certain strong qualifications. While *Cāṁd* was, at least initially, keen to reclaim prostitutes, fallen and 'irregular' women as equally worthy members of society and potential resources for the nation, Gandhi was extremely keen to match *sevā* and *tyāg* with sexual renunciation. This imposed upon women leading lives of public service a strict code of chastity or respectability, lest they endangered the opportunity of such a choice for other women. Although individually the greater openness of their lives and interaction with men seems to have brought about, at least for educated women, new modes of relations, e.g. literary friendships or political camaraderie, as well as the possibility for love and sexual

[1] See G. Pearson, 'Nationalism, Universalization and the Extended Female Space', in G. Minault, ed., *The Extended Family. Women and Political Participation in India and Pakistan*, Chanakya Publications, Delhi 1981, pp. 175-76.

relations, these had to be kept however away from public gaze.[2] This kind of self-censorship acted as a limit to openness and internal debate among women.

Thirdly, the question remains whether the extraordinary circumstances of the nationalist movement provoked a long-standing change in women's access to, and presence in, the public sphere, or whether a return to ordinary circumstances brought women 'back into the kitchen', as was the case in Europe after the second World War. In fact, women's journals showed how difficult it is to assess women's political culture and activism by examining women's associations,[3] or to speak of a "women's movement" where any organised activity by women seems to have been, at least in North India (barring perhaps Lahore), an essentially limited, sporadic urban affair.[4] A much more nuanced study of the diffuse political culture of women and their perspective on the nationalist movement, which could examine in greater detail the relationship between women leaders and anonymous masses, is therefore required.

Finally, the persisting centrality of household duties and roles and the patriarchal framework, the lack of institutional networks that were not strictly connected to political campaigns, limited women's socialisation and presence in the public sphere: she could spin *charkha* or do public work only *after* fulfilling her household duties. In fact, if a woman decided to have a public life, more often than not she had to opt out of family life altogether. In a word, nationalism, as well as education, writing, social work, etc. meant empowerment for women. But they came with a high price: empowerment could be had only at the cost of, as an addition to espousing a heavy prescription of duties and virtues. Women's subordinate role in the patriarchal society was questioned only at the seams, in a covert and tentative fashion, mostly through literature. However, the implications of

[2] The literary friendships of Mahādevī, Subhadrā, Kamlā Caudhrī, etc. are well known and documented, while love relations concerning the first two remain rumours.

[3] See e.g. the articles by G. Forbes and G. Minault in Minault, ed., *The Extended Family*.

[4] Radha Kumar's *A History of Doing* seems a definite improvement, in that it at least problematizes the use of the term feminist movement for this period, and the identification between women's associations like the Women's Indian Association and All India Women's Conference and the national movement, and between women's mass participation in nationalist campaigns and the few women Congress leaders; R. Kumar, *The History of Doing*, chapters 4 and 5. On the other hand, both Indrani Chatterjee and Gail Pearson point out the existence of women's circles, *mahilā-samitis* or *strī-maṇḍals*, in Bengal and Bombay in the 1920s, which encouraged women's self-reliance and interaction and which acquired crucial importance as networks of politicization and activizations during Civil Disobedience; I. Chatterjee, 'The Bengali Bhadramahila', pp. 160 ff.; Gail Pearson, 'Nationalism, Universalization and the Extended Female Space', in G. Minault, ed., *The Extended Family*. There is no evidence of similar diffuse networks in North Indian towns: there would be a Congress Mahilā Samiti, but this would be a political circle from the start. However, this could also be a lack of focus on proper sources on our part. Certainly, it is revealing that an overview of women's associations and women activists in the journal *Strī-darpaṇ* in October 1914 mentions Bombay, Bengal, Punjab but no Hindi-speaking province. The public participation and entrepreneurship of women writers and reformers in Bengal and Bombay contrasted sharply with the silence of *pardā*; Mrs Kalāvatī, 'Bhāratvarṣa kā strī-sudhār', *Strī-darpaṇ*, XI, 4, October 1914, pp. 209-10.

women's voices and issues in Hindi literature are not to be lessened by such observations. They were largely instrumental in legitimising the emphasis on subjectivity, emotionality and the dramatic exploration of critical issues. Moreover they suggest a greater mobility, at least for some sections, greater certainly than what was originally envisaged for them.

The following two chapters turn to the trajectory of public self-affirmation of Hindi intellectuals in the political sphere. We shall first examine their stand on the language issue, which marked for many of them the first direct political action (chapter 5), to turn finally to a more general examination of their role in, and access to, nationalist politics.

Chapter 5

A question of language

5.1 The language question

> निज भाषा उन्नति अहै सब उन्नति को मूल
> बिना निज भाषा- ज्ञान के मिटत न हिय को सूल।
> Progress in one's language is
> the source of all progress;
> if you do not know your own language
> your heart cannot be pure[1]

Language was one of the essential concerns of Indian reformists in the nineteenth century, a basic constituent in their discourse of progress and reform. Establishing Hindi as a public language and compacting a group identity around it were themselves products of this concern. The idea that everyone "has" one language - Bhārtendu's *nij bhāṣā* - which is at one time of the individual and of the community, which should cover all spoken and written practices, and finally that should acquire the seal of recognition by becoming the language of the state (*rājbhāṣā*) and of the nation (*rāṣṭrabhāṣā*) was itself new. This idea, engrained as it was in European assumptions about national unification,[2] was problematic to apply to the Indian context, and to the Hindi context in particular - as colonial census officials were quick to realize in their taxonomic zeal. And yet it was to exercise a powerful appeal for the minds of Indian reformers.

This chapters examines the language question from the public sphere perspective. From the nineteenth century onwards, Hindi as a standard print-language became the means for a cultural self-assertion that was to generate autonomous initiatives, debates and institutions. It was a question that bridged the literary and the political spheres; as the Hindi-Hindustani controversy that was to pit Congress leaders and intellectuals against each other shows, language became the main issue on which literary people could assert their authority, first vis-à-vis the colonial government and then vis-à-vis the Congress. While the

[1] Bhārtendu Hariścandra's famous couplet in the verse speech 'Hindī kī unnati par vyākhyān' (1877), in H. Śarmā, ed., *Bhārtendu samagra,* Hindi Pracarak Sansthan, Banaras 1989, p. 228.
[2] For a comparative account, see B. Anderson, *Imagined Communities.*

contest was always against English, in the process of self-assertion the language question and its several controversies (with Urdu and with Hindustani) also raised again and again the issue of the cultural character and content of Hindi, of its constituency and of its relationship with other linguistic subjects. While contesting voices were always there, chiefly thanks to the authority of literary associations certain notions acquired greater currency and authority.

Specifically, this chapter will discuss how language became a question in the nineteenth century (5.1), how it became a banner for cultural assertion and gave rise to the first political tensions (5.2), and finally how the whole issue became fraught with tensions in the 1930s, when the issue of political recognition by the Congress became prominent. This was for Hindi activists and sympathisers the last step in a struggle for cultural assertiveness, while for Congress leaders it became a source of tension between ideology and *Realpolitik*. In their attempt to gain control of Hindi propaganda organisations in order to foster their own compromise language, Hindustani, they transformed the language issue into a struggle for authority between Hindi intellectuals and politicians and national leaders (5.3). The victory of the former paradoxically did not transform Hindi into a national anguage, but only ensured its position above other Indian languages but below English, a position it still holds fifty years later.

Extensive research has already taken place on issues of language and language controversies in nineteenth century India.[3] Here we shall only outline the main points that are relevant to our discussion. Firstly, we should recall that the notion of a *nij bhāṣā* that would express at the same time the individual and collective identity related to a particular place (like French or English or German), and that should cover all written and spoken styles was itself new; it is therefore necessary to see how it related to the existing linguistic situation, and how it affected the linguistic hierarchy. Until then, as David Lelyveld remarked:

> Languages were not so much associated with place as with function, and in many cases the naming of a language - for the directors of British census operations and

[3] Jürgen Lütt, *Hindu-Nationalismus in Uttar-Pradeś 1867-1900*, Klett, Stuttgart 1970; Kerrin Dittmer, *Die Indischen Muslism und die Hindi-Urdu Kontroversie in de United Provinces*, Harrassowitz, Wiesbaden 1972; Paul Brass, *Language, Religion and politics in North India*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 1974; Bernard Cohn, 'The Command of Language and the Language of Command', in R. Guha, ed., *Subaltern Studies IV*, Oxford University Press, Delhi 1985, pp. 276-329.; David Lelyveld, 'The Fate of Hindustani: Colonial Knowledge and the Project of a National Language'; C.R. King, *One Language, Two Scripts. The Hindi Movement in Nineteenth Century North India*, Oxford University Press, Bombay 1994. For the role of Fort William College in providing the initial framework and spur to linguistic and literary re-definition of the two vernaculars, see R.S. McGregor, 'Bengal and the Development of Hindi, 1850-1880', *South Asian Review*, 5, 2, 1972, and Sisir Kumar Das, *Sahibs and Munshis: n Account of the College of Fort William*, Orion Publications, Calcutta 1978.

> more elaborately for the *Linguistic Survey of India* - was problematic. People didn't have languages; they had linguistic repertoires that varied even within a single household, let alone the marketplace, school, temple, court or devotional circle. These codes of linguistic behaviour took on the same characteristics of hierarchy that other sorts of human interaction did...[4]

However, a variety of phenomena, from the spread of print and western education to the impact of the European notion of language, to new extensive religious oratory in Hindi and Urdu, established new written and spoken standards in North India.[5] Khari Boli Hindi and Urdu became, for both British officials and Indian intellectuals, public languages in this objectified form, and were used in print, in the network of government schools, in public meetings and associations, etc. Where earlier several linguistic repertoires existed, as in literature, now one standard was sought to be developed that would comprise spoken and written usages in an unbroken continuum (see Introduction).

Crucial in this process was the model of English. Bernard Cohn has pointed out how the East India Company initially showed no particular interest in the diffusion of the English language, and the first Indians who learnt English did so out of economic interest and with no sense of cultural inferiority: for them it was just one more linguistic repertoire.[6] However, well before Macaulay's famous Minute of 1835, English began to exert its influence both as the model for Indian languages to imitate and as the new language at the top of the language hierarchy, with political as well as cultural connotations.

In the existing hierarchy of languages, Persian, the language of power and of intellectual exchange, and Sanskrit, the language of Hindu ritual and scholarship, enjoyed a privileged status over the other Indian languages and were studied, used and patronised by specific elites; Urdu took over the mantle from Persian in the nineteenth century as the language of the service elite and of refined, urban literary exchange. Hindi, in its various local forms, was the language used in the bazaar and in commercial transactions; a mixed Hindi-Urdu form, called variously by these names and also Hindustani, was the *lingua franca* of much of northern and central India, but had hardly been used for literary purposes. The emergence of English as a language of power and of culture was the emergence of a new cultural hegemony and new values: it affected the linguistic hierarchy as well as the way Indians looked at their own languages and literatures. For instance:

> The concept of modernity in literary history was also related to the relation each Indian language and literature developed with English. Sanskrit and Persian literary

[4] D. Lelyveld, 'The Fate of Hindustani', p. 202.

[5] Noteworthy in this respect was the use of Urdu by preachers like Sayyd Ahmad Barelvi and Shah Muhammad Isma'il, who toured North India in the 1820s, and the adoption of Khari Boli Hindi by Dayānanda Sarasvatī in the 1870s; *ibid.*, p. 203.

[6] Sisir Kumar Das, *History of Indian Literature*, vol. 8, Sahitya Akademi, New Delhi 1991, pp. 28 ff; see also B. Cohn, 'The Command of Language and the Language of Command'.

> models were labelled as traditional and medieval, and those found in English, irrespective of any period, as modern... English made both Sanskrit and Persian irrelevant and modern Indian languages were reduced to the status of "vernaculars", a group of crude downright speeches.[7]

While British scholars and provincial officials were busy finding out which was *the* vernacular of each province, that one language that would serve as a channel of communication between the foreign rulers and the Indian masses, old service classes and new intellectuals were busy refashioning their linguistic repertories into standard vernaculars: Indian languages, too, were construed in terms of bounded linguistic communities, each with its own "natural language". While a certain degree of linguistic readjustment, and hence competition, followed customarily every new rule,[8] the novelty was that now language was linked to community identity, at the time when a new community history was also being written (see 3.1).

Hence, the Hindi-Urdu controversy of the late nineteenth century was not only a competition between old service elites and new groups, a competition for jobs and status; it was also a struggle for cultural self-assertion, with several symbolic undertones. Whereas Urdu supporters denied Hindi's existence, resented any assertion of it as a threat to their own existence and pristine glory, and deemed it a vulgar and demotic idiom, Urdu was dismissed by Hindi supporters as a spurious offspring of Hindi in a foreign (Persian) guise, all the more hideous since it reminded one of centuries of 'enslavement' by alien Muslim rulers.[9]

What is important to remember here is that the definition of language was controversial even within the Hindi camp.[10] Early Hindi activists fought with the weapons of rationality not only against internal variants (Kaithi, Braj), as Christopher King as shown, but also about the style of Hindi - something which incidentally was thought to be possible

[7] S.K. Das, *ibid.*, pp. 30-31.

[8] Douglas Haynes has demonstrated this particular 'bilingualism' of local elites vis-à-vis changing outside rulers in the case of Surat; D. Haynes, *Rhetoric and Ritual in Colonial India*.

[9] For a symbolic identification of Hindi in Devanagari characters as the virtuous Hindu wife and of Urdu as a disreputable courtesan, see the *svāṁg* analyzed by Christopher King in 'Forging a New Linguistic Identity: The Hindi Movement in Banaras, 1868-1914', in S. Freitag, ed., *Culture and Power in Banaras*, pp. 179 ff.

[10] See e.g. the early controversy within the Nāgarī Pracāriṇī Sabhā between Śyāmsundar Dās and Pandit Lakṣmīśaṅkar Miśra, who was president between 1894 and 1902 and resigned in disagreement over the policy of linguistic differentiation: 'for ordinary purposes, such books as are not technical and which are intended for the common people [an] attempt should be made to assimilate the two forms into one language, which may be called Hindustani, and may be written either in the Persian character or in the Nagari'; *UP Education Department Proceedings*, May 1903, pp. 31-32, quoted in C.S. King, 'The Nagari Pracharini Sabha of Banaras', p. 312. Also Lala Sītārām objected that in Banaras it was fashionable to sanskritize Hindi, hence the view of the Sabhā was not representative of the literary activity of the province; *UP Education Department, Proceedings of the Provincial Textbook Committee of Allahabad*, 2 August 1902, p. 37, quoted in K. Dittmer, *Die Indischen Muslims*, p. 114. These views bear remarkable resemblance with Gandhi's and Premcand's Hindustani; see below 5.3.

to define in a positive sense once and for all. Each view on the style of Hindi implied a particular conception of one's history, of one's cultural referents and of the present predicament, and also reflected the speaker's peculiar position. Within the Hindi world, discussion was polarised between those who favoured the independent 'progress' of Hindi, acknowledged its cultural separateness from the Perso-Urdu tradition, but objected to 'cleansing' it of words of Persian origins, like Śiva Prasād 'Sitāre-Hind' (1823-1895), the influencial official and compiler of textbooks from Banaras, and those like Lakṣmaṇ Siṃh (1826-96), the translator of *Śakuntalā* (1863), who declared:

> In my opinion Hindi and Urdu are two different languages. Hindi is spoken by Hindus and Urdu by Muslims as well as Hindus well versed in Persian. Hindi abounds in Sanskrit forms of expression and Urdu has abundance of Persian and Arabic words and phrases. It cannot be said that Hindi cannot exist without Urdu words and idioms, and I am not prepared to give the name of Hindi to any linguistic form which abounds in such an alien mode of expression.[11]

Their different stances were due not only to different backgrounds, and to the different kinds of literary genres each turned to, but also to the position in the public sphere. Both had undergone colonial education and were part of the colonial administration - Śiva Prasād in the education department, Lakṣmaṇ Siṃh as a Deputy Collector - but Śiva Prasād was possibly more aware of and sensitive to Urdu and British opinion, while Lakṣmaṇ Siṃh, writing from Etawah, had only the Hindi public to address.

A new, important correlative of these debates concerning linguistic assertion was the setting up of voluntary associations.[12] These would provide autonomous institutions of public interaction and debate, local foci of propaganda and literary activity, pool together financial and human resources for campaigns or actvities, foster the growth of Hindi activists and intellectuals, and link the language issue with other of community interest (e.g. education, but also cow-protection). As such, they were looked upon favourably by British officials, who at times were directly involved in their activities.[13]

Parallelly, such debates and activities were instrumental in drawing rigid linguistic boundaries along different lines from the past. Although most Hindi writers of the nineteenth century who took part in the debate were multilingual and proficient in Urdu, at

[11] Preface to his translation of *Raghuvaṃśa* (1878), quoted in S.K. Das, *History of Indian Literature*, p. 143.
[12] Before the founding of the Nāgarī Pracāriṇī Sabhā of Banaras (1893), which marked the beginning of an altogether more organized and sustained effort, nineteenth century Hindi associations were mostly the work of one or a few individuals, often with the support of some local British officer: e.g. P. Gaurīdatt's Devanāgarī Pracāriṇī Sabhā (Meerut, 1882), Babu Totārām's Bhāṣā-Saṃvarddhinī Sabhā (Aligarh, 1877) and Allahabad's Nāgarī-Pravārddhinī-Sabhā (1876); R.S. McGregor, *Hindi Literature of the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries*, pp. 72 ff.
[13] E.g. M. Kempson, Director of Public Instruction of the N.W.Provinces from 1861 to 1877 and a former Head of Bareilly College, supported the activities of Bareilly Tattvabodhinī Sabhā; *ibid.*, p. 74.

critical junctures their choice and advocacy of Hindi as public and written language would become exclusive; i.e. although privately they would read Urdu, Persian and English, publicly they would dismiss them and take the side of Hindi. In fact, writing and reading Hindi was a self-conscious choice, which began to imply one's loyalty to one's own culture - as much as writing Urdu became a sign of disloyalty. This implied a tension which was to surface again and again in Hindi propaganda; while much of Hindi activism aimed at forming a 'high' standard for Hindi, on the model of English, as a language for modern, civilised, literary and even erudite expression on every subject (thus favouring the Sanskritic component) the claim to popular rootedness remained intact. This claim on Hindi as a 'low' idiom, the language of simple and pure rural India and of Hindu religiosity, worked both against Urdu, envisaged as the language of a debauched and tyrannical elite, and against English, the language of imperialist rule. It became central when, with Gandhi, village India became the hallmark of India's moral superiority over modern foreign rule: hence, the alleged uncouthness of Hindi could be taken as a mark of its popular roots.[14]

Colonial policies concerning the language, on their part, tried to apply rational, European standards and categories: first of all, in advocating the use of the vernacular, and then in trying to define the true and best vernacular, script and style and encourage their use. At the same time they were weary of alienating existing allies: hence most changes in language policies were partial and permissive rather than prescriptive. Policies regarding the official language for public employment, legal use and education were themselves inconsistent and changed repeatedly throughout the nineteenth century.[15] The most patent inconsistency regarded the use of the term Hindustani; according to different linguists and administrators, each drawing from his restricted personal experience and upon different practical or literary examples, it could indicate either Urdu or Hindi. While it is true that colonial policies conditioned the shaping and genealogy of Hindi and Urdu, it is also true that the ideologues of either language would choose the official authority which supported their own views and claims.

It has repeatedly been stressed that, far from being a neutral arbiter, the British administration exploited these tensions between Indian languages, in our case between Hindi and Urdu, to pursue a policy of *divide et impera.* By distinguishing the two languages in education but not in the administration, they 'fostered a Hindi-speaking elite by providing Hindi speakers with employment in the educational system, and simultaneously favoured an

[14] Hence Gandhi's support for Hindi as the language spoken in every village of India; see below 5.3.
[15] Early supporters for the wide use of Hindi rather than Urdu included J.R. Ballantyne, principal of the Banaras Sanskrit College, and M. Kempson, Director of Public Instruction in the Province from 1861 to 1877; *ibid.,* pp. 71n., 74.

Urdu-speaking elite by retaining Urdu as the only official vernacular for many years'.[16] This, however, cannot erase the reality of conflicting interests and cultural contest, in which language was a means to strenghten, advance or defend one's position in the hierarchy, nor the attempt to win colonial favour to obtain public privileges.

Further, by accepting public petitions, testimonies and addresses from Indian experts and associations before official commissions of enquiry, British administrators encouraged the latter to act as spokesmen and representatives of public opinion. While the ground of contest had been opened in 1830, when vernaculars were introduced in place of Persian in the lower levels of the judiciary, fixing a territorial homeland for each of them,[17] real controversy erupted only in the late 1860s, when the question was thrown up again. Articles, pamphlets and even plays were written to support either view: on the Hindi side, Śiva Prasād argued in favour of the adoption of Hindi in Nagari script in courts and in schools.[18] His Memorandum, like Madan Mohan Mālavīya's pamphlet thirty years later, dwelt on history before and after 'Muslim conquest' in order to show that Hindi had been the 'language of the country' before that invasion. The heterogeneous set of linguistic repertories of the whole of North India was construed into an homogeneous natural language, and its cultural referents and relationship with the other Neo-Aryan languages of India were laid down once and for all.

Further occasion for extensive and fervent public debate, in print and at public meetings, was provided by the Hunter Commission 'to review the progress of education in India', which toured the North Western Province and the Punjab in 1882. More than a hundred memoranda with tens of thousands of signatures were presented at various places, and witnesses included Śiva Prasād, Bhārtendu Hariścandra and Sir Syed Ahmad Khan. Although the Hunter Report of 1883 failed to accept Hindi grievances, the campaign around it activated Hindi ideologues and supporters, and public associations in defense of Nagari began to mushroom all over North India, the most important of all being the Nāgarī Pracāriṇī Sabhā of Benares (1893).[19] Intense lobbying by the Sabhā with pro-Nagari

[16] C.S. King, *One Language, Two Scripts*, p. 54.

[17] On the one hand it threatened the vested interests of clerks and officials employed thanks to their exclusive knowledge of Persian, on the other it threw open the question of which vernacular was the proper or most widely used in the area. Although the Nagari script was initially introduced in the Central Provinces and Kaithi in Bihar, the move failed to affect the status quo, favourable to the Persian script, and in absence of vocal pro-Nagari public support an Urdu abounding with Persian words and expressions remained the court language as well as the North Western Provinces. The merely permissive, and not prescriptive, introduction of Nagari in the Central Provinces in 1839-40 e.g. did not effect a replacement, since mostly Kayastha clerks refused to give up their monopoly; see *ibid.*, p. 62.

[18] In a Memorandum for private circulation titled *Court Characters, in the Upper Provinces of India*, 1868. For a discussion of it, see King, 'The Nagari Pracharini Sabha', pp. 106 ff.

[19] One of its first activities of the Nāgarī Pàrcāriṇī Sabhā was to campaign for the official recognition of Nagari on a provincial level: Rādhākṛṣṇa Dās toured the western districts of the province, Śyāmsundar Dās Allahabad and Lucknow, and Mālavīya contributed with his pamphlet, his vast

officials in the Education Department between 1895 and 1900 resulted in the permissive introduction of Nagari in courts in 1900. Again, it was mostly a symbolic victory: proceedings and writs continued to be written in Persianized Urdu for at least the next four decades, and Nagari associations had to employ paid clerks to write petitions in Hindi outside the courts.

During the campaign, however, Hindi in Nagari script was successfully turned into a question of Hindu cultural self-assertion, and the united Muslim-Kayastha community of Urdu was shaken. Within the Hindi sphere, the success of the pro-Nagari campaign strenghtened the position of those who championed a maximum differentiation of Hindi from Urdu in style, and an aggressive Hindi-Hindu cultural policy.[20] Also, a voluntary association like the Nāgarī Pracāriṇī Sabhā had successfully staked its claim of being the expert on Hindi vis-a-vis the government and the broader Hindi community, and deciding the cultural faultline of Hindi, namely excluding Urdu lexicon as 'foreign':

> Having examined all the various viewpoints, our principle is this: as far as possible, no words from *Persian, Arabic or other foreign language* should be used for which an easy and current Hindi or Sanskrit word is available, but those words from foreign languages which have become fully current, and for which no Hindi word exists or the substitution of a Sanskrit word for it means that a flaw of difficulty in comprehension is possible, those words should be used. In summary, the very first place should be given to pure Hindi words, the next to easy and current Sanskrit words, the next to ordinary and current words from Persian and other foreign languages, and the very last place should be given to non-current Sanskrit words. Difficult words from Persian and other foreign languages should never be used.[21]

Since many of the writers and scholars associated with the Sabhā were pandits and scholars who knew Sanskrit well, King remarks, 'their judgement as to which were easy and which difficult Sanskrit words must have been inclined to be lenient in favour of admitting Sanskrit words'.[22] Their *saṃskāras*, as well as their aim to create a 'high' language, resulted in a Sanskritized Hindi far from current speech.

To summarize, this section offered an overview of the changes in the linguistic situation in the nineteenth century: how, in a context changed by the political,

influencial contacts and his leadership abilities. The campaign started reaping results when the Vaishya Conference (est. 1891) and even the Kayastha Conference (est. 1887) passed a resolution in favour of Nagari in 1899, and submitted a memorandum to this aim to the Governor, Antony Macdonell; Ś.S. Dās, *Merī ātmakahānī*, pp. 19 ff.

[20] See Pandit Lakṣmīśaṅkar Miśra's resignation, above fn. 9.

[21] Ś. Dās, *Merī ātmakahānī*, p. 72; quoted in C.S. King, 'The Nagari Pracharini Sabha', p. 309, emphasis added. 'Moderate though they appeared' King remarks, 'in practice these principles could and did lead to highly-Sanskritized Hindi'; *ibid.*, p. 310. Despite the objections to this view mentioned earlier (fn. 10), this statement was important because it could and did influence official guidelines; e.g. it was quoted by one of the Hindi members of the Provincial Textbook Committee as evidence; see K. Dittmer, *Die Indischen Muslism*, p. 114.

[22] C.S. King, 'The Nagari Pracharini Sabha', p. 310.

administrative and cultural impact of English and British rule, languages became fixed, standardized print-languages and one of the symbols of community identity, implictly linked to religion. Once the perception of language changed, vernacular intellectuals and activists tried to re-compact social groups along linguistic lines. In fact, the parallel trends towards Sanskritization and Persianization in developing written registers and genres in both languages betray a growing sense of cultural internality. While in the case of Hindi the address to a Hindu public was implicit but present, in the case of Urdu a fluid and porous border was getting tighter. Only in the 1930s this implicit separate enclave would be questioned for Hindi, when Hindi activists tried to by-pass Urdu by counting on Hindi's country-wide appeal. Urdu could count on a composite tradition of urbane, civilised use, but it was however too sophisticated to be popular, and undergoing its own process of exclusion (Persianization). In Hindi the tension was between prestige, which implied both aspiring to the status of English, pursuing cultural exclusion and claiming a pure pedigree under the name of Indianness (Sanskritization), and supporting popularization and contamination in accordance with the new role as 'national language'. In terms of competition with Urdu, Hindi activists knew that numbers were in their favour, and indeed data on publications and on students confirm that Hindi was gaining and edge over Urdu.[23] What they could not alter, with their policy of polite pressure and cooperation with colonial authorities, was the subordinate status of Hindi vis-à-vis English. It was only when Hindi acquired political support from Congress leaders, Gandhi in particular, and significance for political mobilization that this subordinate status could at least be questioned. Further, the expansion of Hindi as a public language in education and the press that we chartered in chapter 2 could indicate to Hindi activists that the Hindi sphere had actually become autonomous and could aspire to eventually replace the English-speaking one. Yet, only political support from the Congress could ensure the change, and for it Hindi activits increasingly pressed in the two decades under study. The next sections of this chapter examine the sinews of the Hindi claim, first on the ideological and then on the practical-institutional terrain. They trace the making of a nationalist discourse of Hindi, the expansion of Hindi as a political language, the tensions and problems connected to its struggle with its claim, and examine whether Hindi activists, intellectuals and politicians were able or willing to mediate and compromise among themselves and with other voices in the political sphere.

[23] See tables concerning growth rates of the production of books and periodicals in Hindi and Urdu in the United Provinces, and student and candidate numbers for Hindi and Urdu examinations in C.S. King, *One Language, Two Scripts*, pp. 38-39, 45-46, 115.

5.2 The nationalist discourse of Hindi

> Necessity has enlighted [our] fellow nationals on the importance of a national language. The wave that arose in their hearts spread and went on to engulf the whole country... All the farsighted intellectuals of the country welcomed this thought. Everyone acknowledged the need for a national language. It is a source of pride for us that the honour (*pad*) has been given to our mother-tongue.
>
> It [the national language] is a worship to goddess Sarasvatī. There is no difference between rich and poor, no need for the hassle of B.A. and M.A. The door is open for all those whose hearts are filled with feeling and love for their mother; they can bring their offering. There is no love for the moderns there, nor hate for the ancients, no flattering the rich nor scolding the poor - all are Mother Sarasvati's worshippers, all have come to lay their loving offerings at the feet of the Mother. All have but one aim, one interest; it is a blissful state which those who are sensitive can feel. Thus, when we enter the temple of the Mother, we see her worshippers embracing each other, discarding all external differences. Hindus, Muslims, Parsis, etc. all harp the same tune, all sing the same song: the words uttered in Bihar are heard in Sindh.[1]

As the long passage quoted above shows eloquently, the question of language was closely intertwined with the discourse of nationalism. Language in fact, in nationalist rhetoric, was to be a crucial element in creating a feeling of belonging and togertheness, in a word a community that transcended boundaries of language, literacy and status. This 'need' for a national language was amply recognized in public debate; on the strength of this argument, Hindi supporters presented the choice of Hindi as much a result of consensus. In the process, they disclaimed differences as superficial or external factors, and delegitimized conflict and dissent. In the previous section we outlined the background of the language question. This section examines Hindi's claim to be the national language of independent India as an ideological construct. We shall first examine how the rhetoric of the mother-tongue - itself, we saw, a new notion - was tied to the nationalist discourse, and then turn to the strategies and problems Hindi activists found in mustering support for their claim.

Although the rhetoric of *nij bhāṣā* was present in each Indian language, Hindi had a peculiar fate because since the nineteenth century it was also prospected as India's potential national language. In the light of the subordinate status Hindi had in its own provinces, and of the contest with Urdu highlighted in the previous section, this was particularly frought with difficulties. In fact, notwithstanding the firm belief expressed in the metaphor of the 'Mother's temple', the path to actual recognition was not as smooth as the rhetoric

[1] Catursen Śāstrī (*Śārdā's* editor), 'Rāṣṭrabhāṣa aur sanskṛtajña', *Sammelan patrikā*, IV, 4, December 1916, pp. 145-6.

suggested. Each step to establish Hindi as a public language, whether in the local boards, in the education system, in the Legislative Assembly or in the Congress itself, had to be fought over. But first we shall discuss how the most comprehensive articulation of the discourse on language, that by Mahāvīr Prasād Dvivedī, sought to pre-empt other claims and difficulties on the rational-discursive ground.

5.2.1 Mother-tongue Hindi: *mātṛbhāṣā-deśvyāpak bhāṣā-rāṣṭrabhāṣa*

Mahāvīr Prasād Dvivedī's importance in establishing and popularising the standard form of modern Hindi is well known. What is of relevance here is how, on the strength of a rational-logical argument, he also helped establishing an ideological construct which linked the issue of *nij bhāṣā* with that of *rāṣṭrabhāṣā*. He was not of course the only one to do so; but the authority he enjoyed, the eloquence of his rhetoric and the clarity of his argument make him an ideal example.

Dvivedī started editing *Sarasvatī* in 1903, while the Hindi-Urdu contest of the nineteenth century was in the foreground. His first task was thus to convert Urdu-literate Hindus to their 'mother-tongue' and to spur English-literate Hindus to acknowledge their duty towards the improvement of *nij bhāṣā*.[2] It is worth remembering that the use of the term 'mother-tongue' marked already an ideological step: the form of Khari Boli used in print was hardly anybody's mother-tongue at the time, except for the small region around Delhi and Aligarh. In Dvivedī's terms, it rather indicated a standard vernacular that would mirror one's cultural and religious identity. The status of print-language gave standard Khari Boli this position over an area covered by various dialects of Hindi, while the 'mother' metaphor helped identification between mother-tongue and mother-land: the use of Hindi could appear thus as a duty and service to the nation.[3]

[2] 'We request all scholars of English to grant us the favour, after considering the condition of their society and country, of writing useful articles in their own language. If they do not know how to write it they need not feel ashamed: if they really do not know how, they only have to learn! Please fulfil your duty!'; M.P. Dvivedī, 'Hindustāniyoṁ ke aṅgrezī lekh', *Sarasvatī*, September 1914, quoted in R.R. Bhatnagar, *The Rise and Growth of Hindi Journalism*, p. 332. Worth noticing is the shift from the exhortative to the imperative tense.

[3] 'The progress of dharma and of the country rests on propagating *mātṛbhāṣā* and on the growth and enrichment of national literature. To strive and work for the progress of Hindi therefore is presently the first and foremost duty of every patriot (*deśhitaiṣī*) and rightful man'; M.P. Dvivedī, 'Deśvyāpak bhāṣā', *Sarasvatī*, November 1903, quoted in H. P. Gauṛ, *Sarasvatī aur rāṣṭrīy jāgaraṇ*, p. 97. See also Dvivedī's speech as chairman of the Welcome Committee of the XIII Hindī Sāhitya Sammelan meeting in Kanpur in 1923: 'A man's mother-tongue is as important as his mother and motherland are... One who does not respect his language, who does not love it and does not enrich its literature can never improve the state of his country. His dream of *svarājya*, his vow of improving the country and his praise for patriotism are quite shallow', quoted in *Sammelan patrikā*, X, 8-9 (1923), p. 301.

This statement of Hindi as 'mother-tongue' became then a basis to argue several more points, namely: (a) that Hindi was the real language of the province ('our language is Hindi!'[4]); (b) that it was one language despite regional variants; thus, it was the mother-tongue of at least all Hindus who lived in the United and Central Provinces, Bihar, Rajputana, Punjab and the various states in central India - whether they acknowledged it or not.[5] (c) Finally, Dvivedī could argue that Urdu's position as court language was not 'natural' but the result of a political privilege that had lost its historical rationale.[6] Thus, Dvivedī argued in favour of a historical change in the linguistic status quo in 'objective' terms. The notion of mother-tongue provided a basis to re-compact Hindus educated in other linguistic repertoires and first-time literates into a homogeneous community.

An extension of the same argument was the 'objective' need for a national language. Like every thinker of the time enthused by European models of nationalism and progress, Dvivedī viewed the language question in a national perspective. The rhetoric of the national language had a profound appeal.

> The existence of a common language has a peculiar influence and very strong effects. It creates in the hearts of people a longing to be one. They long for their whole country to be one, they strive for its improvement and look upon the country's Good as their own good... Without a common language there can never arise true national pride, there can never be national unity. Only Hindi can attain the status of country-wide (*deś-vyāpī*) language.[7]

The last claim could be made first on the strength of a logical argument, which Dvivedī presented uncompromisingly as a fact:

> Hindi *is* the language of the people of Hindustan. It is easy to speak, to write and to understand. It covers a wide area from Punjab to Brahmadesh. Punjabi and Bengali are very similar to Hindi. Even in Marwar, Central India, Madhya Pradesh, Berar and Gujarat there are very many Hindi speakers. Maharastrians are not unfamiliar with it.[8]

[4] M.P. Dvivedī, 'Hindī śikṣā ke vistār kī mahattā', *Sarasvatī*, April 1915, quoted in H.P. Gauṛ, *Sarasvatī aur rāṣṭrīy jāgaraṇ*, p. 332.

[5] Dvivedī dismissed all suggestions that Hindi covered a sepctrum of sub-languages as dangerous provocations: he reacted angrily at Grierson's classification in the Linguistic Survey: 'The clerks of the government have now diminished the sense of vastness of our language by cutting it into several pieces. They have divided it into Western Hindi, Eastern Hindi and Bihari Hindi. They have gone even further: they have divided Hindi and Hindustani in two more parts... Hindi, Hindustani and Urdu have been made into three different languages. God only knows how these two languages - Hindustani and Urdu - differ!'; M.P. Dvived, 'Apnī bhāṣā kī bāt', *Sarasvatī*, July 1914, quoted in R.R. Bhatnagar, *The Rise and Growth of Hindi Journalism*, p. 332.

[6] 'The importance Urdu has acquired is solely due to government favour. If the government had not enhanced it as the language for courts and offices, Urdu would amount to very little in the British Raj' Dvivedī replied to Azghar Ali Khan, a member of the U.P. Textbook Commission who had argued against the introduction of separate Hindi textbooks on the ground that there was no such language as Hindi; M.P. Dvivedī, 'Kyā hindī nām kī koī bhāṣā nahīṁ?', *Sarasvatī*, December 1913, p. 707.

[7] M.P. Dvivedī, 'Deśvyāpak bhāṣā', p. 27.

[8] *Ibid.*, emphasis added.

However, the question was not really whether Hindi (or Urdu or Hindustani) had earlier been current, the *lingua franca* of bazaars thrtoughout the country: now a language, standardized in print-form, was called upon to perform much wider functions. Also, in order to don the loftier robe of 'national language', the flexible colloquial Hindi actually used as link-language had to be superseded by 'pure Hindi', culturally more legitimized.

The step from *lingua franca* to national language then brought up the question of Hindi's subordinate status in its own province: subordinate in relation to English and, in the minds of the Indo-Muslim elite, to Urdu as well. How could Hindi reach the 'highest honour' under such circumstances? Once again, Dvivedī solved the question on the rational-discursive ground, by rejecting all other claims (for Urdu, Bengali, and of course English) and by presenting an opinion as an acknowledged fact.[9] In this way, thorny questions like that of the script could be easily brushed aside: 'In India we need not only one language but also one script, and this script can only be beautiful (*sarvāṅgasundar*) and comprehensible Devanagari. On this point not only all Hindus of the country but many intelligent Muslims and Englishmen agree'.[10]

Thus, Mahāvīr Prasād Dvivedī could, by mere strength of argument, declare Hindi first a full-fledged language, then the language of a province (and, indirectly, of all Hindus of northern India) and finally the national language. The arguments he used were to be heard again and again in Hindi campaigns until 1950. Rationality and scientificity, which were useful tools in persuading British administrators, proved however less successful when dealing with other claimants. Hindi supporters used them as tools to dismiss other claims on an ostensibly 'neutral' ground. But now there was no 'neutral arbiter' to convince: now what was needed was a consensus in the public sphere that woud be both cultural and political. The hard line literary associations on both sides decided to keep left little ground for inner debate and for mutual compromise. We shall turn later in this, and in the following section to the political and practical contest. Let us first consider more closely the historical consciousness the Hindi claim was couched in, and how its historical lineage as defined by Hindi experts fitted in the exclusive Hindu history outlined in the third chapter. Such a historical sense, which pro-Hindi only implied, did not fail to incense Urdu supporters and further reduced the ground for compromise.

[9] 'Everybody knows that Bhāratvarṣa needs a common, country-wide language, because there can be no unity without it, and no progress without unity. Everybody acknowledges, too, that only Hindi can be that language: it is the language of mutual exchange'; *ibid.*

[10] M.P. Dvivedī, 'Roman lipi ke pracār se hāniyāṁ', *Sarasvatī*, April 1913, p. 248. At this stage, the issue of the script, so charged with symbolic overtones, could still thought to be solved on paper or by scholarly gatherings like the Ek-lipi Vistar Parishad of Calcutta (1905), of which Dvivedī was a member, and which reduced the contest to a 'scientific' assessment of the inherent qualities or faults of each script.

5.2.2 Hindi's lineage

Already in the first annual report in 1894 the Nāgarī Pracāriṇī Sabhā dwelt upon the origin of Hindi. In this historical outline, here in the summary provided by C.S. King, the fate of Hindi was shown to mirror closely that of the 'Hindu nation' - united, fallen and now resurgent - as discussed in chapter three. The 'Indianness', naturalness and antiquity of Hindi were emphasized so as to downplay Urdu as an artificial and foreign language, derived from a spoken (i.e. inferior) style of Hindi.

> Hindi had existed as long ago as the reign of Raja Bhoja [XI century], but since no works had come from that time to the present, the *Pṛthvīrāj Rāso* [XII century] served to mark the origin of Hindi... The Muslim invasion of India, which came just about the time of the creation of this work, prevented further progress of Hindi. Muslims, seeing that they could not settle in India unless they knew Hindi, and realizing that Sanskrit-mixed Hindi presented difficulties, created Persian-mixed Urdu. Though Hindi poetry flourished even after the beginning of Muslim rule and the rise of Urdu, and was sometimes patronized even by Muslim rulers, Hindi prose language languished because it was considered to be of little significance. Sanskrit continued to be the most important language of prose. A few books on subjects such as religion, medicine, astrology and the like appeared during this period, but their language was either Braj Bhasha or such a bad Hindi that they could not even be considered literature. Prose received greater attention with the coming of English, however, and Lallu Lal created some of the first works in Hindi prose (such as *Prem Sāgar*) under Dr Gilchrist.[11]

Thus, Hindi was presented as *the* language of India, without further specifications. While Urdu and Hindustani supporters dated the birth of Hindi from the modern development of Khari Boli in the nineteenth century,[12] Hindi intellectuals could move back to an older past by simply expanding the range of languages covered by the term 'Hindi'.[13] Although Muslim conquest had stopped its progress, the superiority and resilience of Hindi (i.e. of Hindus) was proved by the fact that Muslim rulers had to learn it in order to survive and govern, that Hindi (Braj) poetry held its sway even at their court and Sanskrit had retained its highest status. Urdu was but the bastard daughter of Hindi and Persian, and

[11] C.S. King, 'The Nagari Pracharini Sabha', p. 316.

[12] E.g. the statement by Dr Tara Chand, Principal of the Kayastha Pathshala, secretary of the Hindustani Academy and leading spokesman for Hindustani, that 'Hindi is 135 years old'. Tara Chand, 'Some Misconceptions about Hindustani', pamphlet printed at the Leader Press, n.d. but around 1939, p. 5; courtesy of Harimohan Malaviya.

[13] As King puts it: 'the Sabha's usage of the term "Hindi" expanded as it moved towards the past, and contracted as it moved towards the present. To give Hindi a glorious past, one had to include all of its elder sisters, but when one came to the present, only the youngest sister Khari Boli Hindi - received attention'; C.S. King, 'The Nagari Pracharini Sabha', p. 318. See in this respect Ayodhyāsiṃh Upādhyāy Harioudh's Presidential speech at the first All-India Indian poetry meeting in Kanpur, December 1925; quoted in *Mādhurī*, IV, pt. 2, 2, February 1926, p. 147.

now Hindi, after the end of Muslim rule and the advent of British rule, had received new impulse and could resume its progress.

If in the nineteenth century controversy Urdu supporters had maintained that Hindi did not exist as a separate language, now it was the turn of Hindi supporters to say that Urdu was but a branch of Hindi. This view of the origin of the two languages, and of assimilating all medieval literary languages under the cover-term 'Hindi', informed literary historiography and Hindi textbooks.[14]

Like 'Parsi Gujarati', Urdu was but 'mixed Hindi', different from 'pure Hindi' only in lexicon - argued Lala Bhagvān Dīn and Rāmdās Gauṛ. This justified their choice of including in their anthology on the development of Hindi prose for Sammelan and college students pieces originally in Perso-Arabic script by Urdu authors.[15] Once all pre-modern forms of Hindi were assimilated under the same term, the presence of Muslim poets in the Hindi tradition and of Hindi as public language in Muslim courts until Akbar's time could be taken as a proof of 'how former Muslim poets had adopted Hindi with unshakable love... Their hearts, unlike those of contemporary Muslims, were not marred by narrow feelings'.[16] If only Muslims were acquainted with history, ran the argument, they, too, would realize the high status Hindi was accorded in Muslim courts and by Muslim poets in the past! Later, the more Aurangzeb 'tried to crush Hindi, the more Hindus loved it and sheltered it in the temple of their hearts'.[17]

[14] An alternative historiography was attempted under the aegis of the Hindustani Academy, but was easily dismissed as pro-Urdu in the ensuing Hindi-Hindustani controversy (see 5.3); see the speeches by Padmasiṃh Śarmā, belatedly converted to the composite Indo-Persian tradition, collected in *Hindī, urdū aur hindustānī*, Hindustani Akademi, Allahabad 1932 (3rd ed. 1951). In the pamphlet 'Some misconceptions about Hindustani', Tara Chand refuted the 'Hindi tradition' of the Hindī Sāhitya Sammelan and treated modern Khari Boli separately from the medieval neo Indo-Aryan dialects. Instead, he used Hindi in the meaning given by Muslim poets from the 13th century; he traced back a literary tradition in Hindustani from the 16th and 17th century and maintained that Urdu was just the literary form of of the speech known by the names of Hindustani, Khari Boli or Dehlavi, while phonetically and morphologically it was identical with modern Hindi. In practice he rejected the Hindi-Urdu divide and the emergence of a separate Hindi identity. Dr. Tara Chand, 'Some Misconceptions about Hindustani'; see also his article 'Hindustānī kyā hai?', *Cāṁd*, XVII, pt. 1, 1, June 1939, pp. 36 ff.

[15] Bhagvān Dīn and R. Gauṛ, eds., *Hindī bhāṣā sār*, p. 9; see above 2.5.1. The authors included were Munshi Sadāsukh, Inśā Allāh Khān, Nazīr Ahmad and Ratannāth Sarśār. Inśā Allāh Khān's *Rānī ketakī kī kahānī* (1803) was included to 'make our Muslim brothers reflect on how a famous Muslim citizen of Lucknow, an able writer of Urdu and Persian and a favourite and court poet of Nawab Saadat Ali Khan could consider writing a book in Hindi. Did he consider it worthless and dead, or was it rather a source of pride for him to be able to write a book in that language?!'; *ibid.*, pp. 6-7. Munshi Sadāsukh was appropriated as the first Hindi prose-writer: though his 'Surāsur nirṇay' was written in Shikasta script, 'Munshiji wrote in the common language spoken by educated Hindus from Delhi to Prayag' and though a scholar of Persian and Arabic, he did not use 'foreign words'; *ibid.*, pp. 2-3.

[16] Vaśiṣṭh, M.A., Hindī-prabhākar, 'Hindī sāhitya aur musalmān kavi', *Cāṁd*, X, pt. 1, 2, December 1931, p. 275.

[17] *Ibid.*, pp. 274-5.

Thus, the history of Hindi scholars and teachers engrained in textbooks followed closely the history of the Aryan-Hindu community outlined by *Bhārat-bhārtī*: poetry and scholarship supported each other: Hindi, the direct discendant of Sanskrit, had been downgraded from its position of hegemony during Muslim rule; the end of Muslim rule was the beginning of its new rise, which would culminate in its acceptance as the national language of independent India. Thus, while for one section of those who supported Hindi's claim, like Gandhi, Hindi had to transcend this cultural faultline in order to really become the language of all Indians, for Hindi experts, as well as for Hindi politicians like Mālavīya, Ṭaṇḍon etc., Hindi was the national language *because* it was culturally the language of the Hindu majority. The discourse on *rāṣṭrabhāṣā* as the life-spirit of a commmunity that we found in Mahāvīr Prasād Dvivedī was retroactive. Like in *Bhārat-bhārtī*, the fact that India was not united and did not have a national language was itself proof that it had once had one and had lost it: Hindi was that language. Thus, the multilingual past - indeed an essential feature of India - was denied, downplayed and misrepresented.

5.2.3 Support for the claim

Public support for this claim of Hindi and Devanagari to national status had first come in the nineteenth century from religious associations and in the form of scholarly consensus in Bengal.[18] In fact, at the beginning of the century there still was, at least on paper, the will of an elite to put forward Devanagari as the national script of India.[19] Even when the question came out of the secluded cabinet of the associations into the public

[18] The first aim of the Ek-lipi Vistār Pariṣad of Calcutta was 'to urge and increase the use of the Sanskrit script (Devanagari) everywhere and especially for all Indian languages'. Members were requested to fulfil the aim by printing books of various Indian languages in Devanagari, by lobbying for the use of Devanagari in schools, in the press, in public associations, and by putting pressure on the government, on local rulers and on Indian and foreign scholars. Members included government officials, inspectors of schools, university professors, writers, scholars, advocates and a few rulers, mostly from Bengal and North India but also from other parts of the country, and both Hindus and Muslims. Chandrakanta Tarkalankar was its distinguished president, Justice Shardacharan Mitra the secretary, and among the members were Rabindranath Tagore, Edwin Greaves, the Maharajas of Ayodhya, Darbhanga and Kalakankar, several Sanskrit professors from Presidency, Bethune and Government Sanskrit colleges in Calcutta, Mahāvīr Prasād Dvivedī, Lala Sītārām and the Nāgarī Pracāriṇī Sabhā founders. A Devanagari Conference organised by the Pariṣad in Baroda in 1909 and hosted by the Maharaja, was presided by R.C. Dutt and R.G. Bhandarkar, with mostly non-Hindi scholars among the participants. See *Ek-lipi vistār pariṣad - niyamāvalī*, Calcutta n.d.; from the Āryabhāṣā Pustakālay, Banaras; see also *Mādhurī*, I, pt. 2, 2, March 1923, p. 239.

[19] As Svami Śraddhānand recalled in his welcome speech at the XIV Hindī Sāhitya Sammelan meeting in Delhi in 1924, 'the English Vice-President of the Ek-lipi Vistār Pariṣad once said in a speech that the Devanagari script should be publicized in the whole world since there is no other complete script. A Muslim Vice-President said that Indian Muslims should transcribe the Kuran in Devanagari'; quoted in *Sammelan patrikā*, XI, 7-8 (1924), p. 275.

arena, and much of the consensus was lost, Hindi campaigners could hark back to it to uphold their claim.

The claim found further institutional support in the local voluntary associations mentioned in the previous section, and in nascent religious reform associations. As we saw in section 2.5, the fifth rule of the Ārya Samāj established Hindi (called *āryabhāṣā*) as the public language of the Samāj; Dayānanda Sarasvatī himself started using it for public preaching in 1874, and his translation of the Vedas in Hindi was, according to Lajpat Ray, 'the boldest act of his life'.[20] The gradual adoption of Hindi, and that too in a Sanskritized version, by the Ārya Samāj Punjabi Hindu service groups, which had been traditionally Urdu-educated, no doubt helped the identification between language and religious identity. The fact that the Ārya Samāj was the sole force behind Hindi propaganda in the Punjab could not but strengthen it in the perception of other groups. Similarly, one of the first Hindu Sabhas, the Prayāg Hindū Samāj of Allahabad (1880), was active both on Hindu community issues and on the Hindi-Urdu controversy; here Madan Mohan Mālavīya emerged as a champion of both causes.[21]

While scholarly associations like the Nāgarī Pracāriṇī Sabhā undertook mostly literary activities and pushed for the gradual recognition of Hindi within the framework of the colonial state and its agencies - the judiciary, administrative and education systems -, the birth of the Hindī Sāhitya Sammelan (1910) out of the Sabhā marked an important change. Though hardly active initially until the examination scheme gained momentum (see 2.5), the Sammelan provided nonetheless a bridge between Hindi intellectuals and Congress politicians at a time when several of them, like Tilak and Gandhi, were starting to realize the importance of Hindi as a political language. The first 'Conference on National Language and National Script' was organised under the aegis of the Ārya Samāj in Lucknow in December 1916; it was here that the issue of national language appeared to gain momentum and the political support of national leaders.[22] Much of the subsequent effort of the Sammelan, as we shall see later in this section, would be directed at Congress rather than at the colonial government, both at the local and at the national level.

[20] See L. Gupta, *Hindī bhāṣā aur sāhitya ko āryasamāj kī den*, p. 26.

[21] C.S. Bayly, *The Local Roots of Indian Politics*, pp. 105 ff.; see also J. Lütt, *Hindu-Nationalismus*, pp. 37 ff.

[22] Gandhi presided; Annie Besant, Mālavīya, Lala Munśīrām, Ramaswamy Iyer, Śyāmsundar Dās, Satyadev Parivrājak and P.D. Ṭaṇḍon spoke, and Tilak and others sent messages of sympathy. The conference resolved that 'in order to increase unity in the country and to spread nationalist feelings, it is necessary to make use of a national script and national language for all matters concerning the country as a whole, and for this only Devanagari and Hindi are appropriate'; resolution quoted from *Abhyuday*, in *Sammelan patrikā*, IV, 5 (January-February 1917), p. 180. Similar resolutions were passed the following year at the Āryabhāṣā Sammelan for the Annual festival of Gurukul Kangri, and at the second Rāṣṭrabhāṣā Sammelan in Calcutta in December, presided by Tilak; quoted in *Sammelan patrikā*, IV, 8 (April-May 1917), pp. 252-3 and V, 7 (February-March 1918), p. 158.

Thus, before 1920 among both nationalist leaders and Hindi intellectuals there appeared to be a general consensus on Hindi as the prospective national language. Especially eloquent in their support were leaders like Lajpat Rai, Mālavīya, Tilak and Gandhi, each with different shades of argument; the Sammelan journal proudly reported all their statements. What Hindi activists and institutions did not seem to grasp at this stage was that the vocal support of a broad political movement and that of the government were of a different nature. While the latter carried, with all practical limitations, the letter of the law and of official authority, the former was subjected to the pressures of different claimants and to political considerations. Therefore, to Hindi activists and institutions the support of nationalist leaders would seem exasperatingly procrastinating.

During a speech in Kanpur in April 1917, on his Home Rule League tour of the province, Tilak expressed grief at not being able to deliver the speech in Hindi. To the correspondent of the popular Calcutta paper *Bhāratmitra* Tilak said that there was no more doubt on the fact that Congress proceedings should take place in the 'national language', i.e. in Hindi. However, this could not happen yet. When the correspondent suggested that all Congress representatives should learn Hindi, Tilak again agreed in principle but refused to place the language question among urgent matters. What one could do was propaganda, he said, thus delegating responsibility to Hindi institutions. Mālavīya's stand was similarly temporizing, as the choice of English as medium in B.H.U. showed. What Mālavīya, Tilak and Lajpat Rai shared though was a cultural affiliation with Hindi as the essentially 'Indian' language because of its Hindu core. Gandhi's stand differed radically, partly because his politics was different, aiming at conciliation and compromise, but also because he rejected the cultural internality of Hindi (see 5.3).

Vocal support from national leaders could only reassure common Hindi intellectuals that Hindi's assurgence to the honour of national language was an unrefutable fact and only a matter of time.[23] All the greater was their surprise when Gandhi and several other national leaders withdrew or qualified their support in the following decade, and Hindi's claim was termed narrow and communal.

The first problems with this political support arose when Congressmen started taking side for Hindi in constitutional political venues: language was discussed heatedly in the local boards and provincial councils. Although nationalist leaders used Hindi in a

[23] The special Congress Session in Nagpur in 1920 declared Hindi-Hindustani the national language of India, and a resolution presented by P.D. Ṭaṇḍon at the special Kokonada Congress introduced a change in the Congress rules according to which proceedings should be held in the national language 'as far as possible'. 'We have reached very near to our aim' wrote the *Sammelan patrikā*; 'we should accept this statement provisionally, and after a while, we believe, the words "as far as possible" will be removed and Hindi - Hindustani will the language of Congress', *Sammelan patrikā*, XI, 5 (1924), p. 206. The same resolution was to be repeated at several other Congress meetings, a sign that its implementation was taking longer to materialise.

symbolic protest against English as the colonial language, they quickly realized that there was more than one front to it. When e.g. in February 1917 C.Y. Chintamani asked in the U.P. Legislative Council that all court clerks and judges learn Hindi according to the 1900 Resolution, British and Muslim members objected and the controversy spilt in the press.[24] After 1920, when former Non-Cooperators were elected to local boards, they exercised more than an indirect pressure on language policies (see 2.5).[25] The most vociferous supporters of Hindi in the boards were Babu Śivaprasād Gupta and Sampūrṇānand in Banaras, and P.D. Ṭaṇḍon and Babu Saṅgamlāl Agravāl in Allahabad. They did manage to introduce Hindi in the municipal and district board offices, but once again this 'nationalist' anti-English move proved to be divisive, and Congress politicians in office discovered that public opinion was not always in their favour, and that they had different public opinions to mind about.[26]

Thus, language became for Congress a double-edged weapon, especially in the United Provinces. When Saṅgamlāl Agravāl, Mālavīya, Ṭaṇḍon etc. spoke in Hindi in the Legislative Assembly it was a powerful symbol of independence if it was used against the British. But when resolutions touching the script were raised or enforced, they were sure to touch a cultural faultline and create public animosity.[27] Above all, Hindu members were now supposed to protect the interest of Hindi and Muslim members that of Urdu, with little or no space for ambiguity. When a motion on Hindi failed to pass at the Banaras Municipal

[24] The U.P. Provincial Hindī Sāhitya Sammelan Conference in Sitapur in October, which took place at the same time and in the same tent as the U.P. Political Conference, publicly thanked Chintamani for the step, though he was not known to be a Hindi supporter. In fact the atmosphere got so heated at the Political Conference that every speech in English was greeted with derision and cries for Hindi. As the reporter for the Bombay *Śrīveṅkateśvarsamācār* remarked, 'people have realized that it has become difficult to function without Hindi'; quoted by *Sammelan patrikā*, V, 2 (October-November 1917), p. 41. This marked an historical turn in the public perception of Hindi: from 'You cannot function with Hindi' to 'You cannot function without Hindi' (from हिन्दी से काम नहीं चल सकता to बिना हिन्दी के काम नहीं चल सकता).

[25] See the petition presented by a *Representation of the Muslims of the United Provinces (India) to the Indian Statutory Commission*, July 1928, Allahabad, p. 30; quoted in K. Dittmer, *Die Indischen Muslims*, p. 194.

[26] E.g. in 1924 a committee was appointed by the Banaras Municipal Board to decide in which script the proceedings in Hindustani should be written. All Muslim members insisted that the proceedings be written in both scripts, while a Hindu member was driven to the point of saying that English would be better than such squabbles. Śivaprasād Gupta decided to make the debate public, and wrote an open letter to all Hindi newspapers. According to the Congress policy, he suggested a compromise: the script would be Devanagari, as it was simpler and more scientific, and the language would be called Urdu. Śivaprasād Gupta, 'Ek lipi kā praśn', *Sammelan patrikā*, XI, 4 (1924), pp. 129-32. The reply of *Mādhurī*'s editor was fairly typical, in its mixture of rational argument and uncompromising stand: there was no doubt about the script, and to call the language Urdu would be a great mistake, loosing ground one had already conquered; 'Ek lipi kā praśn aur bābū śivaprasād gupta', *Mādhurī*, II, pt. 2, 1, February 1924, pp. 128-29.

[27] E.g. in February 1925 a Muslim League meeting in Allahabad issued a protest against the use of Hindi instead of Urdu in the local boards' offices; the Nāgarī Pracāriṇī Sabhā picked up on that and warned all Hindu Sabhas, Sanatan Dharma Sabhas and Ārya Samāj branches about it; see *Sammelan patrikā*, XII, 8 (March 1925), pp. 3799-80.

Board in 1926, the whole Hindi press (*Āj, Hindī kesarī, Bhāratmitra, Pratāp, Abhyuday*) sprang up in arms to condemn the Hindu members of treason, and spoke of it as a question of shame for the whole Hindu community.[28]

To summarize, by the mid-1920s a nationalist discourse of Hindi had become current: initially established by Hindi intellectuals and fostered by Hindi institutions, it was adopted by nationalist leaders for propaganda purposes. In June 1926, in a long review of 25-30 years of Hindi efforts, veteran writer Lajjārām Mehtā from Bombay could not hide his satisfaction for the great change occurred from the time when the English elite would laugh Hindi off and Hindi supporters worked unfailingly in the *'urdū kā zamānā'*. However, it was the support of national leaders which finally made the goal seem nearer, and now the day seemed not far when

> the public drum [i.e. authority] of Hindi will resound from one corner to the other [of the country], and Indians speaking different languages, while improving their own languages, will perform *ārtī* for Hindi with clasped hands and bowed heads, and Hindi's younger sister, or, if anyone objects to that name, Hindi's elder sister, Urdu, will sacrifice herself standing at her side, and the language of the Raj, English, with all its pomp and pride, with its genius and terror, will garland Hindi with flowers.[29]

Yet, by the same time the potential divisiveness of this discourse, which Hindi rhetoric tended to mask, had also become apparent. While Congress insisted on the compromise formula of Hindi-Hindustani, Hindi activists did not want to see the efforts of a quarter of a century jeopardised. Once again they tried to shift the political question on the 'neutral' ground of rationality by having experts decide which 'style' of Hindi would be best suited for the national language. In doing so, they were trying to find a national solution to their provincial contest with Urdu.

The defense of Hindi which took place in associations and in the Hindi press in the 1930s, which will be the subject of the following section, reflects a wider and more complex conflict of authority. While seeking out politicial influence and support in the Congress, a support that would ensure the future status of Hindi, Hindi activists and associations successfully defended their own role and authority as 'Hindi experts', a role they had acquired with the colonial government. In this way, rather than rallying a broad consensus

[28] See *Sammelan patrikā*, XIII, 7 (February 1926), p. 231.

[29] 'If Hindostani is chosen, our Hindi will become a provincial language instead of attaining the honour of national language, and we shall thrust miles back the treasure of Sanskrit literature'. Apart from 'a couple of languages of Madras' [sic!], all Indian languages originated from Sanskrit, thus a simple language with a reservoir of Sanskrit words was the style Mehtā suggested. All will agree, he concluded, apart from Muslims in the United Provinces and Punjab; Lajjārām Mehtā, 'Bhāratvarṣa kī rāṣṭrabhāṣā', *Mādhurī*, IV, pt. 2, 5, June 1926, p. 620. See also 'Hindī bhāṣā, lipi aur sāhitya', *Sammelan patrikā*, VIII, 9 (1921), pp. 208-9, quoted from *Saurabh*, where a similar answer was suggested: a few scholars should decide a style, and people should accept it.

in the struggle against English, they fell back on their old role in the Hindi-Urdu controversy. In the process they had to tighten the cultural boundaries of the language and their control over language policing, treading further on the path of exclusion. However, as only a few critics pointed out, in their obsession with *rāṣṭrabhāṣā* Hindi campaigners had forgotten Hindi's own frailties and its subordinate position in the Hindi heartland.[30]

[30] One of them was Dhīrendra Varmā who, despite his links with the Hindī Sāhitya Sammelan and his official position as Head of the Hindi department at Allahabad University, cautiously distanced himself from their triumphalism; see his article 'Hindī rāṣṭrabhāṣā banāne kā moh', *Sarasvatī*, July 1938, pp. 2-4; see also his earlier book *Hindī-rāṣṭra yā sūbā hindustānī*, in which he questioned several nationalist assumptions; D. Varmā, *Hindī-rāṣṭra yā sūbā hindustānī*, Leader Press, Allahabad 1930.

5.3 Hindi or Hindustani?

In the previous section we anticipated that political support for Hindi *rāṣṭrabhhāṣā* was not as straightforward as Hindi supporters wished and expected. In this section we examine the Hindi-Hindustani controversy that raged in the literary and political spheres in the late 1930s. This controversy was in many ways a culmination of the processes discussed in the previous sections. Firstly, it marked the climax of the institutionalization of Hindi and of the efforts to establish it as *the* public language of North India and of India *tout court*, both in terms of state language (*rājbhāṣā*) and of national language (*rāṣṭrabhāṣā*). It marked also the crystallization of the nationalist discourse of Hindi with its historical consciousness and its rigid linguistic faultlines. Secondly, it confirmed the authority of a literary association like the Hindī Sāhitya Sammelan as the final judge on the public issue of language. Thirdly, the controversy exposed the tensions of Hindi self-assertion in dealing with other subjects and claims, and between literary and political authority. Not only literary authorities found it hard to switch to a different approach when it was not the colonial *sarkār* they were appealing to but their 'own' national institution, the Congress; they also found it hard to make themselves heard by Congress leaders. These three perspectives will be our guides in unravelling the meaning of the controversy for the development of the Hindi public sphere, and its consequences for the fate of Hindi in independent India.

The need for crucial Congress support in propelling Hindi for the status of *rāṣṭrabhāṣā* seemed fulfilled when a triumphant Gandhi sat on the presidential seat of the 8th Hindī Sāhitya Sammelan meeting in Indore in 1918.[1] He seemed to incarnate perfectly the aim of the Sammelan when he suggested a plan for Hindi propaganda in the South; for this he provided the finance and political blessing, while the Sammelan provided human

[1]Already in *Hind Swaraj* (1909) Gandhi had expressed himself against English and in favour of Hindi as the national language of India. After he spoke in Hindi at the Congress Session in Lucknow in 1916, Ṭaṇḍon invited him to preside the 8th Hindī Sāhitya Sammelan in Indore. The huge crowd welcoming him at the station, the enthusiasm of volunteers who carried Gandhi's carriage on their shoulders, the official parade with elephants and horses through the streets of the city, the great tent for ten thousand people, the long and loud clapping when Gandhi took the presidential seat all marked a massive public celebration of both Gandhi and Hindi. The meeting also provided for several Hindi literary people the first occasion to hear and meet Gandhi in person; for a description and report on the proceedings, see *Sammelan patrikā*, V, 8-9 (March-May 1918), pp. 181-206.

resources and expertise.[2] In the years to follow, propaganda in the South, especially in Madras, proved to be the most sensational enterprise of the Sammelan, and the most successful together with the examinations (see 2.5.3).[3]

However, Gandhi's view of Hindi, also an ideological construct, differed substantially from that of the Sammelan: for him, too, Hindi was to supersede English, but it was also the language of village India, a *spoken* language that cut across literacy and script divides:

> I cannot find the softness I find in village speech either in the way our Muslim brothers speak in Lucknow or pandits speak in Prayag. The best language is one which common people can understand; everyone understands village speech.[4]

Although the assembly silently accepted his definition, probably only too happy to have found such an influencial and popular patron,[5] this view went completely against fifty years of public efforts for Hindi in the Hindi press and by literary institutions, not in the least by the Sammelan. Indeed, when polemics flared up after Gandhi was once again invited to preside the 24th Sammelan meeting in Indore in 1935 - undoubtedly to repeat the successful performance of 1918, to give new lustre to the organisation[6] and to enhance

[2] Gandhi suggested first Ṭaṇḍon and then the Sammelan to set up Hindi teaching classes and instructing Hindi teachers from the South. Before presenting his plan in front of the assembly he had secured the financial help of the Maharaja of Indore, who donated Rs. 10,000, and more were promised by other patrons; *ibid.*, pp. 199-202. According to Kaka Kalelkar's remembrances, Ṭaṇḍon was sceptic about the plan at first, but accepted when Gandhi told him with some emphasis that the Sammelan should otherwise withdraw its claim that Hindi can be the national language of India, or he should resign from secretary of the Sammelan; Kaka Kalelkar, 'Rāṣṭrabhāṣā-pracār: gāndhījī aur ṭaṇḍanjī kā sahyog', in *Gāndhī-ṭaṇḍan-smṛti-aṅk, Sammelan patrikā*, LV, 3-4 (June-December 1969), p. 25.

[3] Some youth were sent from the South to Allahabad for training, and from Gandhi's ashram Harihar Śarmā was sent to Madras to set up Hindi courses. Gandhi also sent his younger son Devdas (who did not know Hindi at the time) and the experienced preacher Svami Satyadeva 'Parivrājak'. In 18 years six hundred thousand South Indians were taught Hindi, forty-two thousand sat for the special examinations, six hundred teachers were trained, who worked in four hundred and fifty centres, all for the limited expense of six lakhs rupees; see Gandhi's speech at 24th Indore Hindī Sāhitya Sammelan, 1935, quoted *ibid.*, p. 130. Propaganda work in Tamil Nadu and Andhra was not matched by similar efforts in other provinces.

[4] 'Hindu preachers and Muslim maulvis give speeches in Hindi throughout Hindustan. And the illiterate people understand them' he wrote in 'Kyā aṅgrezī rāṣṭrabhāṣā ho saktī hai?' (tr. of a Gujarati article), quoted in *Sammelan patrikā*, V, 10 (June-Juy 1918), p. 227.

[5] Gandhi's presidentship of the Hindī Sāhitya Sammelan seemed to put Hindi more urgently on the Congress agenda, and at the following Sammelan meeting in Bombay (April 1919), presided by Mālavīya for the second time, an unprecedented number of nationalist leaders attended: apart from Gandhi, Sarojini Naidu Rajendra Prasad, K.R. Iyengar, Jamunadas Dvarkadas, Rajagopalachari, Avantibhai Gokhale, etc. all put up an appearance. Rajendra Prasad invited the next Sammelan to Patna, where it was held in March 1920.

[6] Throughout the 1920s we find complaints about the inefficiency, inactivity and inner squabbles of the Sammelan, all of which left little time or energy for anything else. Ṭaṇḍon, who was the secretary and factotum of the Sammelan for the first ten years, moved to Lahore from 1925 to 1929 to work for the Punjab National Bank; this allowed a rival faction, comprising Rāmjīlāl Śarmā, Lakṣmīdhar Vājpeyī and other book-publishers, to gain control of the managing committee and the main posts:

Hindi's claim within the Congress - and instead he made the Sammelan formally accept his Hindi-Hindustani definition, many spoke of a 'sudden turn' in Gandhi's policy, even of a betrayal. Rather, even in 1918 when Gandhi spoke of Hindi he clearly intended Hindustani, to be written in both scripts.

Judging by their extreme reactions, it seems that most Hindi intellectuals felt threatened in their own *raison d'être* and in what had been their life-long mission. In January 1936, *Sudhā*'s editor spoke of the Sammelan's pro-Muslim attempt at 'killing Hindi'. In a highly charged note abounding in sepulchral metaphors, the editor predicted that all Hindi literature would have to be cremated, since none fitted in the Hindustani framework of Gandhi, the 'blind *bhakta* of Muslims'.[7] Behind the objection of Hindi intellectuals to Gandhi's emphasis on spoken language and their own emphasis on the written form, we may read several motives. Firstly, they believed that for the honour (*pad*) of *rāṣṭrabhāṣā*, status, and hence a literature and a 'high' idiom, were more important than popularity. Secondly, literature expressed the cultural character and pedigree of Hindi; it had also been their main avenue of self-assertion - through 'useful' literature, the curriculum, the making of a canon, etc. - and of expressing their own nationalism. In this perspective, the fact that Congress leaders disregarded such literary efforts and were in fact professed *ignoramuses*

the remarkable growth of the Hindī Sāhitya Sammelan examinations was very profitable for publishers if their text-books were included in the syllabus. In 1927 the Rāmjīlāl Śarmā-led managing committee attempted to take control of the Madras branch and launched a defamation campaign against Harihar Śarmā to take over the office property; only Mālavīya's intervention restored it to Gandhi, to whom he had entrusted it as president of the 9th Hindī Sāhitya Sammelan in Bombay in 1919. It is only Banārsīdās Caturvedī, who had a penchant for loud controversies, who reveals the scheme and gives some names; all other accounts either speak of a 'painful incident' or do not mention it at all; see *Viśāl bhārat,* I, pt. 1, 4, April 1928, pp. 457 ff. The furious *dalbandī* (factionalism), as it was called in the press (glossing over details), lasted for over a decade; Rāmjīlāl Śarmā himself died in 1931. 'Election Sammelans' like the 20th in Calcutta in May 1931 were reduced to a squabble over managing posts and a public ritual of speeches and 'lifeless resolutions'. The appointed presidents, prestigious but 'exhausted' figures would give a speech, preside the proceedings and then remain idle for the rest of the year; since the office was located in Allahabad while presidents belonged to different places, the administration remained in the hands of the secretaries living there; see editorial note in *Mādhurī*, IX, pt. 2, 4, May 1931, p. 603.

[7] The article went on saying that because of his pious wishes, poor Hindi would have to discard its polished vest to put on a rustic, half-Muslim costume in order to fulfil its aim. But how could Hindi, Sanskrit's daughter and the language of cow-protecting, non violent image-worshippers who considered India their only land ever come to terms with the ever-communalist language of cow-eating image-destroyers, who considered Arabia and Iran their motherland, and whose foreign culture was violent, brutal and always longing back to a Muslim empire? Luckily a few patriots like Dr Savarkar were pointing to the right solution, i.e. to stop trying vainly to woe Muslims. Editorial 'Sāhitya-sammelan aur hindī kī hatyā', *Sudhā*, IX, pt. 1, 6, January 1936, pp. 692-3. Evidently, reactions could be quite extreme. A more laconic Devīdatt Śukla, *Sarasvatī*'s editor, commented sarcastically, in an editorial note in the July 1935 issue, that Hindi speakers had been misguided so far in believing that Hindi had already been accepted as the national language. The honour was to be bestowed on a language which had no literature yet; and if the Hindustani Academy had so far been unsuccessful in establishing its written form, how could the new Sammelan think of succeeding in the same task? D. Śukla, *Sampādak ke paccīs varṣ*, pp. 76-77.

about Hindi literature was felt as deeply humiliating and suspicious.[8] The language controversy thus took the form of a struggle for authority: should it rest with national politicians or with Hindi 'experts'?

The Congress strategy was to assert its own authority by appropriating the Sammelan and taking over Hindi propaganda.[9] Thus, in the years following the 1935 Indore Sammelan, Congress leaders and activists flocked to Sammelan meetings and were elected presidents.[10] The Hindi world itself split into two camps, where different intellectuals and activists militated for different reasons. In the Hindustani camp, apart from Congressmen like Rajendra Prasad, J. Nehru, Vinoba Bhave, Kaka Kalelkar, Rajagopalachari, Pandit Sundarlāl, Jamnalal Bajaj, were intellectuals of mixed Indo-Persian culture like Premcand or Dr Tarachand, or those who followed Gandhi and did not feel too strongly about the issue anyway, like Jainendra Kumār or Rāykṛṣṇadās.[11] In the Hindi camp there were Hindi politicians like Ṭaṇḍon, Sampūrṇānand, V. N. Tivārī, Bālkṛṣṇa Śarmā 'Navīn', those who believed that Hindi had the strength to be open and accommodating, like Śiva Prasād Gupta, Bābūrāo Viṣṇu Parāṛkar, Nirālā, Rāmvilās Śarmā; those who subscribed to the Hindi-Hindu history and believed it was now time for Hindi to rule, and those who had devoted their lives to Hindi enterprises, like Lakṣmīdhar Vājpeyī, Śrīnārāyaṇ Caturvedī, Ambikāprasād Vājpeyī, Viyogī Hari, Kiśoridās Vājpeyī and Devīdatt Śukla. Despite existing tensions among Hindi supporters about the language policy and the authority of the old Sammelan, they reacted defensively to the attempted take-over. In fact, these were possibly the first statements by nationalist-minded Hindi literati decrying national leaders (see 6.4). Sammelan meetings between 1938 and 1941, in Simla, Banaras and Abohar, witnessed furious debates and the successful attempt by Hindi supporters to regain control of the

[8] More about this 'humiliation' below in 6.4.

[9] At the Nagpur Sammelan of 1936 Gandhi launched a new institution for Hindi propaganda in central India, the Rāṣṭrabhāṣā Pracār Sabhā, to be housed in Wardha. After the take-over of the Sammelan failed, Gandhi preferred to start an autonomus organisation for propaganda in the South, the Hindustānī Pracār Sabhā; see Rāmdhārī Siṃh 'Dinkar', 'Hindī-hindustānī vivād', in *Gāndhī-ṭaṇḍan smṛti aṅk*, pp. 36 ff.

[10] In May 1936, Rajendra Prasād presided the XXV Sammelan meeting in Nagpur, while Kaka Kalelkar presided the welcome committee, and in April Gandhi inaugurated the new Sammelan library in Allahabad. Young Ajñeya, who was attending a Sammelan meeting for the first time and reported the proceedings at Nagpur for *Viśāl Bhārat*, remarked that 'the first thing to disturb (*khaṭaknā*) me was that the "All-India Hindī Sāhitya Sammelan" was neither an all-Indian nor a literary meeting. The atmosphere there was political rather than literary'. What he meant by it, he explained, was not Rajendra Prasād' speech but the atmosphere of intrigue and the presence of political activists rather than literary personalities. Ajñeya, 'Sammelan meṁ kyā dekhā, sunā aur socā', *Viśāl bhārat*, XVIII, 1, June 1926, p. 674. The next Sammelan meeting in Madras in March 1937 saw again a Congress politician elected as president: Jamnalal Bajaj instead of Maithilīśaraṇ Gupta; see *Cāṁd*, XV, pt. 2, 1, May 1937, pp. 103-5.

[11] K. Vājpeyī, *Sāhityik jīvan ke anubhav*, p. 83.

organisation.[12] What national Congress leaders, mostly in favour of Hindustani, did not take enough into consideration was how crucial the issue of Hindi self-assertion was to the Hindi public sphere, and how far the institutionalization of the Hindi had already reached. Further, by fighting on the ground of a Hindi organisation they had to deal with the cultural internality of the public and the press. In fact, the series of article in favour of Hindi in 1939-40 by Congressman V.N. Tivārī, former Chief Whip of the U.P. Legislative Assembly, were decisive in upholding Hindi's claim in the political sphere and in upsetting the *Realpolitik* of other Congress leaders.[13] It was finally the academic authority of Amarnāth Jhā, Vice-Chancellor of Allahabad University and president of the Abohar session of the Sammelan, that settled the tussle within the Sammelan in favour of Hindi and reaffirmed Hindi's claim to be the national language of India.[14] The victory within the Hindī Sāhitya Sammelan marked the end of a possible Hindi-Hindustani compromise and the reassertion of the authority of experts and the strategy of committees in dealing with the language question.[15]

To summarize, the controversy over Hindi-Hindustani may have seemed a trivial one in the mind of nationalists engaged with winning independence for the country. For the Hindi sphere, however, it was an issue that involved its own existence and development thus far. Hence, passionate 'rational' debates over minute points of style and history reflect

[12] The story of those momentuous sessions has been retold with ample details in Hindi sources. At the XXVII Hindī Sāhitya Sammelan in Simla in 1938 the debate raged furiously for three days. On the fourth, Śrīnārāyaṇ Caturvedī of the Hindi camp staged a successful attempt to regain control by having a list of pro-Hindi names accepted for the managing committee, with the tacit support of P.D. Ṭaṇḍon and B.V. Parāṛkar, the appointed president; K. Vājpeyī, 'Hindī gaṅgā ke bhāgīrath', in *Gāndhī-Ṭaṇḍon-smṛti-aṅk*, pp. 210-1. At the next session in Benares in December 1939, presided by Ambikāprasād Vājpeyī, with Rajendra Prasād and Kaka Kalelkar present, Veṅkateś Nārāyaṇ Tivārī gave a proweful speech against Hindustani. Ṭaṇḍon assured the audience that the Nagari script would not be tampered with, and even Rajendra Prasad declared that Hindi would not be wronged; quoted in D. Śukla, *Sampādak ke paccīs varṣ*, p. 104.

[13] See e.g. V.N. Tivārī, 'Hindī banām urdū', *Sudhā*, XII, pt. 2, 1, February 1939, pp. 3, 5.

[14] Although he had been a member of the Hindī Sāhitya Sammelan for only one year, Amarnāth Jhā, professor of English and Vice-Chancellor of Allahabad University was elected president instead of Rajendra Prasad. In his speech, Jhā emphatically upheld the original goal of Hindī Sāhitya Sammelan: 'to spread Devanagari script all over the country and to try to make Hindi the national language'. In this light, the Hindi-Hindustani definition was 'unnecessary': everyone knew that Hindustani was an artificial creation, and Hindi descended directly from Sanskrit. He *personally* liked Urdu poetry, but that did not detract from the fact that Hindi and Urdu literature breathed two different atmospheres; *Abohar XXX Hindī sāhitya sammelan kā vistṛt vivaraṇ*, Hindi Sahitya Sammelan, Allahabad 1941, pp. 19-23. Jhā's speech was greeted with resounding success, 'and the supporters of Hindustani saw what the nation really wanted'. Kaka Kalelkar attended the session with a couple of disciples, but he took no active part; K. Vājpeyī, *Sāhityik jīvan ke anubhav*, p. 86.

[15] A Lipi-Vistār-Pariṣad, chaired by Kaka Kalelkar, had tried this avenue, and the grammar committee headed by Ṭaṇḍon worked out fanciful grammatic changes, which included abolishing gender for verbal forms and making all words ending in consonant masculine (!); quoted in *Sudhā*, X, pt. 2, 4, May 1937, p. 359. Again in evidence here is the tendency to to solve problems not through general consensus but by decree, by the authority of a select committee of 'experts'.

a wider and deeper anxiety about the authority of Hindi intellectuals within the nationalist movement and in the future state. Hindi supporters and intellectuals believed that through their long-drawn efforts they had earned the right to stake the claim for Hindi as the national language, and for themselves as respected authorities. The Congress stand in favour of Hindustani seemed to belie all this.

Yet, Hindi's victory within the Sammelan was a paradoxical victory, one that would be repeated in the Constituent Assembly and that foreshadowed Hindi's future position in independent India. First of all, it was a victory that refused compromise with other subjects and accepted them only as subordinate to the Hindi-Hindu cultural mainstream. In this respect, Hindi supporters pursued the same line of separate self-assertion they had pursued with the colonial administration. They asserted their authority over Congress in a way that would have been impossible with the British *sarkār* - in that they staked their claim for a space for Hindi that was hegemonic over Hindustani and Urdu - and yet, by pursuing such an exclusive language as their *rāṣṭrabhāṣā*, they further weakened its chances to really replace English as the language of the nation. Their faith in their own discourse and in the letter of the law prevented them to appreciate the stuctural weakness of Hindi (and the strengths of English). In this respect, the fate of Hindi reflected that of Hindi politicians like Ṭaṇḍon or Sampūrṇānand (see 6.2), in that its authority remained provincial.

The Hindi victory was also a victory of the Sammelan; it reinforced its authority and that of its hard-line language policy within the Hindi literary sphere at the cost of other, more flexible stands. It was the inevitable outcome of the process of institutionalization and cultural self-assertion that had started in the nineteenth century. In the urgency of the moment the Sammelan was been able to galvanize Hindi literary people and create public momentum at the cry of 'Hindi in danger', but this did not mean that it would become more amenable to voices from the literary public sphere. On the strength of their position at the head of academic institutions and of text-book production, as ministers and prominent leaders, Hindi intellectuals and politicians would managed to impose their style of *rāṣṭrabhāṣā* as mother-tongue and public language, and their cultural and historical view as the established one in independent India.

5. Conclusion

We have seen in this chapter how the notion of *nij bhāṣā* - borrowed from less diverse linguistic contexts and in reaction to the growing hegemony of English - acquired several dimensions after it was first mooted in the nineteenth century. The notion accompanied an increasing assertion of community and regional identities, which, initially, were being defined not so much by conflict with colonial authorities as by internal dissensions. Thus the notion of a pure (or purified) Hindi emerged out of a fractious debate with the advocates of Urdu. A class division was sought to be created between the well-entrenched Urdu elite and what was generally projected as the wider and more popular domain of Hindi-speakers.

Colonial authorities played an ambiguous role in these newly-created linguistic debates. They followed two different policies in education and administration, and thereby managed to appease the advocates of both Urdu and Hindi. Indeed, by encouraging official representations of both languages at special Commissions and Panels, they bestowed social and political legitimacy on a host of pro-Hindi and pro-Urdu organisations.

Meanwhile, the self-definitions of these groups were being constantly clarified. The issue of Nagari script came to be closely linked with a larger Hindu cultural self-assertion which did not tolerate any truck with Persian, Arabic or any other foreign language. Urdu on the other hand had long been going through its own period of self-purification and was getting increasingly Persianized. However, both languages, though locked in mutual antagonism, remained in subordinate positions vis-à-vis English.

We then examined the appropriation of Hindi by an exclusionary nationalist discourse that glossed over most definitional and practical difficulties in its determination to create a unitary linguistic consciousness. One main proponent of this discourse was Mahāvīr Prasād Dvivedī whose notion of *nij bhāṣā* shaded into the notion of *rāṣṭrabhāṣā* before finally turning into a political and historical imperative whose time had come after decades of domination by Urdu and English. In this view, all regional and popular variations in Hindi were sidelined in favour of a supra-regional, purified language which ideally could be understood by all Indians. Proponents of this view held that Hindi chronologically pre-dated Urdu, indeed was present at its birth; they saw Hindi as the neglected concomitant of the once-glorious and now-abject Hindu nation which foreign invaders had undermined politically and culturally as well as linguistically. Active support for this view came from the Ārya Samāj whose advocacy of a Vedic, purified Hinduism jelled well with a purer Sanskritized Hindi. The Hindī Sāhitya Sammelan provided important links between Hindi

unitarism and the Congress-led nationalist movement. However, the latter often took equivocal stances on the issue of Hindi, hemmed in as it was by special interest groups within the Congress and other political considerations. This caused much exasperation and annoyance to pro-Hindi activists, who wished to press ahead with their agenda regardless of its potential divisiveness, and who, when faced with obstacles, further hardened their overall position on the linguistic content and future political role of Hindi. For them after all the language question was their main *raison d'être*.

The Hindi-Hindustani controversy of the late 1930s came as a culmination of these various processes. By this time, Hindi had grown enough in the public sphere of press, education, cultural and political activities and discourses to warrant the claim of substituting English altogether and becoming the national language of India. However, originally accepted by the activists of the now established Hindī Sāhitya Sammelan, Gandhi's advocacy of village Hindi turned out to be something very different, much closer in fact to Hindustani than the participants at the 1918 Sammelan had imagined. This created on one hand distrust between leaders of the freedom struggle and the Hindi cultural advocates; on the other, it cleared the decks for a confrontation within the Hindi sphere between advocates of Hindi and Hindustani. In some ways this paralleled the conflict between liberal-secular and conservative elements that formed the political and cultural mainstream of the 1930s, while in others gave vent to issues regarding the authority and autonomy of vernacular intellectuals vis-à-vis political leaders. Activists on both sides of the divide passionately believed in the cultural role they assumed for themselves and Hindi.

In the end it was Hindi that could be said to have triumphed over Hindustani after decisive interventions by authoritative academics and politicians. The triumph was followed by victories on the legislative and executive fronts; but it was a pyrrhic victory. As it gathered strength and champions, the cause of Hindi - which was put to different uses; hitched to the nationalist movement and tacked onto the agenda for a sectarian kind of cultural self-assertion - had always deflected attention from what were very real internal weaknesses in the infrastructures of Hindi, and from the distance between the 'pure' language of associations and the more mixed one of the different Hindi publics. These inadequacies were either never addressed or glossed over as Hindi activists and associations fixed their attention on the cherished honour of national language, the panache for all evils, including English. It was always enough to claim supremacy for Hindi - and concomitantly for the Hindi-Hindu cultural elite of North India - even if the reasons for this supremacy remained abstract, and actual propaganda worked against the popular potential of the language. When the battles were won what remained in the end was a conservative provincial cultural establishment, a disgruntled non-conformist intelligentsia and a kind of cultural and linguistic arrogance which only succeeded in antagonising other linguistic and cultural groupings and thus sealing the fate of Hindi in modern independent India where it

remained, despite state patronage, a much-resented language of subordinate officialdom, severed both from its expansive popular potential and from the practical usefulness, status and intellectual vastness of English.

The reasons for this pyrrhic victory can be searched partly in the weaknesses intrinsic in the Hindi claim and claimants - cultural exclusiveness, heavy reliance on literary use of the language and over-confidence in political patronage. Partly, however, they lie in the peculiar trajectory of the nationalist movement, and in the tension between its populist and cultural discourse, enthusiasm for mass participation and for a diffuse political culture on the one side, and the temptation to take on the ruling and civilising role of the colonial rulers, and the intrinsic logic of institutionalisation on the other. This tension was to become apparent to Hindi intellectuals in the course of the two decades, roughly from the time of Non-Cooperation to the first provincial Congress ministry: as in the case of the language question, it took the shape of a conflict between intellectual and political authority, and between individual authority acquired in the literary public sphere of the journals and the authority vested in literary or political institutions.

The following and last chapter explores these tensions within the Hindi political sphere. Without attempting a historical coverage of the period and the area, it rather seeks to explore the placing of Hindi intellectuals and politicians in the political sphere by distinguishing a constitutional and a non-constitutional terrain. We shall also see how the cultural and historical consciousness outlined in the chapters so far influenced Hindi Congress leaders, and at the fate of the English-Hindi divide in twenty years of nationalist movement.

Chapter 6

The Hindi political public sphere

6.1 The constitutional and non-constitutional domains and the Hindi public sphere

> How can we get *svarājya* with the boards?
> (Śrīkṛṣṇadatt Pālīvāl)[1]
> How can we get *svarājya* by leaving schools?
> (Sumaṅgal Prakāś's father)[2]

The previous chapter ended with a phyrric victory over the language question, after a controversy that was directly political and yet saw intellectuals and politicians taking sides on cultural rather than political lines. The language question was perhaps, along with education, the most directly 'political' issue on which Hindi intellectuals claimed to be heard. Yet the relationship between the literary and the political sphere extended far beyond that. It is not the aim of this chapter to give a political history of the Hindi area during this phase.[3] Rather, our focus will be on the relationship between the literary sphere and its actors and the changing political sphere.

1920 was an important date in the history of political culture in India: it marked the beginning of a new phase in the nationalist movement, where mass politics, vernaculars, popular subjects, counter-symbols and authority would play an unprecedented role. The public of nationalist discourse finally seemed to be physically *there*. New leaders and a new party would emerge from this phase of the movement, and by the end of the decades under study a political leadership would be ready to inherit the reins of the country.

In this first section we shall trace the access and role of Hindi intellectuals and politicians in the changing domains of constitutional and non-constitutional politics. In the literary sphere we saw that a process of autonomous activism and institution-building went side by side with pressure on, and co-operation with, the colonial state. For instance, literary associations from the nineteenth century onwards not only pursued their autonomous literary agenda; they also maintained the notion that independent activities

[1] Śrikṛṣṇadatt Pālīvāl, 'Kaunsiloṁ dvārā svarājya', *Viśāl bhārat*, February 1936, p. 449.
[2] 'Śrī Sumaṅgal Prakāś ke saṃsmaraṇ', in Kṛṣṇanāth, ed., *Kāśī vidyāpīṭh hīrak jayantī. Abhinandan granth*, Jnanmandal, Banaras 1983, p. 185.
[3] For political studies, see Gyanendra Pandey, *The Ascendancy of the Congress in the United Provinces*; Sumit Sarkar, *Modern India, 1917 to 1947*, Macmillan, Delhi 1983; F. Robinson, *Separatism among Indian Muslims*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 1974.

were always *best* enhanced by state support - even when the colonial state had long ceased to appear a benevolent agency. The presence of nationalist-minded officers sensitive to the Hindi project always left, so to speak, an open door.

We find a similar double-track in the political sphere, too, we shall argue. The nationalist movement was both concerned with entering colonial institutions, gradually occupying the state in order to change it from within, and also with autonomous activism, mobilising more and more popular groups, antagonizing the state and erecting a counter-authority. Thus, in this first section we shall use constitutional and non-constitutional politics as co-ordinates to trace political idioms, attitudes to the state and notions of the public among Hindi intellectuals and politicians.

In the second section we consider literary and political attitudes to the peasants and the critique of a peasant leader in order to ask to what extent the Hindi literary and political intelligentsia made space for 'other', popular subjects, and to what extent these could form a 'subaltern counter-public'[4] in Hindi. The question, we shall see, is directly linked to intellectuals' views of Indian society and Indian culture discussed in the previous chapters.

In the third section we shall focus on Hindi politicians in order to see how they moved in constitutional and non-constitutional arenas, how sensitive they were about popular politics and 'other' subjects and publics, how they moved in bilingual nationalist politics, and finally how they related to the Hindi literary sphere.

In the fourth and last section a clash between Hindi intellectuals and politicians will allow us to turn to the issue of authority; in turn, this will help us in assessing the relationship between politicians and intellectuals and, by extension, between the literary and the political sphere at the end of the period under scrutiny.

Before we start, let us recall some peculiarities of the Hindi public sphere that distinguish it from Habermas's account and that will help us assess the achievements of Hindi intellectuals, politicians and contesting subjects such as peasants; these include the simultaneous emergence of a political dimension to the public sphere; the role of literature in forming a political public; multi-lingualism, and especially bi-lingualism of Engish and the vernacular; and finally the peculiar constraints of the colonial state.

Firstly, as we mentioned in the introduction, one peculiarity of the Hindi public sphere was that, compared with European examples, it developed a political dimension from the start. In fact, the script controversy over the official language policy made writing in Hindi-Nagari itself a political issue. The early Hindi press, too, from Bhārtendu onwards, had been directly political, commenting on official policies, albeit in humorous literary style,

[4] See Nancy Fraser's definition of 'subaltern counterpublics' as 'parallel discursive arenas where members of subordinate social groups invent and circulate counterdiscourses to formulate oppositional interpretations of their identities, interests and needs'; Nancy Fraser, 'Rethinking the Public Sphere', p. 124.

debating 'public matters' and taking topical issues as the theme of literature.[5] In their attempt to create a public sphere that was public (=civic) but did not involve the state, early nationalists realized that this could be done best through literature. Thus we saw that the new notions of literature (see 2.2), of *sāhitya-sevā* and of literary activism animating early journals and associations were pervaded by ideas of 'public good', of *jāti* and service to the community.

Secondly, one characteristic feature of such Hindi literary activities in the nineteenth century was, however, that they happened without a public. Journals were launched without subscribers, distribution or readership. Literary associations were often attempts at giving a public dressing to meetings among friends, or else semi-official protocol devoid of audience support. Even plays - the most self-consciously public genre - were put up by small circles of amateurs in private homes.[6] That is, though these initiators certainly attempted to reach out, form and educate a public, who this public was or would be was more a tentative, *presumed*, notion than a reality. As we saw in the previous chapters, subsequent activists and intellectuals tried to find a language in which to speak of this cohesive, if composite, public formed out of various linguistic, literary and social publics. In the present chapter we shall deal with similar attempts at envisaging a political public, and at reaching out and subsuming elite and popular publics under one national *jāti*. This included an effort to find one or more political idioms that would both address disparate publics and draw them together.

Thirdly, implicit in this effort was another peculiarity which affected, albeit in different ways, the political as well as the literary Hindi public sphere, i.e. multi-lingualism; it was present in the state structure, in the intelligentsia and in the publics, especially in the form of bi-lingualism, i.e. a hierarchy of English and vernacular. Bi-lingualism was, as we shall see, a necessary skill for Indian politicians.

Finally, we must remember the peculiar constraints of the colonial state[7] as it consolidated in the second half of the nineteenth century; without relinquishing its first vocation of economic extraction, the post-1858 Indian state became more of a 'strong', national state. It intervened to restructure the economy, social processes (through education, bills of social reform etc.) and relations between the state and society, thus

[5] See Vasudha Dalmia, 'Hariścandra of Banaras and the Consolidation of Hindu Traditions in the Late Nineteenth Century'.
[6] See e.g. Madan Gopāl, *Bhārtendu hariścandra*, Sahitya Akademi, Delhi 1978.
[7] As mentioned in the introduction, the story of the bourgeois public sphere in Europe as traced by Habermas followed the change from a personal to an impersonal notion of political power, and the gradual transformation of the absolutist state into a constitutional, limited state, subject to public scrutiny, pressure and (however partial) influence. Thus institutions, language and discourses of the public sphere emerged from the social terrain that conducted this struggle. In India, these institutions and discourses were introduced into a different social universe and under different structural arrangements, i.e. they had to contend with different pressures from the British and the colonial state itself, and from different groups of Indian subjects.

opening new grounds of public confrontation with Indian subjects. Moreover, the British colonial state in India contende with several conflicting demands of publicity and different needs of legitimacy. First and foremost, it was accountable to the regime in England and to British public opinion. But, and in this lay the first paradox of the colonial regime, it was far more powerful than the state in the mother country, and not bound by the democratic rules, restraints and demands that restricted elitist politics there. On the other hand it was an *Indian* state, i.e. it had to respond in an intelligible and effective way to the pressures and the social logic of the country. In its interaction with the dissimilar and largely unrelated publics of Indian society, and in its discourse of legitimacy both in India and in England, colonial rule adopted different attitudes and idioms. In the words of Sudipta Kaviraj:

> In its dialogue with British public opinion it adopted a tone of reasonableness; with the indigenous middle class, it carried on a dialogue through education and legislation; while vis a vis the sullenly distant popular masses, it adopted primarily a monologue of force.[8]

Moreover, although power under the colonial regime was public in the sense of being at least a formal and impersonal set of laws and institutions, however iniquitous, to large sections of the population, especially in the countryside, it came heavily 'personified' in local figures of authority, landlords who usually had at least some control of the impersonal and 'legal' state machinery (police, courts etc.). However, to the extent that colonial state power was impersonal and public and at least formally not absolute, it implied a potentially democratic discourse, which both imperialists and nationalists tried to exploit to different ends.[9]

This section then examines some features of the changing political culture. Constitutional and non-constitutional politics are taken here to signify two styles of politics, of mediating within society and between society and the state. By constitutional politics we mean a political culture that was largely shaped by colonial expectations and by the interstices offered by the colonial state, and which reproduced those expectations in the vernacular. By non-constitutional politics we mean a political culture that tried to grow more autonomously, with an original cultural content and independent institutions that would provide spaces where colonial culture could be replaced by a national one.[10] This was also the way non-literate sections of society accessed the political public sphere, making their presence felt to literate elites.

[8] S. Kaviraj, 'On the Construction of Colonial Power: structure discourse hegemony', in Engels and Marks, eds., *Contesting Colonial Hegemony*, British Academic Press, London 1994, p. 21.
[9] See the section on 'The Colonial Context' in D. E. Haynes, *Rhetoric and Ritual in Colonial India.*
[10] This does not mean that they were not influenced by the 'colonial context', only that their self-representation was in self-consciously autonomous terms.

However limited, the colonial state did open some spaces for Indian participation and encouraged the formation and expression of 'Indian public opinion' to a certain extent. Indians co-opted through nomination belonged to two groups: they were either 'native chiefs', who were supposed to command the obedience of the masses, or western-educated, bilingual civil servants and professionals, often lawyers, who formed a burgeoning educated public opinion.[11] Since these limited constitutional proceedings were carried on in English,[12] bilingual professionals were advantaged over local notables who did not know the language. They became familiar with the official 'public idiom' both in speech and in writing, in order to understand and interact with the state machinery. These first politicians, of which Madan Mohan Mālavīya is an excellent example, would translate such concepts and language into the vernacular and publicly hold the state up against its own rules.[13] This was a creative process: in Mālavīya's case e.g. it involved espousing Britain's colonising mission to demand that the rule of the liberal state be applied to the Indian state, refuting Indians' incapacity for self-government,[14] and adducing scriptural evidence to argue that in fact self-rule existed in ancient India, i.e. that its demand by modern Indians was not imitative of British democracy.[15]

These politicians would claim to speak in the name of the 'general public' (*sarvasādhāraṇ*). However, as in the case of Hindi reformist intellectuals, the public they claimed to represent was still vaguely defined and intrinsically restricted. Also, they would raise their claims only in the spaces allowed by the colonial state; even *svarājya* was envisaged as a gradual reform and paternalistic democracy.[16] Finally, this style of constitutional politics self-consciously upheld boundaries between different areas of life and activity: there was the official public sphere of the board-assembly-law-court etc.; the civic public sphere, which could overlap with that of the community in religious and political

[11] Restricted franchise structurally limited participation in 'constitutional politics' before 1920 to landed and moneyed elites and to educated professionals, the latter often tied to the former as clients. Being an honorary magistrate, sitting on the local boards became a question of prestige and a way of securing a new venue of patronage and influence. Nomination was also considered a sign of official benevolence and was one way of showing the kind of 'public commitment' British authorities so appreciated; see C.A. Bayly, *The Local Roots of Indian Politics,* and D. Haynes, *Rhetoric and Ritual.*
[12] Actual participation at meetings was usually low, and it was occasionally remarked that notables or their courtiers who sat on them sometimes did not know English.
[13] E.g. each year the Chairman of the Municipal Board submitted the annual report to the Commissioner for comment (*samālocnā*). In 1920 The Kashi Central Ratepayers' Association submitted a similar detailed report 'on behalf of the general public' (*sarvasādhāraṇ kī aur se*), which the Banaras daily *Āj* translated in Hindi and published along several issues in September. *Āj*, 12 Sept. 1920 and ff.
[14] M.M. Mālavīya, 'Svarājya athvā pratinidhi śāsan-praṇālī', and 'Svarājya kī yogyatā aur uske sādhan', *Abhyuday*, 1907, in P. Mālavīya, ed., *Mālavīyajī ke lekh*, National Publishing House, Delhi 1962, pp. 62 ff.
[15] M.M. Mālavīya, 'Svarājya kī kalpanā', *Abhyuday,* 1907, *ibid.*, pp. 121-24.
[16] Despite the occasionally fiery tones, the kind of democratic participation Mālavīya requested was very limited. It was more important that the dialogue and cooperation with the government should not be discontinued. Mālavīya's choice to invite the Prince of Wales to B.H.U. in 1929 and confer upon him a title *honoris causa* while the Congress in the whole province boycotted the visit proves the point. See also below 6.3.

terms, and there was the sphere of the family-*birādarī*, each with its distinct idiom, ideology and behaviour.[17]

Successive constitutional innovations, motivated by the twin requirements of financial devolution and the need for a wider circle of Indian collaborators, partially enlarged the constitutional space, first at the local and then at the provincial level; gradually election supplanted nomination.[18] However insignificant, elections turned constitutional politics into more of a political arena; they forced candidates to turn to 'the public' and develop proper idioms in the vernaculars, carefully nuanced to match each particular audience.[19] Even 'traditional leaders' favoured by the policy of nomination now had to make active efforts to ensure their erstwhile influence,[20] while separate electorates favoured a politics and idiom of community interests.

When activists and leaders legitimized by the non-constitutional movement were elected to the boards and the provincial councils, these were saluted as popular victories in that they seemed to 'occupy the state'. However, the ability to master the idiom of constitutional politics remained a fundamental skill, a symbol of the bilingualism Indian politicians had to command. Although they insisted on certain signs of change (dress, the use of the vernacular, and of course ideology), Congressmen broadly adapted to the constitutional style. This involved a certain formality of countenance, obeisance to parliamentary rules and the ability to use the official idiom, albeit in the vernacular.[21]

[17] To take Mālavīya's example again, he advocated that Hindu interests were a cohesive whole and were compatible with the goal of the national *jāti*, but he opposed both official and unofficial interference with personal and family practices and beliefs. See below 6.3.

[18] For constitutional reforms, see S. Sarkar, *Modern India*. Briefly, the 1916 UP Municipalities Act and 1922 UP District Boards Act introducted election at the local level and had important consequences, especially in terms of expectations and opportunities, in raising elected local leaders. The 1919 Montagu-Chelmsford constitution introduced partly elective provincial legislatures; despite the extended franchise, its bias in favour of landowning classes ensured the return of a loyal majority. Also, the act provided representation without responsibility: certain subjects remained 'reserved' ('diarchy'); Governors had special powers of veto and 'certification' (i.e. to enact legislation refused by the Legislative Assemblies), and ministers were responsible to the governors and not to the assembly; G. Pandey, *Ascendancy of the Congress Party*, pp. 24 ff.

[19] E.g. it became a problem for C.Y. Chintamani, the renowned editor of *The Leader*, to campaign from a seat in Jhansi in 1920 without knowing any Hindi; finally he had to utter a few sentences in a restricted public meeting just to disavow criticism on this respect; V. Varmā, *Apnī kahānī*, pp. 55 ff.

[20] The concrete quandaries of this process are poignantly captured in the following incident, reported in the pro-Congress daily *Āj* in 1920 as 'A fight between *kṣatriyas* and non-*kṣatriyas*'. A local zamindar had called a 'public meeting' to ensure peasants support for his anti-Congress candidate, who tried to play the card of the solidarity between rural classes; however, since the meeting was public, it was open to contestation by local Congress supporters: one of them Nāgar stood up in protest and mentioned the satyagraha Gandhi had done for the peasants in Kheri and Champaran. The villagers started rumbling in agreement. At this point the chairman of the meeting declared it a *private* meeting: 'We have spent Rs. 1000' he said, 'this is our *praiveṭ mīṭiṅg*. It is us who decide whether to allow others to speak if we want to'. To this, other local activists stood up in protest and said that it was a public meeting and it was extremely despicable for them to stop or threaten anyone; *Āj*, 22 September 1920, p. 6.

[21] The first time Sampūrṇānand spoke in the UP Legislative Council after the 1926 elections, he began his speech in Hindi; 'the Speaker, Dr. Sita Ram, pulled me up, the rule being that unless a member was unable to speak in English, he must use that language. In my heart, I was thankful to the President, because I was anxious that what I was going to say should be understood by the

Expectations from Congress participation in constitutional politics were likely to exceed what circumstances allowed. However, with the emergence of popular and non-constitutional politics with Gandhi, criticism of the boards became structurally different. Whereas earlier criticism focused on individual malpractice, now it was the whole structure that came under fire. Hindi editor and Congress leader Śrīkṛṣṇadatt Pālīvāl noted in 1936 that popular opinion was very much against the Legislative Council, which it 'rightly' considered the 'temple of Māyā':

> The Councils are temples of Māyā because ostensibly (*pratyakṣ meṁ*) they are there to help people rule, to give the strings of power in the hands of their representatives; but actually they are there to fulfil the interests of the ruling and capitalist classes! The whole electoral procedure is a demonic Maya (*rākṣasī māyā*) from the beginning to the end. In our country not everybody has yet the right to vote. Those who have it are do not control the registration of names. As a result, there is quite a (*golmāl*) when the list of registers is made. This malpractice has reached its peak in Municipalities...[22]

Moreover, constitutional boards only appeared to make power public, hence transparent and accessible: 'In councils and assemblies one meets power and wealth face to face... [but] the rulers' rights are kept safe in a temple where representatives, like untouchables, are denied entry'.[23] Yet, after describing in detail the serious limitations to political activity within the assemblies and concurring with popular perception - they were a travesty (*svāṁg*) - Pālīvāl concluded that to 'enter the enemy's fortress' was a necessary part of the overall strategy for winning *svarājya*.[24] In fact, disappointment over the performance of elected Congress boards could be turned into an indictment of the conflict between 'our boards' and the alien state.[25]

Implied in this indictment and in the critique by Pālīvāl was the notion that legitimacy rested with the people, the 'true' nation shut outside the 'temples of Maya'. By

English members opposite. But as a Hindi writer I had to show preference to Hindi. I, therefore, protested mildly against the President's order and continued in English'; Sampurnanand, *Memories and Reflections*, Asia Publishing House, Bombay 1962, p. 46.

[22] K.D. Pālīvāl, M.A., MLA, 'Kaunsiloṁ dvārā svarājya', pp. 449-452.

[23] *Ibid.*

[24] 'There is no other way. Even Lenin reached this conclusion, even Gandhi has reached it now... We neither have or should have any hope in the councils; but we should also stop talking of boycott. Council-entry is a necessary evil, and with this in mind we should bear them'; *ibid.*

[25] As Premcand wrote when the Benares Municipal board was threatened with (and then administered) suspension for corruption in 1932, boards were still to be valued as a political space open for the public to exercise some degree of activity and power in the administration. Its achievements (e.g. in the field of education) were not to be belittled, and enthusiastic non-official members might always open the possibility of reform. 'Whatever progress there has been in Kāśī Municipality it happened during the period of the non-official (*gair-sarkārī*) board, and in my opinion the administration of a non-official board is always the best; at least it is not unrestrained (*niraṅkuś*)'. *Jāgaraṇ*, 21 November 1932, in Premcand, *Vividh prasaṅg*, vol. 2, p. 515. See also Paripūrṇānda Varmā's articles on the history of Kāśī Municipal Board since the Bhagvān Dās-led Congress board of 1923, revealing instances of official responsibility in sabotaging the elected board; *Āj*, February 1933.

taking on the fictitious persona of a 'shack-dweller' (*jhoṁpṛā vālā*), editor, poet and Congress activist Mākhanlāl Caturvedī voiced a plea to the 'farers on the national path' (*rāṣṭrīy path ke pathik*) entitled '*Ham jansādhāraṇ haiṁ*', 'We are the common people'. Through a travesty of the 'traditional' deferential attitude of the subordinate to the powerful,[26] he measured the distance between constitutional nationalists and the aspirations of the common people.

> Your Reform Bill has been passed, very well. We also speak your praises with great joy, but in our hut our wives ask us: 'will this new law bring us food to fill our stomachs?' We also believe that education is necessary, but education cannot fill an empty stomach!... Therefore, *mahātmās* with lofty ideals, we salute you. We thank you, all we have got is tears and we wash your feet with them, but nobody listens to our cry. You are clearing the road at the top. It will take centuries to reach the bottom. We don't have food to eat tomorrow, how can we wait patiently for centuries?[27]

The emphasis on the non-constitutional domain as the true sphere of the public had several implications. First of all, it gave a more marked political overtone to public sphere activities, from literature to the press, as mirrors of the political movement.[28] The Hindi political press for example showed a marked change from 'journals of ideas' for the educated few to newspapers rooted in the locality, reflecting and addressing the 'sādhāraṇ samāj'.[29] In fact, editors of political dailies were at the forefront of the process to popularize the Hindi public sphere.[30] Moreover, as editors were prosecuted and even jailed when censorship grew stricter along with repression during mass campaigns, the press became even more clearly identified with the movement.[31]

[26] 'दुखिया की आवाज़। जनसाधारण हौं हम निरे अज्ञान। सेवा करना ही है बस अभिमान। तुम नेता हो आतमबली मतिदान। हम दुखिया हैं रोते देते प्रान।' [This is the voice of a wretched man, a common, ignorant man, only proud to serve. You are the leaders, strongwilled and wise.] M. Caturvedī, 'Ham jansādhāraṇ haiṁ', *Karmavīr*, 14 Feb. 1920, in S. Jośī, ed., *Mākhanlāl caturvedī racnāvalī*, vol. 2, Vani Prakasan, Delhi 1983, pp. 13-14.

[27] *Ibid.*

[28] Premcand's political stories written at the time of both movements, which were extremely popular and which have since been criticised for simplistic didacticism, seem to fulfil exactly this double function: for the writer they are a way of putting his pen at the service of the movement, propagating its message; for the readers, they are a way of constructing meaning and value - alternative to that current in the social or political status quo - out of political actions and slogans. It is no chance that they often climax on moments of 'conversion' to nationalist allegiance, almost helping the reader to take the same step. See 'Lāg dānt' (The Competitors, July 1921), 'Cakmā' (A Little Trick, in *Prabhā*, Nov. 1922); 'Julūs' (The Procession, in *Hans*, March 1930); 'Samar-yātrā' (The Battle March, *Hans*, April 1930); now in Premcand, *Mānsarovar*, vol. 7, Sarasvati Press, Allahabad 1962.

[29] See B.V. Parāṛkar's presidential speech at the Sampādak Sammelan in 1925, quoted above in 2.3.

[30] The creative political role of editors such as G.Ś. Vidyārthī (*Pratāp* (1916) and *Prabhā* (1920), Kanpur), K.D. Pālīvāl (*Sainik*, Agra, 1925), M. Caturvedī (*Karmavīr*, Jabalpur, 1919), D. P. Dvivedī (*Svadeś*, Gorakhpur 1919), B.V. Parāṛkar (*Āj*, Banaras, 1920) etc. deserves separate study and cannot be understood as simple Congress propaganda or vernacular echo of national leaders. For an informative historical study see Brahmānand, *Bhārtīy svatantratā āndolan aur uttar pradeś kī hindī patrakāritā*, Vani Prakasan, Delhi 1986.

[31] For information on censorship and repression of the Hindi press after Civil Disobedience, see editorial note in *Sudhā*, IV, part 1, 3, October 1930, pp. 434-35.

A second implication was the greater emphasis on including larger sections of society into the movement, primarily peasants (see 6.2) and women (see chapter 4). 'Lets go to the villages' (*caliye gāṁvoṁ kī taraf*), urged G.Ś. Vidyārthī: 'whoever has to work should turn to the villages. Work in towns has already been done'.[32] In this effort of expansion, the vernacular and the vernacular press were especially called upon. The pre-Gandhian Congress was not spared either: if it really claimed to be the 'voice of the whole of India' (*saṃyukt bhārat kī āvāz*), 'now... those doors must be open which for some reason have been kept closed so far' wrote Vidyārthī:[33]

> Now the time has come for our political ideology and movement not to be restricted to the English-educated, and to spread among the common people (*sāmānya jantā*), and for Indian public opinion (*lokmat*) to be not the opinion of those few educated people, but to mirror the thoughts of all the classes of the country. When we agitate for *svarājya* we should not forget the principle of a famous political thinker, that democratic rule is actually the rule of public opinion. And one very important way of creating a wide informed public opinion is to use Indian (*svadeśī*) languages along with English for our political interactions and debates.[34]

As another consequence, the politics of the street came to be valued above the 'politics of the library'.[35] Already before 1920 in the United Provinces there had been clear signs of dissatisfaction with the moderate, constitutional Congress of the province.[36] During Non-Cooperation, joining the movement was expressed in terms of a battle (*laṛāī, saṅgrām*), an arena in which one 'jumped in' with *akhāṛā*-style metaphors. This introduced the question of crowd participation and crowd initiative.[37] As several historians have shown, while from the point of view of the common participants the experience of the crowd was an exhilarating one of empowerment, in which the crowd defied colonial authority and claimed legitimacy and authority for itself 'in the name of' (Gandhi, etc.), for Congress politicians the question of crowd control remained crucial: hence here elite and popular perceptions tended to come into conflict.[38] For women in particular, after *svadeśī* had

[32] *Pratāp*, 19.1.1925, in R. Avasthī, *Krānti kā udghoṣ*, vol. 2, p. 767.
[33] G.Ś. Vidyārthī's editorial, *Pratāp*, 11 Jan. 1915; *ibid.*, vol. 1, p. 103.
[34] Vidyārthī's editorial on the forthcoming Lucknow Congress, *Pratāp*, 3 July 1916; *ibid.*, vol. 1, p. 240.
[35] For an excellent example of an early satire of the nature and limitations of constitutional political culture as 'politics of the library', see the fifth scene of Bhārtendu Hariścandra's play *Bhārat durdaśā* (1880), in Ś. Miśra, ed., *Bhārtendu granthāvalī*, vol. 1, Nagari Pracarini Sabha, Banaras 1974.
[36] Hindi editors looked elsewhere, to Bengal and Mahārāṣṭra, for radicalism and heroic terrorism. Tilak's popularity among students, Hindi scribes and future politicians proves the case; e.g. both G.Ś. Vidyārthī and Narendra Deva claimed Tilak as the greatest political influence before Gandhi; see M.L. Bhargava, *Ganesh Shankar Vidyarthi*, Publications Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Delhi 1988, p. 53 and Keskar and Menon, eds., *Acharya Narendra Dev*, p. 25.
[37] See S. Amin, *Event, Metaphor, Memory, Chauri-Chaura 1922-1992*, Oxford University Press, Delhi 1995.
[38] G. Pandey, 'Congress and the Nation'; The role of rumours and slogans in assembling huge crowds and providing them with legitimacy and the conviction that they would face police bullets unharmed has also been remarked upon; see e.g. Vinita Damodaran, *Broken Promises*, p. 230. Again, they point against a vision of centralised Congress propaganda making use of local and popular idioms and

provided them with ways of being nationalist at home, crossing the threshold to take part in shop-picketing, demonstrations, etc. was a hugely liberating experience (first 4.4), and it was exactly the presence of a crowd, its emotional charge and its self-asserted legitimacy, that allowed individual women to take the first step and face the consequences. Similarly, the peasant leader Sahajānand Sarasvatī learned to take advantage of the emotional impact and *elan* generated by massive peasant rallies and demonstrations. Another implication of the non-constitutional style was then its tendency to cross boundaries and conflate publics. Nationalism came in many different symbolic acts and invested the whole person, in every sphere.

In fact, the reversal of values that Gandhi's idiom and ideology brought about - with its reversed hierarchy and the centrality of the *sarvasādhāraṇ*, its emphasis on self-sacrifice over worldly success and on 'Indianness' vs. modern/foreign culture - could not but play into the self-importance of Hindi activists and intellectuals.[39] At least in words, hierarchical bilingualism was devalued in favour of the vernacular, while in practice Congress itself remained a bilingual institution.

The trajectory of the Congress in the two decades under study in fact shows two opposite but concomitant trends. Non-constitutional politics became an important locus of legitimacy and of osmosis between the literary and the political sphere, and allowed access to new subjects and new publics. At the same time, constitutional politics remained the path to tread. In the Hindi political sphere this is mirrored in the fact that Hindi editors- and activists-politicians did manage to become prominent local and regional leaders and parliamentarians, often defeating traditional 'men of influence'. However, once they became entrenched in the constitutional arena, bilingualism prevailed, and their role as representatives of popular aspirations and public opinion shrank. Historians have explained this trend, particularly evident in the 1930s, as a necessary compromise for a party that aspired to represent all. For much of the Hindi intelligentsia, though, the experience was baffling, especially at the time of the Congress ministry: the time of the greatest constitutional success was also the time of the greatest distance between public opinion and the party.

To summarize, in the present section we tried to read the extraordinary changes in the political culture of north India during the period under study along the two co-ordinates of constitutional and non-constitutional political styles. As far as relationships between Hindi and English, attitudes to colonial and traditional authorities, to 'the public', to the Hindi literary intelligentsia and to political and social change are concerned, we noticed a

symbols; rather, what appears is a plethora or voices, addressing different publics. However, by the very fact that they circulated (at least partly) through print they were potentially read by anyone and could be reappropriated.

[39] For their own problems in identifying more than rhetorically with the 'common peasant', see below 6.2.

number of differences. While constitutional politics translated English political vocabulary into Hindi and fostered Hindi as a political language, but only within the bilingual hierachy, non-constitutional politics tended to (at least symbolically) refuse the bilingual hierachy and substitute English with the vernacular altogether. A certain success was achieved in this process, but enthusiasm for Hindi *rāṣṭrabhāṣā* tended to fuel the conflict with Urdu and overlook the difficulties in actually substituting English at the supra-regional level. Naturally, non-constitutional politics was also from the point of view of language and of linguistic affinity more accessible to Hindi intellectuals and publics.

As far as relationships with colonial and traditional Indian authorities are concerned, constitutional politics took, despite the occasionally fiery rhetoric, a mediatory, compromising stand; non-constitutional politics instead tended to take confrontational attitudes and establish within the nationalist movement counter-institutions, places and figures of counter-authority. Also, whereas constitutional politics upheld boundaries between separate spheres, trying to contain, so to say, the consequences of political change from spilling outside the official or public (civic) domain, non-constitutional politics tended to conflate boundaries, politicizing literature, the household, gender and social practices. Thus, while constitutional politicians aimed at political change without social change, at least at the bottom of society, non-constitutional politicians, socialists in particular, placed social change at the heart of their political agenda. Constitutional politicians tended to accept that the Indian public was divided in hierarchical layers, and believed that their own role was that of mediating between elites and the masses *as well as* between the colonial state and Indian society, and of educating, enthusing and guiding the popular public. Politicians and intellectuals who believed in non-constitutional politics, instead, saw their own role and that of the nationalist movement as on of 'breaking the chains' within Indian society itself, forging new relationships and empowering new subjects. As we have seen in the case of women, and as we shall see again in the case of peasants, it was in the non-constitutional domain that they would - enthusiastically - join the fray, while constitutional participation and representation remained negligible. In the following section we shall see to what extent this aim was cogently pursued in literature and in politics, and how peasants' participation in the nationalist arena transcended the role they were assigned and they became a political counter-public.

These are of course simplifications, in practice the two styles blended and overlapped: constitutional boards became a 'necessary evil' and even Mālavīya envisaged a measure of social change. The trajectory of the nationalist movement in the two decades shows both streams intertwining; at times one emerged more prominently than the other. In the end, bilingualism acted as a kind of bottle-neck for Hindi politicians, and parliamentary style was acknowledged as a necessary prerequisite to rule.

6.2 Peasants as subjects

The greatest strength of Hindi's claim vis-à-vis English was that Hindi's public included the entire Indian society, especially its bottom rungs. It was a claim that would overlap with the nationalist slogan of the 1920s that the Congress was a *kisan* Congress.[1] As in the case of women, attitudes toward the participation of peasants in the political public sphere were overtaken by the way peasants and their leaders formulated issues and claimed access in their own terms. This section traces intellectual and political attitudes toward the *kisans* before turning to the reformulation by one of the most important peasant leaders, Svami Sahajānand Sarasvatī (1899-?). As historians have shown, intellectual and political claims became problematic in the face of autonomous peasant activism and political agenda. Without going over terrain already tread by a number of recent studies, the question of peasants' access to the Hindi public sphere seemed an appropriate angle from which, firstly, show how the 'emancipatory language' of publicness became available to subaltern groups and gave rise to a distinct form and idiom of public sphere that questioned the notion of 'rural harmony'; secondly, to gauge the openness to, and impact of, such voices in the literary and political spheres; finally, to examine the indent of peasant activism in the constitutional and non-constitutional domains.

The special *Kisān aṅk* of the influential Allahabad weekly *Abhyuday* (November 1931) may provide a first glimpse of the range of positions, arguments and issues related to peasants and peasants' activism. Coming at the end of the Gandhi-Irwin truce and at the eve of the second phase of Civil Disobedience, the *Abhyuday* issue expressed a wholehearted and collective espousal of peasants' active participation in a nationalist campaign by urban Congress intellectuals and politicians.[2] This was reflected in the declaration that the nationalist movement, indeed world history, was entering a new phase with new political subjects. V.N. Tivārī's editorial called it a new chapter in which the *kisan* had come to occupy the centre-stage, after being absent "from the scriptures and histories of India'. The change from an '*a-kisān yug*' to a '*kisān-yug*' had brought about a complete reversal of

[1] For recent historical investigations into the claim, see G. Pandey, 'A Rural Base for Congress: The United Provinces 1920-1940', and 'The Congress and the Nation, c. 1917-47'; also V. Damodaran, *Broken Promises*.

[2] 'By reading this issue we guarantee that you will be able to speak confidently on the problem of peasants and to answer forcefully to any question (*mumh toṛ javāb*)' reads the frontispice. The issue included articles by '*pūjya* Mālavīyajī', P.D. Ṭaṇḍon, Kṛṣṇakānt Mālavīya (*Abhyuday's* editor), the pro-Congress taluqdars of Kalakankar and Bhadri, Sardar Narmadāprasād Siṃh, Mohanlāl Gautam (secretary of the Kisan Sangh), Lālbahādur Śāstrī (secretary of the Allahabad District Congress Committee), Thakur Śivmūrti Siṃh, Padmakānt Mālavīya, Śrīnāth Siṃh, and V.N. Tivārī, the editor of the issue. *Abhyuday*, XXV, 33, 18 November 1931.

values: thanks to Gandhi now 'Congressmen have started to consider rickety village charpoys more high and honourable than a Governor's chair'.[3]

The *'kisān yug'* provoked a plethora of stances among urban Hindi intellectuals: on the one side identification between the Congress and the *kisān* was not taken to mean a 'partiality' in their favour.[4] On the other side, the need was felt to control their initiative, as Mālavīya's moral appeal to peasants for self-control showed.[5] Peasants were identified as the 'true nation', and as such their struggle was to be against the colonial state.[6] While some stated that acknowledging the peasant as subject would lead to an economic and social agenda for *svarājya*,[7] others welcomed the ouvertures of pro-Congress taluqdars as a path to change without endangering 'rural' and 'social harmony'.[8] Only the secretary of the Kisan Sangh and future Congress Socialist member Mohanlāl Gautam believed that peasant struggles carried an autonomous political agenda and required an autonomous organization, a position later echoed by the Congress Socialist Party and the Kisān Sabhās.[9] Thus, there were conflicting views, pertaining to several layers: economic, symbolic, social, political. We shall now briefly trace their development and mutual interaction in the Hindi public sphere.[10]

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 9.

[4] See Sardār Narmadāprasād Siṃh: 'Congress is actually a peasants' institution (*saṃsthā*). About 70% of its members are *kisans*. The tahsil committees, which elect representatives for the higher committees, are completely in the hands of *kisḍns*. Therefore it is only natural that Congress should support the peasants so strongly. It is indeed praiseworthy that despite being an institution of the peasants, Congress has not advanced any request on behalf of the peasants moved by partiality (*pakṣpāt*).' N. Siṃh, 'Kisān aur congress', *ibid.*, pp. 13-14.

[5] Mālavīya urged peasants to be fearless, united, just, truthful and follow their dharma: 'धर्म मनुष्य का प्राण है। जिसका धर्म नहीं वह मरे के बराबर है इसलिए तुम अपने धर्म की रक्षा करो। धर्म तुम्हारा रक्षा करेगा।' [*Dharma* is the life-spirit of man. A man who has no *dharma* is like a lifeless being. Guard your own *dharma* and *dharma* will guard you]; *ibid.*, p. 1.

[6] P.D. Ṭaṇḍon's article e.g. was a rhetorical ode to the peasant as the 'life-energy of our country', and an equally rhetorical appeal to peasants to become martyrs facing police bullets along with Congressmen; P.D. Ṭaṇḍon, 'Jīnā ho to marnā sīkho', *ibid.*, pp.10-11.

[7] Tivārī and Narmadā Prasād Siṃh rebutted fears that peasant activism would lead to a class war by arguing that: *'zamindārī*-prathā is itself a class war... the present economic basis of society is class war'; *ibid.*, p. 14.

[8] Rai Bajraṅg Bahādur Siṃh, taluqdar of Bhadri, argued that both *kisans* and zamindars had been affected by the slump in prices, and that most zamindars were sorry to be compelled to harass their peasants in order to be able to pay the revenue. However, whereas earlier zamindars 'used to consider peasants the source of their wealth', now they considered themselves distinct (*alag*) from the *kisans*, and this was the root of the problem. This was sheer folly, and zamindars should quickly realize that peasants were their 'capital', which they should treasure as a moneylender treasures his; 'Kisān aur zamīndār' *ibid.*, pp. 5-6.

[9] M. Gautam raised the question of 'which *Svarājya*?' and went further along the vision of a democratic state where peasants, the majority, would rule. They should not be deceived into thinking that with *Svarājya* all their plight will disappear, and should instead organize into the Kisan Sangh to be ready to seize power after independence; Mohanlāl Gautam, 'Kisān saṅgaṭhan', *ibid*, pp. 15 ff.

[10] The use of the blanket term *'kisan'* is of course problematic; it seems that in the eyes of Hindi intellectuals of the 1920s and 1930s, many of them from eastern U.P., it indicated an impoverished peasant-farmer or tenant, or else an agricultural labourer who had lost his land. Every generalization on the score is problematic, particularly in view of the diverse rural conditions and relationships in the Hindi area. This may explain why Hindi intellectuals, several of them of distant peasant origins, never considered themselves remotely in those terms. In fact, any direct family links with the land

Surprisingly for a predominantly rural society and agricultural area, agriculture and the peasantry scarcely featured in the Hindi press before 1920. Even though debates on the 'drainage of wealth' and the need for comprehensive *deśonnati* had already crystallized in Hindi as in other Indian languages by the late nineteenth century, decline in agricultural productivity and rural wealth was touched upon only in the vaguest terms. Commerce, banking, etc. featured much more prominently, with arguments about the rich tradition of the Indian trading and banking system, the colonial drainage of wealth and the expansion of trade and industry as the principal means for *deśonnati*.[11]

Yet parallelly the impoverished condition of the peasantry started to feature in Hindi as a subject of poetry, a perfect example of the Dvivedī age's preference for topical, useful literature.[12] This was the beginning of a trend that saw many established and new poets compose heart-rending poems on peasants, often taking on the persona of the 'dejected peasant' crying out for sympathy and recognition to educated urban readers (hence the titles: *antarnād, krandan*). The language was usually standard Khari Boli, often in the lofty Sanskritized style typical of the Dvivedī period, i.e. without any particular attempt at reproducing peasants' speech or the language of folk-songs.[13] Among the features of these poems was firstly the impersonation. From being part of the background as mute

are hardly ever expatiated on. Even in Premcand's case, the closeness with the world of the peasant was the result of an active process of affiliation. See e.g. how the world of rural poverty was 'revealed' to Rāmnareś Tripāṭhī (1881-1962), who was *born* in a village in Jaunpur district, by an old woman waiting to sell the wood she had collected by the roadside. This encounter and revelation prompted Tripāṭhī to undertake his path-breaking and invaluable work of collecting folk-songs in Hindi dialects, published in 193o as *Grām-gīt*; the story is told in the Preface of the book. R.N. Tripāṭhī, *Grām-gīt*, Hindi Mandir, Allahabad 1930.

[11] See e.g. the long list of articles on political and economic subjects in pre-1920 *Sarasvatī*; H.P. Gauṛ, *Sarasvatī aur rāṣṭrīy navjāgaraṇ*. Mahāvīr Prasād Dvivedī was once again a forerunner in Hindi. In what was the first original work in Hindi on political economy, *Sampattiśāstra* (1907), Dvivedī outlined in a brief section the question of land productivity, capital (*sampatti*) and labour (*mehnat*), and explained the low output of Indian agriculture compared to that of western countries with the insecurity of tenure and the drainage of capital. Not surprisingly, the book was dedicated to a taluqdar, and among the causes of India's economic decline Dvivedī mentioned the '*purānāpan*' of Indians, and the lack of (English) qualities like thriftness, self-improvement, cleverness, lack of enterprise and investment etc. 'Wherever we look we find only signs of despair, very few of hope. The only sign of hope is that we have encountered a people who are unparalleled for trade and commerce; who have opened the doors to world trade; who have laid down railways throughout the country; who have no lack of capital, and who can never be praised enough for their courage, business skills, effort and enthusiasm. If we can learn some of their qualities and pay some attention to the improvement of our country's economy we can set right many of our problems' (p. 184). In the best Dvivedī style, the chapter ended with a list of things to do, things which can be done 'even without the help of the king'; M.P. Divedī, *Sampattiśāstra*, Indian Press, Allahabad 1907, p. 185.

[12] Gayāprasād Śukla 'Sanehī's poem 'Kṛṣak-krandan', published in *Pratāp* in 1913, attracted Dvivedī's attention, and Sanehī became a regular poet for *Sarasvatī*. It was there that his eight-page long poem 'Duḥkhī kisān' under the pen-name 'Triśūl' was published in April 1918; Dhīrendra Varmā, ed., *Hindī sāhitya koś*, vol. 2, Jnanmandal, Banaras, 1985, p. 116; see also V.B. Talvār, *Kisān, rāṣṭrīy āndolan*, p. 112.

[13] One notable exception was 'Achūt kī śikāyat' in Bhojpuri by an unidentified Hirā Ḍom from Patna, published in *Sarasvatī* in 1914 - the only example of a *dalit* poet (if he was one) in the whole of Hindi literature until the 1980s!

and anonymous servants, peasants started thus to become objects of literary attention.[14] Such impersonations however placed the peasant uncompromisingly as the object of an urban, affluent gaze. As Vīr Bhārat Talvār puts it, peasants were, albeit sympathetically, defined as 'wretched' and 'stupid' (*becāre* and *mūrkh*), silent and reduced to weeping, begging or waiting for god's help: in a word, they were denied agency.[15]

Secondly, poems combined the economic and emotional approaches.[16] The contrast between the plain life of the peasant and the wasteful life of the town-dweller overlapped with lamentations about the happy past and unhappy present. If this provided a powerful positive symbol and gave peasants moral stature, making them the truest representatives of anti-British India and the ideal *satyagrahis,* it also helped creating an idyllic rural world, easily identified with Kṛṣṇa's pastoral idyll of Braj, where any trace of exploitation or impoverishment was absent.[17] Thus Mukuṭdhar Pāṇḍey, an important pre-Chāyāvād poet, could speak (no irony implied) of the expropriation of the peasant's wealth in terms of the peasant's 'generosity' (*audārya*), of his deprivation as asceticism (*tapasyā*), of his submission to insults as a mark of moral superiority.[18]

Overall, we can detect a hiatus between increasingly poignant and political analyses of the reasons behind peasants' impoverishment, and guiding ideals of social harmony and morality. In the first case, from the late 1910s discussions started changing from theoretical discussions on land productivity and drainage of wealth to a greater focus on the peasant as

[14] We may recall here the debate around the peasants as 'intrinsically' uninteresting characters in Premcand's *Premāśram*, see above 2.4. See Maithilīśaraṇ Gupta's verses concluding the section on '*Kṛṣi aur kṛṣak*' (Agriculture and the peasant) in the second part of *Bhārat bhārtī:* 'पाठक! न यह कह बैठना - छेड़ा कहाँ का राग है। यह फुल कैसा है कि इसमें गन्ध है न पराग है। है यह कथा नीरस तदपि इसमें हमारा भाग है॥' [Reader! Do not say I have chosen a strange tune, a flower without perfume or pollen. It is an ugly story, but we are part of it.] M. Gupta, *Bhārat bhārtī* (1912), p. 98.

[15] V.B. Talvār, *Kisān, rāṣṭrīy āndolan,* pp. 147 ff. Even 'Triśūl', the most vocal and radical poet on the theme, wrote as follows: 'कौन सुनेगा, दीन जनों की राम कहानी । दीनबन्धु भी भूल गए वह बात पुरानी। रहे बहुत दिन मौन सही सबकी मनमानी। आँखों से बह गया धैर्य हो-होकर पानी॥कल न सही, तो काल ही किसी तरह कट जाएगा। रोएंगे कुछ देर तो कुछ तो दुख घट जाएगा॥' [Who will listen to poors' tale of woe? Even god (the friend of the poor) has forgotten their old story. They were silent for long, bore all injustice, and all their patience was washed away in tears. If not tomorrow, Time will surely come; weeping will lessen the pain.] *Sarasvatī*, April 1919, quoted *ibid.*, p. 149.

[16] In fact, it is again in Maithilīśaraṇ Gupta's influential poem (see 3.1.) that we find the economic and the emotional approaches combined: after a discussion of rural impoverishment that followed closely Dvivedī's argument, Gupta depicted as in a '*jhāṃkī*', a *tableaux,* the helpless plight of the *kisans.* Implied in such heart-rending depictions is the notion that the pitiful sight (*karuṇ dṛśya*) of peasants' plight will be enough to shake the affluent town-dwellers out of their indifference and to affect change.

[17] As poet Gopālsiṃh Nepālī wrote in *Sarasvatī* as late as 1932, in the countryside one found many Tulsīs, Kabīrs, Sūrs, Gopāls and Gandhis. Here lay the true Bhāratvarṣa of the past and the true Hindustan of the future; quoted in Ś.N. Caturvedi, ed., *Sarasvatī hīrak jayantī viśeṣāṅk*, Indian Press, Allahabad 1959, pp. 88-89. See Puruṣottam Dās Ṭaṇḍon writing in the special 'Kisān aṅk' of *Abhyuday* in November 1931: 'Our hearts break when we read of the happy condition of villages in the ancient texts of our country, or we read the tales of Gokul and Vrindaban, when we read how happy villagers lived in the Hindu and Muslim periods and compare them with today's sight', p. 10.

[18] M. Pāṇḍey, 'Kisān', *Mādhurī*, VI, pt. 2, 1, February 1928, p. 333.

an economic and political subject.[19] 'The much-despised peasants are our true *annadātā*' wrote Vidyārthī in May 1915, 'not those who consider themselves to be a special kind of people and look down upon those who have to live in toil and poverty as lowly beings'.[20] Champaran seemed to open a new chapter and marked a new awareness and interest in rural conditions in the Hindi press. Not only 'for the first time peasants became an issue on a wide scale in the bourgeois public sphere'; issues directly relevant to them like indebtment, forced labour and the general absence of legality were raised and discussed for the first time.[21] Explicit parallels were drawn between the awakening Indian peasantry and the successful Russian revolution, and the need for a broad peasant movement in India was expressed.[22] Similarly, the agitation in Bijaulia in 1919 and the movement in Avadh in 1920-22 received wide echo in the Hindi press, with particular focus on zamindars' oppression and peasants' demands.[23]

The event of the 1920-22 peasant movements in fact show a section of the Hindi nationalist press and of Congress activists turning decisively towards socialism and engaging directly in peasant and labour organisation.[24] In the 1930s, as tracts and articles show, arguments and vocabulary on the peasants' issue would become decidedly socialist, using

[19] In fact, articulate analyses of rural economic conditions in the province were produced in Hindi even before the Avadh movement: e.g. Gaṅgādhar Pant, 'Avadh ke zamīndār aur kaśtakār', *Sarasvatī*, June-July 1918; quoted in V.B. Talvār, *Kisān, rāṣṭrīy āndolan*, pp. 113-14.

[20] G.Ś. Vidyārthī's editorial 'Hamāre annadātā', *Pratāp*, 31 May 1915; also 'Āgāmī kaṅgres', 16 Dec. 1918; R. Avasthī, ed., *Krānti kā udghoṣ*, vol. 1, pp. 52, 448. See also *Pratāp's Rāṣṭrīy aṅk* (Vijayadaśmī 1917), with an important article under the pseudonym 'Dhruv' on 'Bhārtīy kisān'. The 'intellectual geography' of this awakened interest in peasant issues had its centres in Kanpur, with the Urdu journals *Zamānā* and *Āzād*, with *Pratāp* and the Pratap Press; Allahabad, with Kṛṣṇakānt Mālavīya's *Abhyuday* and *Maryādā*, *Sarasvatī*, C.Y. Chintamani's *Leader* and Nehru's *Independent*; Banaras with *Āj* and the Jnanmandal Press, and Indore with *Hindī navjīvan* and the Sarasvati Sadan Press; V.B. Talvār, *Kisān, rāṣṭrīy āndolan*, p. 110. Gaṅgādhar Pant, Dayāśaṅkar Dūbe, Prāṇnāth Vidyālaṃkār and Ramāśaṅkar Avasthī were the most prominent writers on peasant questions in Hindi. They were also among the first to write about the Russian revolution and the coming of 'the age of the masses'. Prāṇnāth Vidyālaṃkār was a Gurukul Kangri graduate, a professor of economics at B.H.U. and the author of several tracts and books on economics, rural issues and bolshevism. For a detailed discussion, see *ibid.*

[21] *Ibid.*, pp. 108 ff.

[22] See e.g. articles by R. Avasthī in *Maryādā*: 'Rūsī kisān: āgāmī ādarś' (Sept. 1919); 'Rūsī mazdūr: āgāmī viśvakarmā' (Dec. 1919); 'Rūsī sainik: svatantra rāṣṭrarakṣak' (Feb. 1920); quoted *ibid.*

[23] *Pratāp's* coverage of the Avadh movement and of the Munshiganj firing led to a libel case and a six-months conviction for Vidyārthī that were widely publicized in the press. The photographs of killed and wounded *kisans* in *Prabhā* must have left a deep impression and recalled images of Jallianwala Bagh, an epoch-making event in Indian photo-journalism.

[24] In Kanpur, the '*Pratāp* family' founded a Congress ashram at village Narwal after campaigning with anti-zamindari speeches and agitation in the early 1920s. The ashram would provide a training ground for volunteers for the salt *satyagraha*, and trained members of the Hindustani Seva Dal spread in the villages; M.L. Bhargava, *Ganesh Shankar Vidyarthi*, pp. 75 ff. Graduates of Kāśī Vidyāpīṭh like Hariharnāth Śāstrī, Kamlāpati Tripāṭhī etc. became, like their teachers Narendra Dev and Sampūrṇānand, early Congress Socialist Party members. Both in 1921 and at the time of Civil Disobedience they toured villages for propaganda. In Bihar, Hindi intellectuals like Rāmvṛkṣa Benīpurī, Rāhul Sāṅkṛtyāyan, and later Vaidyanāth Miśra Nāgārjun were involved in Kisān Sabhā activities; the first was among the founders of the Congress Socialist Patry (CSP) while the latters joined the Communists around 1940. Benīpurī's weekly *Yuvak* (Patna, 1929) became the organ of the CSP in Bihar, while Narendra Dev edited the monthly *Saṅghars* (1939) from Lucknow.

categories such as labour (*mehnat*), means of production (*auzār, sādhan*), natural resources (*kudratī cīzeṁ*) and capitalism (*pūñjivād*). In this changed perspective peasants and workers - as labourers and producers - became central subjects, while zamindars and capitalists alike were harmful parasites and should be divested of all authority and control.

> Nowadays there are only two *jātis*: that of patels, zamindars, thakurs, nawab-rajas or rais, contractors, shopkeepers, money-lenders, bankers, house-owners, factory-owners or dalals, agents, lawyers and officers, and that of the poor: *kisans* and *mazdurs*.[25]

This view was to take institutional form in 1934 with the creation of the Congress Socialist Party, whose aims included forming a pressure group within Congress to enact pro-*kisan* and *mazdur* policies, and organizing peasants and workers in the non-constitutional sphere.[26] Significantly, Hindi politicians - Acharya Narendra Dev, Sampūrṇānand, J.P. Nārāyaṇ, etc. - formed the large majority of Congress socialist leaders in the United Provinces and Bihar. Although their political loyalty ultimately rested with Congress, they would be instrumental in bringing Kisān Sabhās witin the Congress fold and mediating between them and the hostile party leadership.

On the other hand, as we saw in an earlier section, the idea of an inherently conflicting society did not square well with prevailing notions about the harmony of Indian (Hindu) society (see 3.3). This social ideal, placed either in pre-British or in pre-Muslim India, provided a positive counterpoint to both the present state of Indian society and to foreign modern societies torn by social and class struggles. A similar vision of rural harmony continued to exist in the Hindi sphere even after the peasants movements around 1920 brought to the fore the existence of rural exploitation, as some of the articles in *Abhyuday* showed above. In this context Rāmcandra Śukla's article on 'Non-cooperation and non-mercantile classes' (*Express*, Patna, 1921) acquires peculiar interest, although it has only recently come to light.[27] Śukla's rare foray into direct political debate is particularly relevant because, through a critique of Non-Cooperation, it explicits a point of view implicit in most articles on 'rural harmony' i.e. the negation of separate, conflicting interests and subordination. The centrality of the small, impoverished zamindar as subject, rather than his tenant and labourer, led Rāmcandra Śukla to lay the fault at the feet of land

[25] Anon., *Ham bhūkhe naṅge kyoṁ haiṁ?* (1935), p. 5. See also Premcand's famous last article, 'Mahājanī sabhyatā', written in June 1936, in which he reached a similar conclusion; Premcand, *Maṅgalsūtra tathā anya racnāeṁ* (1946).
[26] See Girja Shankar, *Socialist Trends in Indian National Movement*, Twenty-First Century Publishers, Meerut 1987.
[27] A Hindi translation in the Gorakhpur journal *Sākṣātkār* has sparked off a debate over Rāmcandra Śukla's ideology; for lack of either the original article or the translation, here we quote from Talvār's discussion of it in 'Asahyog aur avyāpārik śreṇiyāṁ: rāṣṭrīy āndolan aur rāmcandra śukla', in V.B. Talvār, *Rāṣṭrīy navjāgaraṇ aur sāhitya: kuch prasaṅg, kuch pravṛttiyāṁ*, Himachal Pustak Bhandar, Delhi 1993.

commercialization, 'that hateful mercantilism', which he expressed in terms of a dangerous mixture (*saṅkara*) of the two neat classes of pre-colonial society: mercantile and non-mercantile, the latter comprising both agrarian and service classes. Earlier each class had kept to its place and had not interfered with the other's sphere: 'in this way, there was complete balance in society... Clerical and agrarian classes were content with what they earned according to their position or share of land' (pp. 27-28). The ensuing interference, along with excessive extraction of land revenue, ruined 'agricultural classes', zamindars and peasants alike.[28]

Śukla thus viewed the tie-up between nationalist workers and peasants' agitations with extreme suspicion as a step towards social conflict and social chaos, which he uncompromisingly portrayed as a kind of Kāliyuga. In this Kāliyuga, spearheaded by the two-headed monster of individualism and capitalism, students would learn to disobey their masters, labourers to disobey their landlords; *maryādā* would have no place and the result would be total disruption. Therefore, to keep the boundaries of *maryādā* very clear was of utmost importance. The solution to rural impoverishment lay for Śukla in a programme of economic *unnati* with no social or economic cost; any social change needed would and should be accomplished by mutual goodwill (p. 52).

By contrast, the peasant leader Svami Sahajānand Sarasvatī would present a stringent critique of all half-hearted, rhetorical political espousals of the peasants cause. Through his reflections and his career we may see the emergence of a peasant counter-public, and gain an insight into the transformation, the cultural step that was required in order to support the peasant as a full political subject. To this aim, we shall analyse Sahajānand's changing attitudes to 'rural harmony', to Gandhian nationalism, to the Congress and to *kisan* struggles and their place in the nationalist movement.[29]

Sahajānand's first foray into public activism, as is well known, regarded supporting Bhumihars' claim to Brahmin status.[30] Soon he started reading newspapers, and after a meeting with Gandhi in 1919 and Nagpur Congress he joined Non-Cooperation as a '*kaṭṭar gāndhīvādī*'.[31] His faith in Gandhi would survive many disillusionments over the latter's compromising stance on peasants-zamindars relations.[32] Yet, years later he would warn the

[28] This analysis provided the background for Śukla's negative assessment of Non-Cooperation. He saw it as an attempt by the mercantile class to wring control over the agricultural class, and called Gandhi's programme a 'vague programme', a 'superficial revolt', 'a mere hullabaloo in which people were taking part thoughtlessly'. Thus individualism, the product of western education, which 'has filled the minds of our youth with ideas of individual freedom that kill all sense of social and moral discipline' was another factor. *Ibid.*, pp. 34-36.

[29] For biographical details, see Appendix. For a description of his intellectual trajectory from Sanskrit education to 'social work' among Bhumihars, and from there to Non-Cooperation and peasant politics, see his autobiography, *Merā jīvan saṅgharṣ*, Progressive Publishing House, Delhi 1985.

[30] *Ibid.*, pp. 97 ff.

[31] *Ibid.*, p. 118.

[32] 'Well, those days I did not know what compromise, reform and revolutionary meant exactly. Nor did I know that Gandhiji was a *samjhautāvadī* (compromisor) and a reformist. I considered him a

kisans to preserve independent discrimination and not to 'be infatuated' (*laṭṭū*) with the aura of self-sacrifice around leaders, but rather test them on the touchstone (*kasauṭī*) of peasants' interests.[33]

Sahajānand's gradual political education and disillusionment with the Gandhian politics of compromise went hand in hand with his growing disenchantment with the notion of rural harmony.[34] Once again, the disenchantment was forced upon him by experience; thanks to his commitment to justice and the tools of publicity, he resisted zamindars' attempts at 'domesticating' him and fitting him in a hierarchical, client-like relationship. The way this happened is worth noticing, and full of implications for our argument on the public sphere, in that it shows both the emancipatory potential of publicness and its limitations in the face of persisting differences in status. In his first foray into peasants politics, at a public meeting Sahājanand would successfully contrast zamindar attempts at creating a bogus Kisān Sabhā to ensure changes in the legislation that would favour them. Sahajānand intervened and managed to disrupt the meeting and stop the move by appealing to rules (*qāydā*) and insisting on a public, widespread debate among peasants to obtain their opinion.[35] But although Sahajānand successfully rebutted an attempt to override *qāydā* with the zamindars' personal authority in direct public confrontation, zamindars and their client-politicians were more successful in influencing Congressmen in the constitutional arena of the Legislative Council, both in passing the bill and later in the event of elections.[36] Sahajānand was to have a similar experience with a 'nationalist' industrialist, Ramkrishna Dalmia.[37]

revolutionary through and through, as many good and reasonable people still consider him even now'; *ibid.*, p. 224. The final disillusionment came after the Bihar earthquake, when Sahajānand, already a peasant leader, witnessed the systematic misuse and profiteering of relief funds by zamindars with the connivance of Congress leaders. When he confronted Gandhi with this evidence, he received only vague reassurances that the pro-Congress secretary of the maharaja of Darbhanga would redress those complaints. Sahajānand was shocked: 'I realized that he does not know a thing of how the zamindari machinery works! He did not know how they tread on the *kisans*.' *Ibid.*, p. 259.

[33] 'Not to think of one's interests (*hitāhit*) and fall for someone else's sacrifice and believe in what he says with closed eyes amounts to suicide. We should stop the blind tradition and enquire earnestly after whatever leaders or preachers say, after testing it against our collective interest (of peasants and workers). Not only that, we should sometimes embarrass leaders who present us with long arguments, as people in Russia and other countries have done from time to time'. Sahajānand, *Kisān ke dost aur duśman*, Bihta 1942, p. 4.

[34] In fact, the first peasant organisation he was involved in, the West Patna Kisān Sabhā (March 1929) aimed at tenant-landlord compromise: 'to guide the peasant movement in such a manner as to prevent landlord-tenant struggle and help the Congress in elections to the legislative council'. Immediately after the first meeting in 1929, it was decided that the Kisān Sabhā would not go against the Congress on political matters; Rakesh Gupta, *Bihar Pesantry and the Kisan Sabha (1936-1947)*, People's Publishing House, Delhi 1982, pp.89, 90.

[35] In another instance, Sahajānand attempted a mediation with a Gaya landlord, the Raja of Amavan, to solve reported *kisan* grievances; when he finally realized that the Raja was only trying to delay and silence him into submission, he turned to the public and published his report as *Gayā ke kisānoṁ kī karuṇ kahānī*, and thereafter always suspected 'zamindars' tricks'; Sahajānand, *Merā jīvan saṅghar*ṣ, pp. 248-50.

[36] *Ibid.*, p. 242.

[37] Dalmia had set up a sugar-mill at Bihta, next to Sahajānand's ashram in 1932 and tried to influence Sahajānand both through personal pressure and 'traditional' patronage through his family.

In *Kisānoṁ ke dost aur duśman* (1942), Sahajānand would further produce a radical critique of the notion of rural harmony from a peasant's perspective. He first denied the legitimacy of zamindari with an historical argument, and then denounced the connivance between the seemingly impersonal and impartial power of colonial rule and the violent, unrestrained personal power of zamindars: zamindari survived in defiance of all laws only thanks to the excess of violent power and with the active help of the colonial system. 'If the violence and oppression are stopped zamindari cannot stand even for one minute.' It was in fact the zamindar, rather than the distant colonial rule, the real *sarkar* of the *kisan*; those who hesitated to fight against zamindari did not want to confront this reality.[38]

In Sahajānand's words, the basic difference between the Congress and Kisān Sabhā view on the matter was that 'whereas the Congress sees the economic policy and *roṭī* reflected through the mirror of politics, and reaches them only through politics, the Kisān Sabhā sees politics in the mirror of the economic policy and *roṭī* and considers it only a medium'.[39] A Kisān Sabhā slogan said: 'Only a *kisan-mazdur* state is the true *svarājya*'.[40] Sahajānand's words and the slogan contained two predicates: one about the primacy of economic change in defining the agenda of *svarājya*, the other about full civil and political rights for peasants and labourers.

Sahajānand's view of the peasant as subject also led him to a growing awareness of the peasant as a complex category, including impoverished landlords, well-to-do peasants and landless labourers, subjects with conflicting interests.[41] Also, his understanding of economic and practical issues was coupled with an understanding of their cultural and

He first offered unlimited *candā* for the ashram in exchange of help in getting land for the mill from the local zamindars. Sahajānand's reply was: 'Should I be a servant or a slave of the mill-owners, or become their courtier?.. I might do it if I consider it my duty, but certainly not for greed of money. I piss on such money.' *Ibid.*: 277. Ostensibly, the mill, who had Rajendra Prasad among its directors, was going to be an ideal 'swadeshi mill', with all facilities and fair treatment for the workers and their families. In reality, it started paying peasants even less for their sugarcane than the English mill; Sahajānand then proceeded to organise the local peasants on this issue, and after 'tens of notices and hundreds of meetings' he managed to fetch higher prices for their sugarcane. Subsequent strikes in 1936, 1938 and 1939 saw Sahajānand again take the side of workers and peasants against the 'nationalist' capitalist; *ibid.*, pp. 280-81. Again, despite successful resistance and activism on behalf of the workers 'on the field', Sahajānand was unable to overpower Dalmia in the constitutional or party arena: Dalmia was a major financer for the Congress campaign for the 1937 provincial elections and prevailed over Sahajānand in chosing Congress candidates; see V. Damodaran, *Broken Promises*, p. 62.

[38] Sahājanad Sarasvatī, *Kisānoṁ ke dost aur duśman*, pp. 7, 10.

[39] Sahajānand, *Merā jīvan saṅghaṛ*, p. 324.

[40] Sahajānand, *Kisānoṁ ke dost aur duśman*, p. 32.

[41] The need to address this question in depth and adjust Kisān Sabhā and nationalist policies accordingly is expressed among others in his pamphlet *Khetmazdūr*, which deals expressively with the need to include rural labourers in the Kisān Sabhā and Congress view of the nation, and the problems related to it. Translated and edited with notes by Walter Hauser as *Sahajanand on Agricultural Labour and the Rural Poor*, Manohar, Delhi 1994.

religious aspects. In both cases, he distinguished between points one could compromise on and basic economic and civil rights that had to be ensured for all.

Lastly, Sahajānand came to realize more and more the importance of autonomous peasant initiative and sustained activism. We already mentioned Sahajānand's warning that *kisans* should subject their avowed leaders to 'strict control', pointing to a genuine belief in the democratic principle of limited, publicly answerable power.[42] Similarly, he came to the understanding that since one of the greatest strengths of peasants was their number, it was important that they should be *seen*, i.e. physically occupy public space and loudly claim their right to access. The first mass *kisan* rally at Gaya saw hundreds of thousands peasants cramming the city despite obstruction by the police; in 1937 and 1938 several mass rallies took place in Patna and other centres at the height of a struggle during the Congress ministry. To protest against their exclusion from representation in constitutional politics, peasants went right into the Assembly house in Patna and occupied its seats for some time in the first session under the Congress ministry.[43] When Rajendra Prasad told Sahajānand to 'be aware of the mob' after the first mass rallies in Patna, Sahajānand reflected:

> These are the same people who used to call the *kisān samūh* (multitude of peasants) *mass* once. Now it has become *mob*! These groups of *kisans* were *mobs* before, too. For some time they became *masses* for some purpose, and then the *mob* became *mob* again![44]

Thus, the problem of how to accommodate this non-constitutional activism within the framework of constitutional politics remained; the attempt to legitimize it within the Congress seems to have largely failed. It was in fact during the Congress ministry that the distance between the Congress leadership and Socialists-cum-Kisan Sabhaites grew to the extreme. The failure was to have important consequences. As Damodaran remarks: 'The realization that the Congress government was at least willing to protect them as the colonial state had been was a factor that strengthened the psychological and practical position of the

[42] Once again, it was experience that brought home to him the necessity for a peasant leader to be answerable to the peasants first and foremost: when he refrained from speaking at the first mass *kisān* rally in Gaya in 1933 after being issued a notice under Section 144, he was scolded by *kisans* who had assembled in their hundreds of thousands. 'They were right. After all they were my masters, my lords, and they should give orders. Inside me, I was very happy to see that they would not leave anyone alone. See, today they are angry at me. This is right, until they will be ready to nag and slap their leaders they will not be free. Therefore that day I welcomed that attitude of theirs with all my heart.' Sahajānand, *Merā jīvan saṅghars*, p. 263.

[43] G.D. Birla, who was present, commented that 'the rank and file seems to be confusing freedom with discipline'; quoted in S. Sarkar, *Modern India*, p. 364. At the second All India Kisān Sabhā Conference in Faizpur in 1936, for the first time peasants marched 'in a military fashion' through the countryside. This was repeated at all Congress sessions: at the Haripura Congress in Gujarat in 1938, twenty thousand peasants marched and held a public meeting in Congress Nagar defying Patel's orders; Sahajānand, *Merā jīvan saṅghars*, p. 325.

[44] *Ibid.*, p. 299, italics in English in the text.

landlords immensely'.[45] Later, even the drawing of the zamindari abolition scheme was to be decisively influenced by compromisory attitudes, harking back to a vision of rural harmony and of economic *unnati* without social conflict or cost.[46]

To summarize, this section traced the gradual acknowledgement of peasants as literary, economic and political subjects: the nationalist movement and literature had to include them if they were to be truly 'national'. Moreover, peasants provided, especially for Hindi writers, a symbolic identification with the true nation. However, the distance between symbolic identification and controlled political participation on the one side, and full recogniton of their agency on the other emerged whenever peasants became autonomous, political and contesting subjects.[47] By the 1930s there appeared a pattern by which socialist ideas and analyses and radical programmes were advanced both in the press and within Congress, thanks to the combined pressure of Jawaharlal Nehru and of Congress Socialists, and yet little actual change accrued.[48] This, as historians have repeatedly pointed out in, was due both to 'Right-wing' opposition within Congress,[49] but also to the restraining influence even leftist national Congress leaders exerted on *kisan* activism.[50]

The two things may not be unrelated, and may have to do with the gradual primacy of constitutional politics over the non-constitutional domain. G. Pandey has argued e.g. that Nehru's attitude, which we may extend to Socialist leaders as well, moved from one of 'discovery' of the peasantry and keenness to see them as the bulwark of the movement, to one of 'making' the peasantry a part of the nation, subsumed in the overall project.[51] Thus, his strong pro-*kisan* attitude vis-à-vis British authorities, landlords and the Right of the

[45] V. Damodaran, *Broken Promises*, p. 153. G. Pandey remarks about UP around the same time that 'even if socialist slogans were more loudly mouthed, new Congress membership [came] from ranks of rich peasants and small and small and middle landlords... Thus, the same year the CSP was formed and gained a substantial following among UP Congress leaders, the UP Congress also restaked its claims to being a landlord-cum-tenant party in the campaign for elections to the central Legislative Assembly'; G. Pandey, 'Rural Base for Congress', p. 217.
[46] See P. Reeves, 'The Congress and the Abolition of Zamindari in Uttar Pradesh'.
[47] Several historians have remarked on the independent use of the name of Gandhi and of other Congress leaders to legimitize autonomous peasants' protests; see e.g. a handbill in Hindi bearing J. Nehru's signature and urging peasants to take up the campaign of *Svarājya* in their own hands, distributed at Pushkar Fair in November 1931, included in S. Gopal, ed., *Selected Works of Jawaharlal Nehru*, vol. 5, Orient Longman, New Delhi 1973, p. 179; see also S. Amin, 'Gandhi as Mahatma'. The rich popular nationalist literature of songs, *bhajans*, pamphlets etc. can be taken as evidence of such popular urge, rather than of party propaganda; the subject, however, requires separate study.
[48] For a discussion of the making of an agrarian programme and the emerging of a consensus around zamindari abolition, see G. Pandey, 'A Rural Base for Congress'; Girja Shankar, *Socialist Trends in Indian National Movement (Being a Study of the Congress Socialist Party)*, Twenty-First Century Publishers, Meerut 1987; P. Reeves, 'The Congress and the Abolition of Zamindari in Uttar Pradesh', in J. Masselos, ed., *Struggling and Ruling. The Indian National Congress 1885-1985,* Oriental University Press, London 1987; V. Damodaran, *Broken Promises.*
[49] 'The years 1935 and, particularly, 1936, saw the emergence of a pattern in Indian politics which would be repeated often, both before and after Independence. Outwardly, all the signs were of a significant lurch to the Left... Yet, in the end the Right within the Congress was able to skillfully and effectively sidestep and utilize the storm...'. S. Sarkar, *Modern India, 1917 to 1947*, p. 338.
[50] G. Pandey, 'A Rural Base for Congress', p. 199.
[51] G. Pandey, 'The Congress and the Nation'.

Congress was combined to a self-appointed role of representation and responsibility. However, the responsibility he first felt towards the faith (*bharosā*) peasants had placed in them was overcome by a responsibility towards law and order and to the 'higher goal' of political *svarājya*. This implied a (paternalistic) attitude of political guidance, discipline and education towards peasant masses. As Narendra Dev put it: 'these ignorant people trampled upon by tyranny and sunk deep in superstition know only one way out and that is to rush headlong into riotous conduct, and then the Government makes short shrift of them. It is only the revolutionary intelligentsia that can organise them for disciplined action'.[52]

With Sahajānand, however, we saw the emergence of a powerful peasant's voice and critique of *svarājya*. The experience of the Kisān Sabhā in Bihar did manage to provide a non-constitutional space for peasants voices, demands and autonomous political initiative, and changed the political and cultural environment of the area for good. Yet, despite the formation, at least in certain areas of Bihar, of a kind of peasant counter-public, the question of constitutional representation of *kisans* remained unresolved.

Why did peasants' aspirations and their faith (*bharosā*) in nationalist politicians meet with only limited response? Several answers have been suggested by recent historians.[53] In general terms, the ideal of 'social harmony' and 'rural harmony', and the Congress claim to represent all classes, diluted peasants' demands and pre-empted them of autonomous political legitimacy, reducing them to economic struggles.[54] Moreover, in putting forward an argument and agenda of peasant politics, Sahajānand encountered what he called the 'taint of unanimity' within Bihar Congress, and spoke derisively of its political culture that discouraged internal dissent.[55]

Secondly, we may indicate the internal trajectory and the bi-lingual logic of the constitutional path Congress followed. This made the question of *bharosā* and responsibility

[52] Narendra Dev, 'Socialism and the Nationalist Movement', Presidential Address and the First Socialist Conference in Patna, May 1934; in N. Dev, *Socialism and the National Revolution*, Padma Publications, Bombay 1946, p. 7.

[53] We may recall here Gyan Pandey's remark about Jawaharlal Nehru's perception of Baba Ramcandra's mobilisation of the peasantry in 1920 Avadh. What Nehru perceived as Ramcandra's 'shifting the responsibility to others' was, in Ramcandra's view, the attempt to link their *kisan* movement with a more established, far-reaching and effective organization; G. Pandey, 'The Congress and the Nation', p. 15.

[54] Thus, peasant struggles in Bihar during the Congress ministry were considered at best narrow, economic struggles, at worst 'anti-national'; G. Pandey, 'The Congress and the Nation', p. 19; see V. Damodaran: Congress leadership 'increasingly... dissociated itself from these popular movements, first by condemning the actions as resulting from the machinations of the Congress socialists, and then actively suppressing them with all the instruments of state repression at its disposal'; V. Damodaran, *Broken Promises*, p. 10.

[55] Sahajānand, *Merā jīvan saṅgarṣ*, p. 285. E.g. Sahajānand was not included in the Congress enquiry committee on agrarian conditions because, as Rajendra Prasad told him: 'If you were included the report might not be unanimous and we want it to be unanimous, so that it may be valuable and carry some weight. Moreover, if you were included the government and zamindars might raise the cry that it is a report of the Kisān Sabhā. Therefore it is better for you not to be there'; quoted *ibid.*, p. 289. His continued vocal criticism of the Bihar Congress government earned him a reprimand from the party and he was eventually expelled as *persona non grata* in 1940.

a fraught one; it explains why even strong and radical advocates of peasants' interests such as Congress Socialists could finally make little indent in the party's political culture. This also points to a growing distance between constitutional and non-constitutional nationalist politics; in the constitutional arena, pressures coming from popular activism would recede to the background. While local Socialist activists took active part in Kisān Sabhā activities in the non-constitutional arena, and would provide much of the local leadership in 1942,[56] peasant organizations were not represented by the Congress leadership and were usually neglected in the constitutional arena.[57] Thus, partial franchise and participation in non-constitutional politics were not enough to ensure equal access or the right to be heard to the *kisans* or their leaders, nor did the overarching 'we' of nationalism really represent them despite the symbolic use of them as an icon.

On the other hand, the agenda of dignified survival, of justice and of ending a culture of oppression found quite an echo in Hindi literature. Earlier attitudes of sympathy were replaced by vivid and argumentative narratives of peasants oppression, struggle and political awareness. After Premcand, it is noteworthy that it was writers in Bihar who embraced these issues; several of them were directly involved in Kisān Sabhā activities and brought forward the voice of bonded labourers, peasants, fishermen and other subordinate subjects with great force.[58]

In discussing the lasting hold of the ideal of 'rural harmony', this section emphasised the importance of a cultural transformation, along with economic and political understanding, in order to make space for the peasant as subject, something which Sahajānand's trajectory proved eloquently. The weight of cultural values and ideals is discussed in the following section; there, cultural consciousness is taken as one co-ordinate to interpret the peculiar features of politicians active in the Hindi public sphere, and to explain a certain commonality that enveloped them despite ideological differences.

[56] See G. Pandey, ed., *The Indian Nation in 1942*, K.P. Bagchi, Calcutta 1988.
[57] This led to several contradictions, not least the embarassment of Kisān Sabhā leaders campaigning for Congress zamindar candidates for elections; *ibid.*, p. 62; see also Sahajānand Sarasvatī, *Merā jīvan saṅgharṣ*, pp. 292-94.
[58] See e.g. the work of Vaidyanāth Miśra Nāgarjun, especially his novel *Balcanmā* (1952). We may remark, however, that outspoken Marxist writers and critics subscribing to Pragativād, Progressivism, in the late 1930s and 1940s who wrote about peasants and workers would also do so 'on behalf' of them and often impose their own Marxist values in a deceptively neutral mould of realistic depiction.

6.3 Hindi politicians

> Just like dawn announces sunrise the birth of such people [leaders] announces the future rise of the nation. It is they who first dream in their minds the edifice of the nation, and drawing a picture of that edifice they display it in front of the general public (*sarva-sādhāraṇ*) with speeches and articles. And through their speeches and articles they forge whatever elements and strength are needed to build that edifice. (M.M. Mālavīya)[1]

The following two sections complete our foray into the political domain by looking at the relationship between culture and politics in Hindi through the role and agency of political leaders. The present section gives a brief overview of the various kinds of Hindi politicians, their role in Hindi institutions and in the nationalist movement, and their cultural consciousness. The final section will take up the issue of intellectual and political authority in the Hindi public sphere as a way to assess the mutual relationship between intellectuals, politicians and the public.

By 'Hindi politicians' we mean here those political leaders who were particularly important in the Hindi political sphere, either because, like Madan Mohan Mālavīya, they realized early the need to address the Hindi-speaking public *along with* English-educated Indians and British authorities, or else because they privileged non-constitutional politics and their area of activity was that of Hindi speakers. Mālavīya's choice of idiom was dictated by cultural considerations: Hindi was for him the language of the Hindu community, and in order to mobilize it into a constituency one had to foster the public use of Hindi. Gaṇeś Śaṅkar Vidyārthī represents the second case: in fact, not only was his main arena that of non-constitutional activities, but he tried to enlarge the boundaries of the Hindi *sarvasādhāraṇ* to include subaltern subjects, namely industrial and agricultural labour.

Hindi politicians are important for us firstly because they established Hindi as a legitimate language of political exchange. That is, they not only translated the English of constitutional politics into Hindi (e.g. Mālāvīya), but also included either more popular idioms and symbols into Hindi political language, words and concepts from ancient Indian political theory as well. In this they performed a culturally creative role, shaping political idioms in the vernacular and elaborating nationalist concepts and symbols for the wider

[1] M.M. Mālavīya, 'Rāṣṭra kā nirmāṇ', *Abhyuday*, 1907, in P. Mālavīya, *Mālavīyajī ke lekh*, p. 126.

vernacular public. Besides, they were all actively involved in forming and participating in Hindi institutions and the press: as such they were closely in touch with Hindi intellectuals and could mediate between them and national leaders. On the strength of their achievements as active local organizers and leaders, they were soon to be among the first elected representatives in constitutional bodies; as such they would be asked to perform the role of mediators and interpreters of public opinion and would also derive personal authority from their posts. Finally, and this will be the main argument of this section, despite great ideological differences they shared certain specific cultural *saṃskāras*; this cultural commonality would influence both their role as mediators of the Hindi public and their relationship with the Hindi intelligentsia (6.4).

This section is not an extensive study of the ideology and activities of Hindi politicians, but only a brief discussion of their role and influence in the Hindi public sphere, of their own view of the public sphere and of their position in the nationalist movement. In this attempt to place Hindi politicians, at least three different axes are required; a political axis between political right and left; and two cultural axes: one between Hindi and English, which partly overlaps with, but is also distinguished from, an axis between popular and elite. Only by taking all these dimensions into consideration can we acknowledge the cultural commonality, the difference in political styles and the inner tensions of Hindi politicians. We shall limit our discussion to Madan Mohan Mālavīya, Puruṣottam Dās Ṭaṇḍon, Gaṇeś Śaṅkar Vidyārthī, Acharya Narendra Dev, Babu Sampūrṇānand;[2] they were not only the most significant, but also provide a fair variety of stances.

It is appropriate to start our discussion with Madan Mohan Mālavīya (1861-1946), since he was the first Hindi politician, both because he first used Hindi, too, in public addresses and articles,[3] and also because he argued in favour of the official recognition of Hindi and the Nagari script as early as the 1880s.[4]

Hindi was for Mālavīya one element and one issue of his community politics, which aimed at forming and mobilising a Hindu political constituency through public sphere activities that included also Hindu Sabhas, cow-protection, educational facilities for Hindu students, newspapers in Hindi and English, social work during festivals and times of crisis

[2] The choice is based partly on their importance, and partly on the variety they offer. Other locally important leaders, or leaders who would play a significant role also in post-independence politics, would include: Śrīkṛṣṇadatt Pālīvāl, Pandit Sundarlāl, Kamlāpati Tripāṭhī, Lāl Bahādur Śāstrī and Rām Manohar Lohiā in the United Provinces; Seth Govind Dās in the Central Provinces, Rajendra Prasad and J.P. Nārāyaṇ in Bihar. Ārya Samāj leaders like Svami Śraddhānand and Bhai Parmānand were also important political agitators. Serious monographic studies are still lacking on most Hindi politicians, as well as comprehensive collections of speeches and writings.
[3] In the first, and short-lived, Hindi political daily, *Hindosthān* (1883), launched and financed by Raja Rāmpāl Siṃh of Kalakankar (near Allahabad); see R.R. Bhatnagar, *The Rise and Growth of Hindi Journalism*, p. 429.
[4] Remarkable in this respect is his famous pamphlet (in English) on *Court Character and Primary Education in N.-W.P. and Oudh* (1897); for a discussion of it, see C.S. King, *One Language, Two Scripts*, pp. 150-52.

through Seva Samitis and Mahavir Dals, and later *śuddhi* and *saṅgaṭhan*.[5] Hindi was also one of the idioms at his disposal, while he happily accepted English as the language for addressing colonial authorities and for constitutional politics, and did not question its role as country-wide language.[6]

Mālavīya offers in this sense an early example of the transformation of a 'client' of powerful local patrons into a community politician of independent standing,[7] and of the consolidation of Brahmin authority in modern religious and political terms. His range of idioms and of political strategies testify to his crucial capacity to mediate and adapt to different publics and spheres:[8] thus, he was equally at ease both in traditional patron-client relationships with Indian princes and magnates, in the respectful but proud attitude to British administrators as an educated subject of the empire, as selfless 'public worker', pandit and politician among peers. Above all, he combined rhetorical, organizational and fund-raising skills in the public sphere with the rhetoric and strategy of constitutional politics.[9] In the first case, he sought traditional patronage from princely and commercial magnates for educational and Hindu *saṅgaṭhan* activities, investing the notion of charity with new nationalist resonances.[10] In the second case, he combined the language of

[5] Mālavīya's public career started in 1880 with the foundation of the Prayag Hindu Samaj, rallying against official interference in the local Magh Mela. The Prayag Hindu Samaj, like its successor, Madhya Hindu Samaj (1884), also campaigned for the Nagari vs Persian script issue, and for cow-protection in 1887-1890. The organisation, the first of a series Mālavīya animated in the province culminating in the Hindu Mahasabha in 1923, was remarkable and new in that it was open to all Hindus, like the Ārya Samāj and it realized the need to use modern means of communication, to appeal to the public and to establish both a local and a wider network, though unlike the Ārya Samāj funding came not from the community but from rich patrons. Again like the Ārya Samāj, it expressed and put forward a multi-symbol congruence of language, script and religion, the first expression of a self-aware modern Hindu identity. Unlike the Ārya Samāj, it upheld orthodoxy and took a very cautious view of social reform; see J. Lütt, *Hindu-Nationalismus im Uttar Pradeś*; C.A. Bayly, *The Local Roots of Indian Politics*, especially chapter four; P. Brass, *Language, Religion and Politics*, and Sītārām Caturvedī, *Mahāmanā madan mohan mālavīya*, Akhil Bhartiya Vikrama Parishad, Banaras 1948.

[6] Hence the readiness with which he accepted English as the medium of instruction for 'his' university, Benares Hindu University: see above 2.5.

[7] The son of an ordinary *vyās* of Ahalyapur *muhalla* in Allahabad, Mālavīya rose from an ordinary position as Sanskrit teacher at the local Government High School thanks to powerful patrons: thanks to Rāmpāl Siṃh's patronage he could combine his traditional *pāṭhśālā* education with a modern one that combined humanities (a B.A. at Muir College in 1884) and law, while his first public ouvertures took place under the auspices of his Sanskrit professor, Aditya Ram Bhattacharya; J. Lütt, *Hindu-Nationalismus*, pp. 148 ff.

[8] E.g. he used traditional means of public communication like *kathā* and *upadeś* to campaign for cow-protection, performed public rituals like sacrifices (*yajña*) and devised others like *yajñopavīt*, *mantra-dīkṣā* and *śuddhi* for political purposes. He himself started performing massive public rituals of initiation (*mantradīkṣā*) of Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas and Shudras from 1927 on Dasasvamedha Ghat in Banaras, and in 1930 he initiated a large group of Harijans there; S. Caturvedī, *Mahāmanā*, pp. 34 ff.

[9] His titanic effort to raise funds for a 'University for the Hindus', started with a month-long penance and chanting of the Gayatri mantra at the Hanuman Mandir in Allahabad, took him to princely houses all around India several times, and this developed into a life-long relationship of mutual esteem, which would take a political form in the Independent Congress Party and the Congress Nationalist Party to fight elections in the 1920s and 1930s.

[10] Charity in this sense was not directed at the local community or at general pilgrims, but at Hindus as members of a homogeneous cultural and political group. In accepting princely patronage,

representative politics with that of community: in this way the language of democratic politics coud serve to defend 'Hindu interests', as when in the case of separate electorates he argued in favour of the one-man one-vote system.[11]

Mālavīya's view of the public sphere was thus of a national community that had one and one only common interest; even acknowledging conflicting interests was deemed harmful to the attainment of self-rule.[12] Within this overall national community, his more immediate concern was with the Hindu public, also envisaged as politically compact but free to follow its different customs and beliefs. Mālavīya's brand of constitutional politics envisaged on one side nationalist politics as a legitimate framework to further, defend and comprehend what were defined as politically compact 'Hindu interests'; on the other side, it sought to keep caste and community customs free from official interference and discouraged public criticism and discussion on the matter.[13] His view of political agitation was that of a movement in which the people (*prajā*) would provide patient and unanimous support while serious, firm and intelligent leaders would provide responsible guidance; by another act of political creativity, he lent the notion of *maryādā* a political connotation by distinguishing gradual and controlled movements (*maryādā-baddh āndolan*) from revolutions and uprisings (*maryādā-viruddh*), which were best avoided.[14]

Finally, as an orthodox Brahmin, a learned pandit and a professional politician respected by British authorities; as the recipient, conduit and distributor of considerable financial patronage and as a tireless public worker, 'mahāmanā' Mālavīya embodied several kinds of authority: the traditional authority of the learned and pious Brahmin and of the expert minister; that of the *rāṣṭrīy sevak*, the selfless and devoted nationalist; that of representative and vocal leader of the community, defender and mediator vis-a-vis the sovereign and other sections of society; and that of the effective man of influence on a personal, local level as well as on the political, constitutional level. His prestige and

Mālavīya would also act as guarantee with patrons and with British authorities that such 'community activities' would not be disruptive of order and hierarchy, while Gandhi's later fund-raising aimed at erecting a counter-authority.

[11] M.M. Mālavīya, 'Dharmānusār pratinidhiyoṁ kā cunāv', *Abhyuday*, 19 February 1909, in P. Mālavīya, *Mālavīyajī ke lekh*, pp. 189-91.

[12] *Ibid.*

[13] Mālavīya passionately opposed the Sarda Bill raising the minimum marriageable age; for critical reports see 'Ārya-vivāh-bil', *Cāṁd*, VII, pt. 2, 6, October 1929, pp. 737-43, and 'Ārya-vivāh-bil', *Cāṁd*, VIII, pt. 1, 6, April 1930, pp. 107-10. A fervent believer in the intrinsic good of *varṇāśram dharma*, Mālavīya supported limited reforms on the issues of widows and untouchability only as defensive measures against greater evils and greater reforms, and undertook only token gestures in this regard; see his article M.M. Mālavīya, 'Varṇāśram dharma', *Abhyuday*, 1 May 1908, in P. Mālavīya, *Mālavīyajī ke lekh*, pp. 174-75.

[14] M.M. Mālavīya, 'Unnati aur maryādā-baddh āndolan', *Abhyuday*, 1907, *ibid.* p. 83. See also his public speech published as *Satyāgrah saptāh. Mālavīyajī kā bhāṣaṇ*, Hindi Pustak Agency, Calcutta 1922, in which he preached a similar self-restraint as the key to a sucsessful political economy. This explains why, if Mālavīya was indeed the first to found a Kisan Sabha in Allahabad in 1916, it was not to *organise* or *awaken* the peasantry, but to *represent* it in the newly enlarged rural franchise and reserved seats in the legislative councils.

authority as Hindu leader and Vice-Chancellor of B.H.U. remained high in the Hindi sphere even when his political clout became more limited to the right-wing of the Congress, and his path of gradual constitutional reform became less popular. The first Hindi politician, Mālavīya was also the most 'bi-lingual' in more sense than one, and he was in fact the one who most acquired national status. Culturally, he was an elite politician with an elite view of language, whether English or Hindi.

A protege of Mālavīya and also an advocate, Puruṣottam Dās Ṭaṇḍon (1882-1962) started public activism under a similar aegis, and under the cultural spell of Bālkṛṣṇa Bhaṭṭ. He subscribed to a similar view of the politician as an ascetic, also due to the influence of the austere, self-restraining vision of the Radhasoami *sampraday*, and became popularly know as 'the Gandhi of UP'.[15] In the Hindi public sphere Ṭaṇḍon's name remains linked mostly to the Hindī Sāhitya Sammelan and to the advancement of the political status of Hindi. As such, his authority stemmed both from his recognized role as a mediator between Hindi institutions and Congress, and also to his personal *tyāg*. Beside that, he was also a vocal editor and contributor to *Abhyuday* and *Maryādā*, worked as a local organizer and selfless volunteer for nationalist events and campaigns and covered several party and elective posts: thus he rose from municipal councillor and chairman of the municipality to Parliamentary Secretary (Chief Whip) of the United Provinces Legislative Assembly during the Congress government, where he would prove his mettle as a staunch defender of parliamentary rules. He would also use those positions to further the cause of Hindi, especially in education (sse 2.5).

Despite his commitment to peasant politics and zamindari abolition (see 6.2), Ṭaṇḍon believed uncompromisingly in the 'social harmony' and cultural unity of 'our ancient civilization'.[16] Hindi figured in this picture as a culturally loaded language:

> Hindi is the language of *svarājya*. Our *svarājya* will not be based on the principle of *Democracy* [in English], but it will protect our ancient civilisation, language and the other national components (*aṅga*). This is a proven fact (*Yah bāt siddh hī hai*).[17]

[15] The austere message of the *sants*, which appealed most to modernising clerical and small commercial families, provided a spiritual education to Ṭaṇḍon, a distaste for modern amenities and a view of literature as a moral medium. Though Ṭaṇḍon himself was not an assiduous follower, the influence of the *sampraday* can be seen in his austere and non-sectarian religiosity, in his emphasis on simple living, and in his personal interest in Yoga, Tantra and other spiritual practices; see Lakṣmīnārāyaṇ Siṃh, *Rājarṣi puruṣottamdās ṭaṇḍan*, Hindi Sahitya Sammelan, Allahabad 1982, p. 2. For the Radhasoami sampraday, see Mark Juergensmeyer, *Radhasoami Reality: the Logic of a Modern Faith*, Princeton University Press, Princeton 1991.

[16] Ṭaṇḍon's short essays on 'National literature', 'Philosophy and literature', 'The message of Indian culture', 'The grove of Hindi literature' in the only available collection of his writings, are exemplary in this respect: the subjects posited are that of literature, philosophy, the nation and national culture as single abstract entities, which belong to the realm of transcendental value and universal good; J. Nirmal, ed., *Ṭaṇḍan nibandhāvalī*, Rastrabhasha Pracar Samiti, Wardha 1970. In this he can be seen as a typical example of a Punjabi Khatri's rejection of Indo-Persian culture in favour of a new affiliation to the 'high tradition' of Indian (Hindu) culture; see K.W. Jones, *Arya Dharm*.

[17] Ṭaṇḍon's speech at the 10th Hindī Sāhitya Sammelan annual meeting in Patna in March 1921, quoted in *Sammelan patrikā*, VII, 8 (April-May 1921), p. 227.

A corollary to this view, one that was to have great influence in the Hindi literary sphere, was Ṭaṇḍon's instrumental view of literature: literature, too, could only be envisaged in the same holistic national perspective, and relative or plural personal views were devalued as unnecessarily controversial, impure and the product of 'narrow feelings':

> The immortality of national glory (*kīrti*) depends on national literature. National wealth and national literature are mutually dependent. The *jāti* that wants to make its literature powerful (*śaktiśālī*) must first attempt to become powerful itself... Great literature cannot be created by narrow feelings (*saṅkucit bhāv*). No literature can become immortal and worthy of the whole nation's respect if it contains scores of texts full of different opinions... Scholars who write disparate texts to spread controversial opinions or particular social beliefs may succeed in their aim, but their works cannot help producing pure literature (*viśuddh sāhitya*).[18]

This instrumental view of literature was not rare in Hindi, we have already seen (2.2); however, Ṭaṇḍon lent it his own prestige as the foremost Hindi political champion and leader of the most influential Hindi association. His attitude then was to have profound effects on the relationship between politicians and writers and on Hindi literature *tout court*, as the following section will illustrate. It also points to a tension that we shall encounter again between awoved democratic principles and aspirations and inherently normalizing cultural views.

Sampūrṇanand (1891-1969) also came from an average educated background;[19] his family was typical in that it tried to turn the tide of economic decline in old service jobs by grabbing new opportunities and securing employment in colonial administration through modern education.[20] Sampūrṇānand himself would combine a 'scientific mentality' with a personal philosophical and spiritual quest that brought him away from inherited religious affiliations but close to 'high' scriptural sources, so that he would later enjoy some reputation as a scholar.[21]

Like all other Hindi politicians, Sampūrṇānand too was closely connected to Hindi public institutions, both as a teacher and as a journalist: besides contributing political articles to the leading Hindi papers, he shortly edited the monthly *Maryādā* (in 1921) and was involved in the cluster of educational and publishing activities financed by Śivaprasād

[18] P. D. Ṭaṇḍon, 'Jātīy sāhitya', in *Ṭaṇḍan nibandhāvalī*, pp. 74-76.

[19] Sampūrṇānand himself would write in his autobiography: 'My early life could hardly have been different from that of any other boy in a lower middle-class family in one of the larger cities in northern India.' Sampurnanand, *Memories and Reflections*, p. 1.

[20] In his book on *Cet siṃh aur kāśī kā vidroh*, (Pratap Press, Kanpur 1919), Sampūrṇānand mentions that his great-grandfather Sadānandjī was *dīvān* and companion to Cetsiṃh.

[21] He took a B.Sc. from Allahabad University in 1911; for his spiritual quest see *Memories and Reflections*. Like Ṭaṇḍon, he would aid a more conscious participation in marriage rituals by translating and writing on them in Hindi.

Gupta in Banaras, namely Kāśī Vidyāpīṭh and Jnanmandal.[22] His political career resembles largely Ṭaṇḍon's, in that he too combined great skills as organizer, particularly precious during frantic campaign days,[23] with argumentative eloquence and pragmatic skills as a constitutional politician. Like Ṭaṇḍon, he became Municipal councillor at the first municipal elections after Non-Cooperation, and was particularly active as chairman of the education committee (see 2.5); he became a prominent Socialist leader in Banaras, was elected to the Legislative Council in 1926 and to the Assembly in 1937, and rose to become Education Minister during the Congress provincial government in 1938-39.[24] Even more than in the case of other Hindi politicians, Sampūrṇānand's authority, originally stemming from his public activism, came to lie in his proximity to political power and patronage (see 6.4), a role he was to strenghten after independence.[25] As a minister before and after independence, he would be with Ṭaṇḍon the most staunch and vocal supporter of Hindi.

With Gaṇeś Śaṅkar Vidyārthī (1890-1931) we encounter the Hindi journalist-politician who most believed in the popular potential of Hindi as a political language, and who was most preoccupied with broadening the Hindi public sphere in a popular sense. This preoccupation was reflected in his style of journalism, which introduced a more colloquial form of the language and which anticipated post-1920 developments in the Hindi political press by introducing reports and actively supporting peasant and labour activities, thus fulfilling B.V. Parāṛkar's aspiration that the Hindi press should express 'the voice of the people' (*jantā kī āvāz*).[26] It was also reflected in Vidyārthī's own political work as a trade unionist in Kanpur and founder of a Congress rural *ashram* in Kanpur district, as well as in his effort to raise questions regarding peasants and labourers in the provincial Legislative Council.[27] Finally, it was reflected in his own anti-elitist 'common man' image and behaviour. Vidyārthī shows best how the authority as an editor and authority as a political leader enforced each other, and how the success of a vernacular paper was translated into a

[22]At Kāśī Vidyāpīṭh he taught philosophy after Dr. Bhagvān Dās; for Jnanmandal he published *Antarrāṣṭrīy vidhān* (1924); Sampūrṇānand's younger brother Paripūrṇānand became Ś.P. Gupta's personal secretary.

[23] He was made secretary of the District Congress Committee in 1921, only two years after joining the Congress, and was chosen as the first Dictator for the salt *satyagraha* in Banaras in 1930; Sampurnanand, *Memories and Reflections*, pp. 25, 53.

[24] His public pronouncements and gestures in favour of Hindi under those circumstances were greeted with loud protests in the Urdu press, while the Hindi press remained expectant of even more decisive steps; see Mukul Kesavan, 'Congress and the Muslims of UP and Bihar, 1937 to 1939', Nehru Memorial Museum and Library occasional papers on History and Society, second series, XXVII, 1990, pp. 20 ff.

[25] When Sampūrṇānand became education minister in 1938, he appointed Narendra Dev to conduct an enquiry and suggest recommendations to change the education system in the province. Narendra Dev remained the respected ideologue and selfless worker, Sampūrṇanand the man of influence and of direct political power.

[26] See B.V. Parāṛkar's presidential address at the First Editors' Conference at the XVI Hindī Sāhitya Sammelan meeting in Vrindavan in 1925, quoted in *Sammelan Patrikā*, XIII, 4-5, pp. 228 ff.

[27] See M.L. Bhargava, *Ganesh Shankar Vidyarthi*, pp. 93-96.; Renuka Khosla, *Urban Politics (with Special Reference to Kanpur)*, S. Chand & Co., New Delhi 1992.

political role as interpreter of public opinion[28] In the Hindi literary sphere he performed a particularly important role as mediator between the literary and political spheres: he urged and encouraged old and young writers, made the *Pratāp* office in the populous Philkhana ward of Kanpur a veritable literary and political trading centre, and generally entertained more relaxed and democratic views of literature as a *prajātantra* in which everyone was making a contribution, rather than as a *rājatantra* in which writers were told how to write and were reprimanded for thinking independently.[29] Vidyārthī too espoused the strong anti-colonial pride in India's great tradition and entertained high expectations for Hindi as a future 'international language'.[30] Still, that pride was combined with the urge to build a modern Hindi culture that would be different from the past and would include popular subjects, publics and forms of the language, in order to reflect the 'true' nation.[31]

We finally turn to Acharya Narendra Dev (1889-1956), one of the leading Congress Socialist leaders and ideologues both in Hindi and English. In fact Narendra Dev's more distinguished social standing and educational curriculum[32] make him, with Mālavīya, the most 'bi-lingual' of the Hindi politicians under review. Like Sampūrṇānand, it would be Narendra Dev's own personal effort to combine the rational knowledge drawn from 'modern education' with the allegiance to Indian tradition as studied from books and documents and imbibed through spiritual encounters, and with his personal radical politics, born in Narendra Dev's case out of a basic concern for justice and the study of socialism.[33]

[28] *Pratāp*'s influence was so great that an official surveyor remarked in 1929, 'If we exclude [a local paper], we find that in 1929 the political views of teachers of Etawah [district] are moulded mainly by the late Mr Ganesh Shankar Vidyarthi and P. Shri Krishna Dutt Palival - the two Congress leader-journalists of Cawnpore and Agra respectively'; S.N. Chaturvedi, *An Educational Survey of a District*, Indian Press, Allahabad 1935, p. 234. Vidyārthī himself, though a man of no personal means, was known as the 'uncrowned king of Kanpur' for the authority he commanded thanks to his public activism.

[29] Possibly his Kayastha background made Vidyārthī more open to modern tastes and ideas: his reading habits and the books he chose to publish under the Pratap imprint show a preference for political literature and historical novels - he himself translated Victor Hugo's *Ninety-three* into Hindi in jail.

[30] See his presidential speech at the XIX Hindī Sāhitya Sammelan meeting in Gorakhpur in 1930, a few months before he was killed during the Kanpur riots, quoted in Rādhākṛṣṇa, ed., *Gaṇeś Śaṅkar Vidyārthī ke śreṣṭh nibandh*, Atmaram and Sons, Delhi 1964, pp. 1-2.

[31] See Vidyārthī's editorial 'Rāṣṭra kā nirmāṇ' for the special 1915 issue of *Pratāp*, in R. Avasthī, *Krānti kā udghoṣ*, vol. 2, pp. 977-85.

[32] Narendra Dev came from a wealthier and more established merchant family based in Faizabad which had branched out in the professions, acquired zamindaris in the district and had already embraced English education two generations earlier. In his childhood Narendra Dev breathed a very cultured and religious atmosphere, but open also to public concerns and politics. His father Bāldev Prasād, though educated in Persian and English, had studied Sanskrit 'to keep himself abreast of his own culture and religion', enjoyed 'the company of sadhus' (*satsaṅg*) and wrote children's text-books in English, Hindi and Persian as a hobby. The family library was open to the public and subscribed to several newspapers. Narendra Dev's subsequent education would be in ancient Indian history, archeology, philology and epigraphy with Dr Venice and Prof. Norman at Queen's College in Banaras before graduating in law. Narendra Dev, 'My Recollections', in Keskar and Menon, *Acharya Narendra Dev*; see also the recollections of the Sanskrit scholar Gopīnāth Kavirāj, 'Bauddh aur saṃskṛt sāhitya kā vidvān', in the same volume.

[33] In the words of a historian: 'Like so many educated middle-class youth of his generation, Narendra Dev saw in the Kisan's Congress the reconciliation of opposites: the urban Indian's preoccupation

Narendra Dev would combine them practically by being politically active within Congress and the Socialist group and by teaching ancient history and politics at the national college in Banaras, Kāśī Vidyāpīṭh. In fact, he, Sampūrṇānand and Śrīprakāś turned the Vidyāpīṭh into a cradle for young socialist activists, trade unionists and future politicians. On the intellectual level, Narendra Dev would hover between a Marxist view of the nationalist movement and the agrarian question and a socialist view of society which dismissed caste and social hierarchy on one level, and a cultural affiliation that defined Indian civilisation in terms of its basic unity and harmon on anothery.[34] In the Hindi literary sphere Narendra Dev would be respected as a scholar, in the political sphere his influence was mainly that of a political thinker; as a socialist leader he would be more devoted to putting pressure within the Congress, to teaching, writing and taking part in party meetings and in the Assembly than to organizational work.[35]

What emerges from this overview of political careers is that, politically, they spanned literally across the political spectrum, from Mālavīya's Hindu right to Narendra Dev's Marxism. However, if we turn to the cultural plane, another picture emerges: despite ideological differences and different roles in the political sphere, all these politicians shared a certain cultural commonality, which included adopting Hindi as a culturally loaded language, a personal sense of affiliation to the 'harmony' of Indian culture viewed in nationalist, holistic terms as essentially Hindu culture, and finally (barring perhaps G.Ś. Vidyārthī) a moral outlook towards literature and culture in general. However, the adoption of Hindi and this cultural commonality could be backed by different attitudes as per the relationship of Hindi to English, and the role of Hindi as vehicle of a cultural and political community. For Vidyārthī, and partly for Narendra Dev, Hindi was the antithesis of English in that it addressed and represented a popular public; for Ṭaṇḍon and Sampūrṇānand it represented 'Indian' (as opposed to 'foreign') culture and it substituted English as the elite, country-wide language. The attitude of Narendra Dev, and in a

with political reform and the rural Indian's preoccupation with agrarian reform'; Harold A. Gould, 'The Rise of the Congress System in a District Political Culture: the Case of Faizabad District in Eastern Uttar Pradesh', in P. Brass and F. Robinson, eds., *The Indian National Congress and Indian Society, 1885-1985: ideology, social structure and political dominance*, Chanakya, Delhi 1987, p. 269.

[34] See his speeches 'Class Organisations and the Congress' (presidential address at the Gujarat Socialist Conference, Ahmedabad 1935) and 'National Revolution and socialism' (presidential address at the First All-India Congress Socialist Conference, Patna, May 1934), both offering a class interpretation of the nationalist movement and of the Indian situation, included in Narendra Dev, *Socialism and the National Revolution,* and the later articles 'Bhārtīy samāj aur saṃskṛti', 'Bhārtīy dharma', and the broadcast on 'Religious movements as symbols of unity', (30.11.1950), quoted in Keskar and Menon, *Acharya Narendra Dev*, which emphasise the openness, adaptibility and progressive tendencies in 'Indian *dharma*' and culture.

[35] Although his active political career started by speaking and working in villages of Tanda and Akbarpur tahsils during the Avadh movement of 1920-21, and he again toured villages during the salt satyagraha, his delicate health prevented consistent organizational work.

different way of Mālavīya, was more functional, in that English served to address a national audience, while Hindi, in its different language styles, addressed local audiences.[36]

Although this cultural consciousness did not necessarily translate into Hindu[37] or elite politics, it nonetheless affected the social and political vision of these politicians. While in Ṭaṇḍon's case it would openly lead to conservative politics only after independence, when he took over Mālavīya's mantle in the political scene of the province, in the case of Sampūrṇānand and Narendra Dev it would, more subtly, produce a hiatus between their political and cultural visions.[38] 'The greatest feature of our culture is how it establishes unity among different systems of life (*jīvan-praṇālī*), and harmony in every field' wrote Narendra Dev; 'the second peculiarity of Indian culture is how it establishes a moral system (*naitik vyavasthā*)', a hierarchy of values with *mokṣa* at the top.[39] As we have seen in ealier chapters and especially in the previous section, uncriticized ideals and values of *samanvay* and unity, while not necessarily negative in themselves, were easily instrumental in hiding structures of exclusion, suppression, hierarchy and authority which present Indian culture as a singular block. Thus, while on a political terrain Vidyārthī, Narendra Dev, Sampūrṇānand, and Ṭaṇḍon to a certain extent, challenged the notion of 'social harmony' and maintained that the new times required a new political culture - of *prajātantra*, the rule of the people - and that *svarājya* had no meaning without economic justice, on the cultural terrain they spoke a language of unity, harmony and pride in the ancient 'Bhārtīy saṃskṛti'. Whereas politically they carried popular and democratic aspirations, culturally their role as representatives and interpreters of popular Hindi voices was largely unfulfilled. They neither challenged the ideal of 'Bhārtīy saṃskṛti' nor asked to revise the forming Hindi canon in order to allow space for multiple and conflicting voices, or for a critique of hierarchy parallel to that in the social or economic spheres; the discourse of harmony (*samanvay*) in Indian culture allowed no space for that. The fact that it was easier to uphold *samanvay* and national unity on the abstract terrain of culture than on the fraught one of politics - at a time when national unity was becoming an elusive goal - may explain for the easiness with which all these politicians slipped into it. The ideal was held high as a mirror for the fraught nation to contemplate a holistic view of itself. Vidyārthī's early death leaves the question open as to whether things could have been different,

[36] They could and would also use Urdu where the local audience was clearly mixed or predominanty Muslim, or when it suited their purpose in other ways.

[37] This observation may apply to a large section of the educated Hindi public, which remained broadly loyal to the Congress fold despite holding a culturally conservative 'Hindu' outlook.

[38] As Sampūrṇānand suggested in his article 'Gāndhīvād aur sāmyavād', although class division and class conflict were the main difference between the two ideologies, 'Indian socialists can, if they want to, harmonise socialism with theism and religiosity, i.e. socialism with Gandhism... Indian socialism will have a peculiar nature: it will be influenced by Gandhism and by Indian culture, which is birth-giver of Gandhism, and it will become more spiritual and might even adopt non-violence'; *Viśāl bhārat*, 'Rāṣṭrīy aṅk', XVII, 4, April 1936, pp. 413-16.

[39] Narendra Dev, 'Bhārtīy samāj aur saṃskṛti', in Keskar and Menon, *Acharya Narendra Dev*, p. 253.

whether a major and popular Hindi politician could have helped putting forward a more popular and composite Hindi culture.

The limited bilingualism, and possibly the cultural rigidity, of Hindi politicians had another consequence as well: despite significant local authority and patronage, they did not become politicians of national importance, mirroring in a way the predicament of Hindi itself. Despite the spectacular expansion and greater pervasiveness of Hindi, and despite the fanfare of Hindi propaganda, at the time it could not command the same width and breadth of use and of public as English did. Even Sampūrṇānand and P.D. Ṭaṇḍon, the most successful Hindi politicians, remained regional leaders, defenders of the vested interests and cultural role of Hindi and of Hindi institutions, and as the centre of power and authority shifted to Delhi even this cultural role did no develop, but remained to form a kind of cultural entrenchment, a solidified 'Hindī *saṃskāra*' transmitted through the institutions they had helped to found.

To summarize, this section examined a few Hindi politicians who rose as organizers and leaders of public activities of various kinds in the Hindi sphere. Such activism bestowed authority upon them despite their often unremarkable social status; their rise in the Congress and with the Congress bestowed another, more pragmatically political authority, tied with the patronage and influence they could command. These politicians were largely successful in mediating between non-constitutional and constitutional politics; however, as they became more part of the party structure, their role of mediators of public opinion decreased: they remained vocal critics and representatives of public opinion with the colonial government, but largely discouraged dissent and public criticism of the Congress in the public sphere. Though certainly forcing the tone, it was against this political culture of unanimity that Sahajānand spoke so vehemently.

We acknowledged that no linear distinction can apply to Hindi politicians: at least three different coordinates are required to assess their positions: the political left-right coordinate saw Mālavīya firmly on the right, and all the others on the left of Congress. However, the cultural axes of Hindi-English and elite-popular showed another configuration: a kind of unanimous cultural affiliation made the category 'Hindi politician' tenable at an important level - that of a shared cultural identity. This could synthetically be described as a high regard for, and identification, with ancient India and for its allegedly homogeneous intellectual tradition. The exclusions implied in this view of Indian history and tradition have already been discussed in the third chapter. This created a tension within even leftist Hindi politicians between their professed allegiance to social and economic justice and their cultural consciousness, which was translated also in their pursuit of Hindi: while upholding Hindi as the language of the common people and of their redemption, they fostered Hindi as the heir to Sanskrit and vehicle of 'Bhārtīy saṃskṛti'. While for bilingual politicians Hindi would have this status along with the current national

language, English, for the others Hindi was to substitute English by absorbing all its functions; this would legitimize 'high' Hindi as the national language of power along with legitimizing themselves as the inheriting ruling class of the nation. This common sensibility affected Hindi politicians in a culturally conservative way whatever their political beliefs: we may only mention Sampūrṇānand's 'Vedic Socialism', Narendra Dev's 'Indian dharma', P.D. Ṭaṇḍon's views on *varṇāśram dharma*. This despite the fact that they were, as 'vernacular' politicians, the best placed to carry popular aspirations and democratic demands.

This cultural conservatism of Hindi politicians had significant repercussions on the Hindi cultural sphere as well. While several varied voices were emerging in the Hindi literary sphere, some concording with the 'Bhārtīy saṃskṛti' view and some claiming greater autonomy for the literary imagination and valuing originality, barring Vidyārthī Hindi politicians showed a remarkable lack of attention and sensitivity to these varied voices and to contemporary Hindi literary production in general. This indifference was to cause serious tensions, which will be analysed in the following section. The mediation Hindi politicians were ideally placed to exercise between the Hindi intelligentsia and public opinion and national leaders worked only one way, from the latter to the former. This deprived independent Hindi intellectuals of the (moral and intellectual) authority and political influence they believed they could exercise. Instead, with their authority politicians gave the culturally conservative Hindi intelligentsia sanction to become the Hindi establishment, at the head of cultural and educational institutions, at the expenses of independent voices. By doing so they blocked the way to a further democratisation and popularisation of Hindi. The following section examines some exchanges between intellectuals and politicians that will further illustrate the point.

6.4 The question of authority

In the previous sections we mentioned the growing distance between Hindi intellectuals and politicians once the latter became more entrenched in the party hierarchy and in the constitutional arena. The U.P. Hindī Sāhitya Sammelan meeting in Faizabad in 1937 witnessed an extraordinary repartee between one leading Hindi intellectual, Sūryakānt Tripāṭhī Nirālā, and Hindi politicians that shows the extent and nature of the crisis that had intervened.

The meeting in Faizabad could well be considered evidence of Hindi's success after decades of struggle: Narendra Dev, the Socialist leader from Faizabad, was chairing the welcome committee; Sampūrṇānand, the new education minister of the province, was to open the art exhibition; P.D. Ṭaṇḍon, the long-standing pillar of the Sammelan and now Speaker of the provincial assembly, presided. There was talk of making Rāmcandra Śukla, the most respected Hindi critic, president, but in the end he presided only the proceedings of the literary branch. The audience was numerous. According to a literary observer, it comprised mostly school-masters, subordinate to the new Congress minister, and a sprinkling of local notables loyal to Narendra Dev.[1] Thanks to Nirālā's outspoken comments, however, the celebratory occasion degenerated into a bitter debate over the function, authority and relationship between politics and literature.

We shall use this and a few other instances to investigate two issues such frictions seem to reveal. The first concerns intellectual authority and who was it to be vested in. The second concerns the relationship between political and intellectual authority. We shall focus on Nirālā's response because, thanks to his position outside literary institutions and to his nature, particularly sensitive to questions of prestige and hierarchy, he was one of the very few Hindi writers to think and write at length on these matters. This, we might argue, not because he was the only one to *feel* about the issue but because he was one of the few who questioned and disregarded vested authority, both traditional and nationalist, both political and literary. An iconoclast, he challenged the categories invoked as 'natural' by those authorities in order to subvert the consensus of opinion which derived from such categories; in the process, he discussed what were the sources of their authority. This will be of central concern to this section. At the same time, we do not asssume that his reports

[1] The account follows an interview with Nirālā, in *Cakallas*, May-June 1938; quoted in *Nirālā racnāvalī*, vol. 6, pp. 213-15. The following quotations are from the interview, with page numbers in brackets.

were 'true' or unbiased; but as far as they were his perceptions, they reveal several critical points that concern us.

What happened then in Faizabad to upset Nirālā so much?

Sampūrṇānand was there to open the art exhibition, but he started extemporating about poetry. In the beginning he was 'restrained and correct' and granted poets freedom of expression. Eventually however, according to Nirālā, he was taken by a 'political fit': 'Poets should give support to politicians' he said. Nirālā was unable to restrain a loud, irreverent comment: 'Hindi poets are much ahead of politicians'. The first stone was thrown.

The following day was the day of presidential speeches. In his impromptu introductory address Narendra Dev spoke of the 'two great men' (*mahāpuruṣa*) who were gracing the occasion: the 'honourable and revered' Babu Puruṣottamdās Ṭaṇḍon and the 'respected' Sampūrṇānandjī. Nirālā was appalled: there was Rāmcandra Śukla sitting, a true literary *mahāpuruṣa*, and Narendra Dev failed even to mention him![2] When eventually Ṭaṇḍon took his presidential seat, he was greeted by loud applause: 'people clapped at seeing their *tyāgī* leader gracing the high seat of literature' (p. 213). But when he came forward to deliver his address, he had no prepared speech either. 'That the speech of the president of the Sāhitya Sammelan should not be written cannot be excused in any way' commented Nirālā (p. 214).[3] Finally, Ṭaṇḍon too moved from literature to politics, mentioning his recent contact with Mahatma Gandhi. Again and again he gave pre-eminence (*prādhānya*) to politics - 'as if Sarasvatī were a slave to politics'. Although he failed to even mention contemporary literature in Hindi, Ṭaṇḍon nonetheless felt it necessary to admonish Hindi writers and urged them to 'transcend provincial limits'. This incensed Nirālā: first of all, because he felt that to subordinate literature to politics from the presidential seat of the Sammelan was an insult (*apmān*) to that very seat. Secondly, because it betrayed ignorance and indifference to the contemporary Hindi literary scene. In a later interview Nirālā clarified his view:

> I can say with full assurance that in this province the contribution literature has made is greater than that of politics. Literary people in this province have been, undoubtedly, much greater people (*baṛe vyakti*) than politicians. True, literary people here have not crossed the Atlantic eight times or the Pacific sixteen times; hardly any of them has been fully educated in Europe, but as far as *yathārtha jñān* (knowledge of reality), study (*adhyayan*), activity and sacrifice are concerned, literary people here are ahead of politicians - especially because they are not "followers", they are "original".[4]

[2] This 'inadvertent' slip revealed, according to Nirālā, 'his inner feeling': even a 'generous' politician, a radical and a socialist, who unselfconsciously fell into the 'common' mould of paying respects only to powerful people; Nirālā, Interview, *ibid.*

[3] The speech was on the words Hind, Hindu and Hindi - hardly anything original. 'For someone like Ṭaṇḍonjī, who has been for so long the helmsman, the life and soul of the Sammelan it was hardly a big thing to have an accurate knowledge of those words'; *ibid.*

[4] *Ibid.* The words in inverted commas are in English in the original.

We shall come back to these arguments. At the meeting, a repartee ensued with Nirālā questioning Ṭaṇḍon about what he meant by literature, and Ṭaṇḍon answering that literature had always followed politics. The audience, at seeing its leaders questioned and humbled publicly, started shouting against Nirālā.[5] As the exchange became more heated, Ṭaṇḍon said that he did not touch literature written by writers who were not of high character (*caritravān*). Nirālā immediately thought of Kalidasa, Tagore and other not exactly prudish classics: what did such bragging (*ḍaporśaṅkh*) have to do with a literary gathering? He walked out saying 'I am not used to listening to such nonsense' (p. 216).

What are the points that emerge from this argument? Nirālā pointed out that his opposition was not personal: he respected Ṭaṇḍon's high moral character and selfless public work. His objections regarded the exclusive use of the word *mahāpuruṣa* politicians made. The term itself is interesting and signals the attempt to de-link personal authority from birth, position or power held. To be a *mahāpuruṣa* had to do with inner individual qualities or achievements - something Congress leaders had acquired 'on the field'. Both language and and 'open-minded' person would give equal importance to politics and literature, objected Nirālā (p. 214). Instead, at Faizabad both politicians and the audience had showed ignorance and indifference towards literary *mahāpuruṣas* even in a literary venue. The audience had been readier to listen to the leaders than to Nirālā: political clout and 'high' contacts mattered more than literary achievements. The second point of contention regarded the autonomy of literature and writers' originality, which were the sources of personal authority for a writer. Ṭaṇḍon had shown no respect for the autonomy of literary creativity, whereas according to Nirālā originality in a writer was itself a political achievement. After all, to enrich the literature in Hindi by original works of excellence meant contributing to the cultural decolonisation of the country.

Instead the Sammelan showed that 'Hindi is a puppet in the hands of some non-literary people, not the living goddess of the hearts of her devotees' (p. 210). What was left in the Sammelan, as Premcand also remarked, was a pompous and shallow ritual that had hardly anything to do with literature. Prevailed upon to take part in the 1934 annual Sammelan meeting in Delhi, Premcand reported ironically for *Jāgaraṇ:*

> This much-publicized conference held this year in Delhi, the capital city of so many rises and falls, has now come to a happy end, as it does every year... The disappointment caused by it was similar to that felt by the devout when the Universal Spirit assumes a gross physical form in order to appear before them... By lightning bright petromax lamps for four days, by decking the scene with flowers and by singing anthems, the conference has tried to make us believe that Hindi is

[5] Nirālā was told to either shut up or go away. He later reflected: 'It is clear whether the people had come there for the sake of literature or for their daily bread; whether politics had made them sensible men or sensible slaves is also clear'; *ibid.*, p. 215.

going to progress by leaps and bounds... The procession started on schedule with tired delegates and some very important persons marching in it... The meeting after lunch was characterised by the vigour one usually associates with any meeting held immediately after a meal... How could the anthem sung by girls clad in saffron *saris* possibly fail to enchant those volunteers who had been checking passes with the same alacrity with which a sergeant flashes a warrant of arrest. The portraits of past presidents and the inspirational inscriptions in bold letters which adorned the walls, and the red and blue rosettes pinned to the *kurtas* and jackets of the important persons were enough to captivate anyone.[6]

At the Faizabad meeting, the following day Nirālā tried to publicly uphold his view of the autonomy and importance of the writer. True literature is higher than politics, he said in his speech, because it transcends boundaries and bestows superworldly gifts.[7] These are so important because a writer is a seer endowed with a vision that transcends his boundaries of time and space and the limited horizon of the people (p. 217). To support this claim, and to show how advanced contemporary Hindi literature was compared to politics, he quoted one of his 'Bādal rāg' poems, written in the early 1920s. In these poems he had used metaphors of ammassing clouds and torrential rain to express a yearning for social and political upheaval at the hands of the masses. In the end he sung one poem, and as on other occasions the force of the poem and his inspiring delivery won him the hostile audience.

A similar confrontation had taken place in December 1935, when Jawaharlal Nehru, invited by the Ratnākar-Rasik Maṇḍal of Banaras to receive a felicitation letter, delivered a short speech in front of the leading Hindi literary men of Banaras: Rāmacandra Śukla, Jayśaṅkar Prasād, Kṛṣṇadev Prasād Gauṛ and others. In his address, which caused quite a stir in the Hindi press, Nehru said that Hindi had so far produced only courtly poetry, and when *svarājya* came the government would see to it that 3-400 books were translated into Hindi from other languages.[8] Nirālā's response was:

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru lives in the same place where the Hindī Sāhitya Sammelan stands, where *Sarasvatī* alone can be called an epoch-making history of Hindi literature. But Panditji has been too immersed in the making of the nation ever to

[6] Quoted in Amrit Rai, *Premchand: his Life and Times*, Oxford University Press, Delhi 1991, pp. 302-4.
[7] Whereas politics was necessarily bound by interests - whether individual or national - literature was higher because it was disinterested and universalistic, aiming only at the good (*kalyāṇ*) of man *tout court*; Nirālā, Interview, p. 214.
[8] As quoted in Nirālā's editorial 'Paṇḍit jawāharlāl nehrū aur hindī', *Sudhā*, 1 Dec. 1933, in *Nirālā racnāvalī*, vol. 6, p. 439. A similar repartee took place in 1935 between Nehru and Premcand on the columns of the Hindi press. To Nehru's suggestion that English, too, should be considered a 'sautelī bhāṣā' (step-language) of India, Premcand had replied: 'In our opinion English has become such an indispensable language under the present circumstances that it hardly needs an association or an institution to help it. Far from being a 'sautelī' language, it is rather a 'paṭrānī' (head) language and all the other languages of India are reduced to the status of beggars in front of her. The pity is that those who call themselves our leaders are often ignorant of their mother-tongue, and the result of a society in which its leaders have become so far removed from society that they have no relationship with their language, is in front of our eyes'; Premcand, 'Bhārtīy sāhitya aur paṇḍit javāharlāl nehrū', *Hans*, November 1935, in *Vividh prasaṅg*, vol. 3, p. 106.

> remember the national language or to feel that it was necessary to teach Hindi for the sake of the nation. To our mind, if some of the literary talent Panditji has spent for the nation, a talent which the humble servants of *rāṣṭrabhāṣā* can hardly grasp, had been spent writing some books in that language, they would understand him very well. Also, Panditji would also learn that he could receive much from the very same people he wants to give something to, and that they are much ahead of him in the field of the national language, however much ahead he may consider himself to be in the field of the nation.[9]

The superciliousness and ignorance Nehru had displayed towards Hindi literature had no correspondance in Bengal for example, Nirālā would tell Nehru when they met face to face: there Tagore was as much if not more respected than political leaders.[10] Finally, in the article Nirālā turned to the literary audience of the Banaras meeting:

> The people who remained silent after listening to Panditji's fantastic (*adbhut*) speech must have done so out of civility. Otherwise they could have rebutted such a learned speech! They must have considered it unfitting for their literary disposition to oppose someone they had invited to bestow their respect. But we request Hindi literary people on such matters that if they want to avoid being insulted, they should follow this philosophical truth: जो दूसरे को बड़ा मानता है वह दूसरे से छोटा समझा जाता है। (Whoever looks up to someone else will be looked down upon).[11]

The exchange at Faizabad and the 'insult' in Banaras pertained to both representational and discursive aspects of the public sphere: both to the authority displayed in front of the audience and their hierarchical status,[12] and to the nature of intellectual authority. The conflict became sharper when the two aspects overlapped. As Nirālā was painfully aware, it was virtually impossible that an English-educated man like Nehru would go to a Hindi literary gathering to *learn* or *listen* to something. And if we understand authority as the faculty of being given a respectful hearing, then the hierarchy was only too clear.[13]

[9] *Nirālā racnāvalī,* vol. 6, p. 439. Nirālā went on to say that if Nehru was acquainted with Hindi he would realize that Hindi poetry was hardly in the stage of courtly literature any longer, and that all the books he wanted to have translated into Hindi had been probably already translated long ago.
[10] Nirālā, 'Nehrūjī se do bātem̐' (1936), *Nirālā racnāvalī*, vol. 6, p. 235. Even Subhash Chandra Bose had not failed to express his condolescence at Sharatchandra's death. Nothing similar had happened in Hindi at Prasād's demise, and even Premcand's death had not provoked a suitable condolence motion in the Congress. Nirālā's obsessive engagement with Tagore's success and with Bengali critics of Hindi had partly to do with his close familiarity with Bengal, and partly with the deference and respect national and Hindi leaders showed towards Bengali literature, a deference that according to Nirālā smacked of partiality and resulted from ignorance of Hindi's worth.
[11] Nirālā, 'Paṇḍit javāharlāl', p. 439.
[12] On another occasion, at the Delhi Sammelan meeting of 1924, Nirālā, scheduled to recite some of his blank verses, was asked to vacate his 'best seat' (*sabse baṛhiyā kursī*) at the front when the maharaja of Baroda came in for a while. Nirālā vacated the chair. The president, Ayodhyāsiṃh Upādhyāy, stood up 'showing devotion with great humility - his turban folded and his belly and hands outstretched'. At the president's request, Babu P.D. Ṭaṇḍon said a few words in praise of the Maharaja. Nirālā, Interview, p. 209.
[13] See D.V.J. Bell, *Power, Influence and Authority*, Oxford University Press, London 1975. In the case of Hindi vs Bengali, Nirālā was successful in redressing the balance when given a chance: e.g. he charmed Bengali intellectuals in a meeting at the Baṅgīy Sāhitya Pariṣad in Calcutta between Hindi

The two attempts Nirālā made to redress the balance and make himself heard with Gandhi and Nehru went famously wrong. They are reported in two hilarious essays written in 1939 by Nirālā himself.[14] First of all it was virtually impossible for Nirālā, already a famous poet, to have access to Gandhi the political *mahāpuruṣa*: he was accorded a private audience only when he said he had come to meet Gandhi the president of the Hindī Sāhitya Sammelan (p. 227). In a spirited conversation which left all people present aghast, Nirālā challenged Gandhi's stance on language and the authority he commanded in the Hindi literary sphere despite his avowed ignorance about Hindi literature. In the first case, he criticised Gandhi for caring only for 'leadership'(*netṛtva*) and for overlooking the natural process by which Hindi and Hindi literature were becoming broad-based and syncretistic in an original, spontaneous way. In the second, he lamented Gandhi's reliance on 'Hindi experts' whose main claim to authority was their very proximity to Gandhi and Tagore (p. 229). When Nirālā asked Gandhi half an hour for the former to recite a few Hindi poems and show the achievements of contemporary Hindi literature, Gandhi predictably refused (p. 230), adducing as a reason the lack of time. That the president of the Hindī Sāhitya Sammelan should not have half an hour's time to listen to a major Hindi poet proved Nirālā's point.

Nirālā was very aware of how such superciliousness towards Hindi literature on the part of respected political leaders harmed the authority of contemporary writers. He complained about it in several articles, and directly with Nehru at the time of a chance meeting on a train. If only *baṛe vyakti* like Nehru were to write in Hindi, Nirālā told him, Hindi would greatly profit.

> Hindi writers are not only common people, fending the blows of life with one hand while with the other they try to write. While writing they also see *baṛe-baṛe vyakti* like you working against them... Thus people (*jantā*) consider you, their support (*pakṣadhar*), their true literary representatives and disregard someone who has been struggling for twenty years in the Hindi literary field. When I started to write I had to face a lot of opposition; now that I am somewhat established, after having fought my opponents and created literature, I find you against me in other ways...[15]

In the public and nationalist discourse writers were called to a high task. They were the vanguard of the nation, its critical and imaginative conscience.[16] Nirālā, like most

and Bengali literary people in 1930. He did so first by singing a few poems of his own, and then by delivering a speech in current Bengali on the influence of old Hindi poetry over modern Bengali poets. Nirālā, Interview, p. 211.

[14] 'Gāndhījī se bātcīt' and 'Nehrūjī se do bātem̐', first published in the collection *Prabandha-pratimā* (1940), collected in *Nirālā racnāvalī*, vol. 6, pp. 224-31 and 231-35. To reach Gandhi's place of stay in Lucknow in 1936 was itself an effort: finally, while standing on the bridge over the Gomti river, Nirālā saw a goat being carried on a tonga and guessed that it must be Gandhi's goat! Following it, he found the address.

[15] Nirālā, 'Nehrūjī se do bātem̐', p. 234.

[16] See e.g. V.N. Tivārī, 'Sāhitya aur rāṣṭrīytā', *Sammelan Patrikā*, V, 8-9, 1918; Lakṣmīdhar Vājpeyī, 'Rāṣṭra ko kaise sāhitya kī āvaśyaktā hai?', *Mādhurī*, X, pt. 1, 1, August 1931; and the editorial 'Rāṣṭra aur sāhitya', *Cām̐d*, XVII, pt. 1, 5, October 1939.

other Hindi writers, identified fully with this role and believed that contemporary Hindi literature had been quite successful in the task. Nirālā himself was considered to have brought about a revolution in Hindi poetry, breaking old conventions in form and content. Such originality was itself according to Nirālā, we have seen, a nationalist achievement, and in this Hindi 'literature was ahead of politics': while politicians were constrained by wordly and tactic considerations, literary people moved ahead, breaking new ground not just for themselves but for their readers, too. Instead, while calling out to writers not to be courtly, dependent intellectuals anymore, political leaders behaved with them exactly like patrons dispensing patronage and asking for allegiance and deference in return. We shall come back to this contradiction later. It is partly in the context of this awoved role and dignity of the intellectual that we should understand Nirālā's frustration, particularly at the time when Hindi writers were called, thanks to Hindi *rāṣṭrabhāṣā*, to new, wider audiences and an even higher role. Like most Hindi intellectuals, Nirālā was not prepared to consider even the possibility of English performing such a cultural role: English *had* to be wiped out for any cultural regeneration to take place.

Nirālā's frustration had also partly to do with a crisis of authority that was internal to the literary sphere. We have already discussed how critical debates over the nature and function of literature (2.2) and over the nature of criticism itself (2.4) betrayed a loss of certainties about the role and rules of literature and a crisis in intellectual authority. They were also closely related to changes in the institutional structure of literature - a process not too unlike that which had taken place in England in the late nineteenth century. In England, debates over the role of criticism had mirrored a conflict between the originality of the Victorian 'universal man' and of the later aesthetic critic on one side, and the 'rise of the expert' on the other. This was also a contest between individual authority and the authority vested exclusively in the community of experts; and between a common (public) terrain and the specialist, esoteric enclosure of the academia.[17]

In Hindi, too, in this period literary activity and the social position and role of literary people changed radically. On the one hand the growth of a Hindi literary market and a literary public fostered the emergence of independent writers, whose authority stemmed from their creative achievements and their public voice. On the other hand,

[17] 'Debates about criticism were part of, and were indeed partly caused by, much larger upheavals in British intellectual life. These upheavals were felt in three ways. First... in changes in the models of 'man', which in many disciplines of knowledge, particularly those in the newly emergent social sciences, were used to underwrite the explanations and the practices. Secondly, they were felt in *the crisis of intellectual authority* which affected all disciplines of knowledge and which thus profoundly altered the value of particular critical statements. The third... was the fact that, along with many other disciplines, criticism became *institutionalized within the universities*: indeed, as I shall show, one of the main ends of university reform in the last half of the nineteenth century was to accommodate the growing diversity of intellectual enquiry. More important, along with the process of institutionalization went the companion process of professionalization;' Ian Small, *Conditions for Criticism*, pp. 19-20, emphases added.

criticism was becoming institutionalized within universities, and literary scholars were turning into a professional establishment of university professors. It is common to all nascent professions to try and delimit a particular practice and lay exclusive claim to it: professional knowledge has to be proved valuable and restricted to the 'professionals'.[18] Thus, while writers tread experimental paths, nascent critics attempted to identify and foster particular values in literature considered peculiar to Indian literature (the Romantic idea of the literature of the *Volk*) or useful for the needs of the times or useful *tout court*. As a result, a crisis ensued between the authority of the independent writer and that vested into the community of scholars, specialists who had the power to decide over the canon. This involved, we mentioned in an earlier section (2.5), deciding what was 'Literature', setting standards of appropriate specialist knowledge and the values it endorsed, and controlling the dissemination of this knowledge and these values among future generations of readers and critics on the basis of their own authority of only qualified specialists.[19]

This was exactly what Nirālā took issue with when he complained about the literary taste of the Hindī Sāhitya Sammelan curriculum and the opposition he had to face from literary critics.[20] His contacts with the newly-born Hindi departments were strained, and interaction took place either with students or *privately* with a few lecturers. However, what Nirālā thirsted for was *public* recognition in the seats of literary authority, and he found that hard to obtain.[21] In his critique, which tried to challenge current sources of authority, Nirālā took issue with the authority of professional critics in universities and colleges and with that of the *jantā* and of uncriticized popularity. To start from the latter, Nirālā argued against a literal and narrow understanding of 'utility',[22] and maintained that while new, experimental literature could not be immediately popular with the common

[18] By comparison, the process by which professions in Europe sought to acquire status by entering the university as new subjects (and English was one of them) included: '(a) a high degree of generalized and systematic knowledge; (b) primary orientation to the community interest rather than to individual self-interest; (c) a high degree of self-control of behaviour through codes of ethics internalized in the process of work socialization and through voluntary associations organized and operated by work specialists themselves; (d) and a system of rewards (moneatry and honorary) that is primarily a set of symbols of work achievement and thus ends in themselves, not means to some other end of individual self-interests;' *ibid.*, pp. 23-24; see also p. 135.

[19] *Ibid.*, pp. 139-40.

[20] For strong criticism on Chāyāvād, especially from Rāmcandra Śukla, the most influential and respected Hindi critic, see above 2.2; for the often personal and virulent attacks on Nirālā, see. Rāmvilās Śarmā, *Nirālā kī sāhitya sādhnā*, vol. 1. Nirālā resented the fact that Sammelan authorities, so eager in guiding students, 'are just as much devoid of knowledge about the "pillars" of literature' and did not introduce them to the most modern and living literature; Nirālā, Interview, p. 211.

[21] For the greater popularity of Sumitrānandan Pant and other young and less fiery Chāyāvādī, with students and at poetry readings, see above 2.3.

[22] 'In every literature there are people who consider gross utilitarianism to be the peak (*utkarṣ*) of literature. They say that literature proves to be genuine (*kharā*), useful and valuable as far as its strength lies in the interest of the people (*jantā*)'. Rather than pitching 'aestheticism' (*saundaryavād*) against 'utilitarianism' (*upyogitāvād*), Nirālā suggested a picture of literature as a tree with many branches. Moreover, one should not confuse *pracalan* (custom) with truth; also, for a writer *pracār* (diffusion) of tastes and beliefs among the people came at a second stage and required considerable effort. Nirālā, 'Sāhitya aur jantā', editorial in *Sudhā*, June 1933; in *Nirālā racnāvalī*, vol. 6, pp. 501-2.

readership, it was nonetheless useful in another sense, in that is refined taste and beliefs.[23] Moreover, true literature would stand the test of time and eventually 'show its strength': thus, writers did move towards the people, but following their own, original ways. In the present stage of modern Hindi literature, the common people did not take favourably to new writers because they were unprepared and because the literary *pracāraks*, those whose duty it was to prepare the ground, were in fact hostile. As a result, the common folk was not made aware of who was taking the greatest responsibilities and did not know whom they should honour most for their original contributions. Thus Nirālā acknowledged the powers of professional critics but criticized their attitude:

> The literary horizon of Hindi is very small, and most college lecturers do not teach students to fly in the open sky of literature. They want to see them sitting in the same nest of literature in the way they themselves sit... Most teachers are of conservative tastes (*purānī lakīr ke fakīr*), and the few who are new do not favour the new culture. Not everything is bad in the new civilisation, you know, there are many qualities as well. There is a peculiar sparkle in its refinement which makes man's soul as pure as a flower cleansed by a winter morning. But our teachers are unaware of it. This is why their students have their minds stuffed with the same old narrowness. They do not enter the Hindi literary field with lofty literary intentions, with any great new and original talent. They remain confined to visiting the same old *koṭhās* of *nāyikā-bhed* and *alaṃkāras*... Because of the faults in this education, their Hindi is also not as polished as it should be according to how the language has developed, and thanks to what current Hindi authorities teach them about poetry they keep tasting the sweetness of Braj poetry until they themselves become sickening poets. Their poems are a sorrowful sight.[24]

What this indictment reveals is a competing notion of literature, and a cry against marginalization from the academia. Although Nirālā's protest was personal, it nonetheless took side for the authority of the Hindi literary *mahāpuruṣa*, that humble *sāhitya-sevī* who had taken the more tortuous, original and problematic way - the way of 'knowledge of reality', of study, action and *tapasyā*.

What do these controversies tell us about the crisis of authority, and especially political authority, in the Hindi sphere?

A few remarks on conceptual terms will not be out of place here, since first of all we face an absence of direct debates and a direct equivalent of the word - which does not imply that the concept itself was absent. Rather, discussions in Hindi groped with an array of existing words and concepts in Indian political culture. Just like *sārvajanik* does not cover the range and depth of the concept of 'the public', the term *adhikār* does not express

[23] For the lack of educated readers in Hindi, see Nirālā, 'Sāhitya tathā hamāre lekhakoṁ kā saṅkaṭ', editorial in *Sudhā*, September 1934, reprinted *ibid.*, pp. 468-69.

[24] Nirālā, 'Sāhitya kī vartmān pragati', editorial in *Sudhā*, June 1930; in *Nirālā racnāvalī*, vol. 5, pp. 460-61. In lamenting the absence of serious literary criticism in Hindi, Nirālā argued along similar lines, and added that 'one feels like tearing contemporary Hindi critical literature to pieces: it is so gross, so lifeless, so far from the human mind'; 'Hindī meṁ ālocnā', *Sudhā*, July 1993; quoted *ibid.*: 506.

the conflict and crisis of authority. We have thus to explore related terms and concepts - such as *pratiṣṭhā* or *prabhāv* (influence) - and how they are subjected to tensions when new sources and forms of authority emerge along with developments in the public sphere.[25]

Debates in Hindi on Indian political culture, however, did not investigate political power in terms of personal authority; they would rather centre around the cluster of *rājā* and *prajā* - whether to argue about the existence of contractual or limited sovereignty in ancient India, or about mutual relations between rulers and subjects, or about the rights of citizenship or power and authority in general.[26] Thus, zamindars, taluqdars and conservative intellectuals and politicians would emphasize the paternalistic, benevolent aspect of this mutual relationship, while radical intellectuals and politicians would underline the contractual and consensual meaning. According to them, the relationship of sovereignty and subordination existed only as long as the *rājā* worked for the 'welfare of the people' (*prajā-iṣṭa*): final authority and legitimacy had always rested with in the *prajā*, and they had the right to withold obedience if the *rājā* did not perform his duty. Needless to say, most modern *rājās* - called contemptously *rāje-mahārāje* - had failed in their duty, and so had zamindars.[27] Moreover, everywhere in the world these were the times of 'the rule of the *prajā*' - of *prajātantra* - and there was no need for *rājās* anymore. On the other hand, 'influence' (*pratiṣṭhā, prabhāv*) usually indicated clout and prestige over a limited group of people and in a local arena - be it that of a *jāti*, a *samāj*, or a mohalla or a town. This was connected to status, and was used for traditional landed or moneyed elites, and for 'senior citizens', *baṛe vyakti*. As such, it did not enter tehoretical political debates.

[25] It is useful e.g. to keep in mind the varied range of the concept of *sarkār* - used to indicate the impersonal state, the government in power, and also as an appellative for any person in power. The adjective *sarkārī* had also the meaning of 'public' in the sense of related to the state, e.g. public service is *sarkārī naukrī*. Particularly as spoken by peasants or generally subordinate classes - *sarkār* shows how for them impersonal power and personal power overlapped, be it the zamindar, tahsildar, police officer, judge or generally educated interlocutor. '*Sarkār*' immediately established a personal relation of subordination. Other terms would be *svāmī, mālik* (lord), which would have other overtones, since they are the terms used for God as well. Similarly, the relation of *bharosā* (faith, reliance) applied both to God and to subordination to, and protection by, a wordly authority; for *bharosā* in national leaders, see above 6.2. As Premcand's characters (e.g. Horī in *Godān*) show well, the appellative implied an entreaty: Horī never fails to call the zamindar thus, so as to ingratiate him and to request his benevolence and sympathy (*sahānubhūti*). Hence, what to the zamindar appeared as a spontaneous (and natural) manifestation of loyalty - along the paternalistic lines of *rājā-prajā* - was also an attempt to request protection and reciprocity. It acknowledged that the power of the person above was capricious, that the subordinate had no 'rights' to stand by, and that deference was the best way to make sure that the caprice would turn in one's favour. In educated discourse, *sarkār* would both apply to the impersonal state and to the legally limited government.
[26] E.g. M. M. Mālavīya, 'Rāj-dharma', *Abhyuday*, 1908, in P. Mālavīya, *Mālavīyajī ke lekh*, pp. 162-68; 'Indra', 'Prācīn bhārat meṁ rājnītik svādhīntā', *Mādhurī*, IV, pt. 2, 2, Feb. 1926, pp. 180-86.
[27] E.g. Śukdevsiṃh, 'Sārvajanik saṃsthāoṁ kī duravasthā', *Mādhurī*, II, pt. 1, 3, Oct. 1923; see also Rāy Bajraṅgbahādur Siṃh, MLC, the taluqdar of Bhadri, 'Talluqedāroṁ kā savāl', *Sarasvatī, Kaṅgres ministrī viśeṣāṅk*, Nov. 1937. Interestingly, Śukdevsiṃh argues that Parliament, the Imperial Council and the Legislative Council *cannot* be called public (*sārvajanik*) institutions precisely because they do not serve the welfare of the public: 'in their decisions they appear to want to harm (*aniṣṭa*) the *prajā-pakṣa* all the time'. *Rāje-mahārāje*, on their part, are 'blinded by the pride of authority (*adhikār-garva*)', by 'greed for fame' (*yaśololuptā*) and personal enmity; p. 264.

What the discourse and activities of 'the public' did was to move away from patronage and relationships of deference to an impersonal, public and limited notion of power and to alternative sources of authority in 'the public', envisaging a wider, open-ended and potentially equal audience. Already in the moderate reformist programme of Mahāvīr Prasād Dvivedī, 'good' rulers and administrators were only those who actively serve the people and who displayed a measure of *tyāg* (self-sacrifice). Later, one of the cornerstones of Gandhian politics would be to challenge, discredit and ridicule British authority through symbolic reversals of values. As we have seen, literary, but especially political activism, *sevā, tyāg* and achievements did produce a personal authority which might enhance status (as in the case of Motilal Nehru) but was not necessarily be connected to it. We have seen that the majority of Hindi leaders who emerged from the Non-Cooperation and Civil Disobedience movements came from ordinary backgrounds: their authority stemmed from the field, and wearing khadi or leading a simple, austere life became the seals of legitimacy. They represented an inversion of the traditional marks of aristocratic authority (conspicuous consumption and secluded unavailability) and, at least in the eyes of Hindi intellectuals, marked the Congress *mahāpuruṣa* as a 'man of the people'. They also marked a more direct commitment to the people and to the values of justice, *tyāg* etc. than were expected from 'ordinary' politicians. This kind of authority involved not only a style of living, as we have said, but also an unassuming and approachable role: a Congress *mahāpuruṣa* was expected not be as superior and unapproachable as British authorities or traditional rulers. Insofar as they personified these alternative values in human form, nationalist *mahāpuruṣas* could be considered the vanguards of the Svaraj yet to come.

In the literary field the discourse and activities of 'the public' engendered a notion of independence and of direct commitment to the people. Writers subscribing to it woud keep away from occasions where they might be asked to adhere to customary deference to patrons.[28] In writing, breaking literary conventions became a way of asserting the personal authority of the writer and the individual right to create. The controversy that raged on the matter reveals at least contrasting attitudes towards literary authority.

However, parallelly to this process of questioning authority and developing alternative seats, there was another 'constitutional' processof consolidation, which led to the forming of a literary establishment and, in the political domain, to the formation of a Congress *sarkār*. One result was that Congress *mahāpuruṣas,* whose authority originally stemmed from *tyāg, sevā* etc., fell back into the customary practice of personal power. The

[28] See Nirālā's experience at the court of Chattarpur, in 'Chatrapur meṁ tīn saptāh', *Sudhā,* July 1928, now in *Nirālā racnāvalī*, vol. 6, pp. 87-88, and his strong remark that 'the time for Hindi literature has not yet come' when he witnessed deference to *baṛe vyakti* at the Delhi Sammelan meeting of 1924; Nirālā, Interview, p. 209.

simple style and *tyāg* were kept up at the level of appearance and of ideology. As the case of the Sāhitya Sammelan showed, when Congress ministers graced public occasions, or visited temples or presided over community functions, they did so with the graciousness and superiority of patronising sovereigns. When they had not been in power, that appeared as a subversive move to infuse a nationalist overtone into such events, but now that they were in power it became just a question of sovereignty and of mutual legitimation.

Nirālā and other Hindi intellectuals noticed all this and wondered. Not only their own authority as literary figures and mediators of public opinion in the press seemed curbed and denied, but also the expectation of a sharing, a participatory nationalist authority. Instead, all the Congress commitment and closeness to the people seemed to have been lost. 'Congress *netāśāhī*' is the term Devīdatt Śukla, the editor of *Sarasvatī,* used in 1939. Similarly, the Congress government in U.P. was accused of 'overlooking the opinion of the majority' on the issue of Hindi and Hindustani: 'But when did the Congress *deśbhaktas* ever pay attention to the people (*jantā*)?' was Śukla's wry comment.[29]

Thus, by the end of the 1930s part of the more institutionalised Hindi intelligentsia happily secured Congress patronage, and some Hindi politicians reached important parliamentary positions. This process, however, took place to the detriment of the disparate voices present in the Hindi public sphere, so that the official Hindi language and culture Congress endorsed, albeit reluctantly and amidst contestation, was to hinder the further expansion and popularisation of the Hindi public sphere, and the recognition of its most original voices.

[29] D. Śukla, *Sampādak ke paccīs varṣ*, p. 117.

6. Conclusion

This final chapter examined the relationship between the Hindi literary sphere and the rapidly changing political sphere in order to explore critically the varieties of Hindi nationalism and the relationship between Hindi writers and leaders in the nationalist movement. As one critic remarks, refinements of Habermas' theory examine the cultural world 'not as a realm left behind when the public sphere took up political issues, but as an important aspect of public participation and contestation'.[1]

Both in the literary and in the political sphere, we noticed, we find a kind of double-track, of intellectuals and politicians working gradually their way up within the spaces provided by the colonial system, or else creating separate spaces in opposition and in alternative to those of the system. In the first case, the attitude to the public was to educate, enthuse and guide it through responsible leadership, in the second case the emphasis was rather on 'breaking chains', giving voice to new subjects and forging new meaningful bonds. It was in these alternative spaces that Hindi literature and literary people came most directly to have a political role, whether in the political press or in 'national' schools, and that writing Hindi itself became a political act. Also, whereas in constitutional spaces Hindi's subordinate status to English was not really questioned, in alternative spaces English was debunked along with other marks of colonisation, and Hindi was championed as the language of the masses, the 'true nation'. It was also in these alternative spaces that the new public sphere interacted with older forms of public activity such as festivals and processions, taking on board religious symbols and popular idioms.

While bilingualism was discarded and delegitimized more radically in the literary sphere, also thanks to the movement for Hindi *rāṣṭrabhāṣā*, in the political sphere bilingualism remained, at least in practice, the norm, especially in the constitutional arena and in the Congress at the national level. In the case of Hindi politicians, the contradiction between their pledge to Hindi and the practice of bilingualism was solved pragmatically, and it resulted in Hindi becoming even more of a culturally loaded language for them.

The claim of the nationalist public sphere to represent the whole nation was fraught with difficulties, as the rhetoric espousal of the peasant showed. While it is true that to a certain extent urban intellectuals and politicians made space for the peasantry in their view of the public, and peasants gained some access to the nationalist movement, it was hardly on an equal footing and with equal readiness to listen as well as to speak to one

[1]Sandria Freitag, 'Introduction' to the special issue on *Aspects of the Public in Colonial South Asia*, Vol. XIV, No. 1, June 1991, p. 6.

another. Moreover, the difficulty intellectuals and politicians had in accepting the social conflict that inevitably arose with peasants' activism and agenda shows once more a widespread and strong resistance to accept internal conflict, which is a direct consequence of the principle of publicity.

Thus, Sahajānand Sarasvatī's example showed the possibility of an autonomous *kisan* voice and public, but also the constraints and limitations under which such voice emerged even within the nationalist political sphere.

Sahajānand's case is symptomatic of a growing tension within the public sphere between constitutional and non-constitutional domains. We saw it in the language question, where the victory was a 'constitutional' one and favoured a non-popular style of Hindi. We saw it in the literary sphere, where the great variety of voices and styles did not square well with the political agenda of literature in education. Finally we saw it in the political sphere, where we find a growing distance between Congress leadership, local activists and popular (counter-) publics, and between the bi-lingual Congress Hindi leadership and the more independent Hindi intelligentsia.

As a result, the picture that emerges from the two decades is one of two opposite trends: one is a tremendous expansion and emergence of new vocal subjects, e.g. women, with several long-term consequences, and a strong sense of political involvement and cultural responsibility on the part of intellectuals; the other is a cultural and political bottle-neck, with a budding literary and political establishment which lay exclusive claims to authority and discouraged criticism and dissent. Traces of both trends would remain and clash in the following decades.

Chapter 7

Conclusions

In this thesis the notion of 'public sphere' was adopted in order to ask and answer several orders of question. One set of questions pertained to the Hindi literary sphere and its momentous changes in the relatively short span of two decades. These questions were initially spurred by our personal encounter with the world both of *śuddh* Hindī and its solid educational-critical apparatus, and with literary voices which seemed to suggest a more composite and harshly conflictual reality. Yet, and this seemed remarkably contradictory, our *śuddh* Hindi teachers could comfortably expatiate even on dissident voices without being in the least affected by their critical sting. In a word, Premcand, Nirālā and Nāgarjun could be comfortably part of the canon without its categories and premises being questioned.

Thus, our initial set of questions regarded what seemed to be the roots of this curious contradiction. First of all, we wanted to explore and understand the remarkable variety in the literature of the period, a variety that appeared to be both in terms of divergent but co-existing tastes and *saṃskāras,* as well as a wide range of experimentations with literary genres. Secondly, we wanted to understand how and why, out of this variety and out of a popular nationalist movement, a Hindi *rāṣṭrabhāṣā* could emerge that was not varied and popular at all, in fact quite the opposite. Thirdly, we wanted to understand how a monolithic cultural nationalism had emerged out of what appeared as a period of lively and wide-ranging critical debate, and in which literature seemed all engaged in giving voice to social contradictions and oppressed subjects. How could official Hindi nationalism then be so dismissive of conflict and debate and casually operate remarkable exclusions of other subjects? This seemed all the more remarkable since such uncritical mood appeared to have persisted even after Independence, when the outer enemy, British rule, had left.

In this respect, journals revealed another world altogether. As a source of material they were particularly precious in providing coverage of, and insights into, the literary field and the processes in action. These processes can be described, we have seen, as a process of *expansion* and one of *institutionalisation*.

Expansion took place in fact thanks to the open and commercial spaces journals provided. A wider and more diverse readership emerged to support them, thanks to a young Hindi-schooled generation and an emerging readership of women. Growing political awareness undoubtedly helped this expansion, creating a momentum that literature did its

best to fuel, and which charged public literary events like poetry and literary meetings with nationalist overtones.

In this expanding and more open literary sphere, modern Hindi writers became freer to interpret *Hindī-sevā* in original and personal ways and more conscious of the public importance of what they wrote. Thus, we see modern Hindi literature of this period actively performing (at least) two important roles for the 'public sphere'. First of all, in many original ways literature came to play an *imaginative* function, i.e. it provided a space where contemporary aspirations and anxieties could be explored and composed in a *verisimilar,* if not realistic, fashion. We saw it in the case of historical narratives, where literature could forge connections and provide avenues of personal quest. We saw it in the case of social novels, where the simplicity of rational answers was eschewed to explore social problems with all their tensions and complexity (e.g. Premcand's *Sevā-sadan*), or else where new relationships could be probed by legitimising emotions and desires. We saw it even in Jainendra Kumār's imaginative and fraught treatment of well-accepted roles and ideals. Secondly, literature played an active and self-conscious political function. This included straightforward propaganda - which still required, however, a creative reinterpretation of political messages for a specific audience; it included narratives commenting and elaborating on the movement, thus providing explanation and legitimisation for action. It also included finding a voice for new subjects like women and *kisans*. Finally, as a Chāyāvād poet like Nirālā claimed, just being original was an indirect way of being political. After all, as contemporary young readers and later critics were quick to grasp, the burgeoning sense of the self that Chāyāvād displayed, the freedom to explore and establish correspondences, to vent out emotions without constraint, all this upheld an independence of spirit and mind that demanded and foreshadowed political independence. Being original, moreover, meant not complying with cultural colonialism, and negotiating creatively being 'Indian' with being 'modern'. This sense of exploration was mirrored by the physical and intellectual mobility of Hindi intellectuals of all hues during this period; they would literally cross worlds in coming from village to city, from traditional scholarship to jobs in the press, from the world of Sanskrit to that of Hindi, Bengali, English. In doing this, they would not relinquish their previous *saṃskāras,* but rather keep adding on new ones in a remarkable show of elasticity and cultural self-confidence. For, after all, it is much easier to give up one's previous scholarship for the *naī vidyā* than to keep both and either harmonise them or skip back and forth from one to the other. Journals, we saw, mirrored this expansion by including old and new, high and popular tastes all in the same literary space, mirroring in a sense the coexistence of *saṃskāras* in individual themselves. Finally, writers of this period expressed this expansion in their own trajectories across genres, styles and literary sensibilities, in a period that witnessed a true outburst of talented polygraphs.

Institutionalisation of literature took place at the same time, we have seen. It took place through associations and their scholarly publication series and, much with the same actors, through the education system and its related publishing business: both joined forces in establishing the Hindi literary curriculum. We already discussed the implications of, and the reasons for, it being a *literary* - rather than a scientific or a comprehensive curriculum. Others have pointed out how this seemingly innocuous and limited literary curriculum carried great cultural weight, because it was underwritten by the authority of the centralised system and because its message was subtle and pervasive. Through the choices of the curriculum and the kind of historical discourse it was based upon, we saw how it institutionalised a chauvinistic and exclusivist historical consciousness that was to exercise a lasting influence on future generations. Finally, we saw how institutionalisation bestowed authority on literary people active in the education system and associations, an authority they used in the literary sphere to exercise excluding judgements and critical interpretations of those writers who did not fit into their mould. These were the men behind the institutionalisation of Hindi in the *rāṣṭrabhāṣā* struggle; although they were successful in mustering the support of independent Hindi intellectuals against the common threat, it did not mean that they were ready to share out their own authority or recognise the others' contribution once the struggle was over.

Thus, expansion and institutionalisation took place at the same time in the Hindi literary sphere, symbolised by the two poles of the 'journal' and the 'text-book'.

The material and phenomena examined, however, threw up also another set of questions, pertaining to the changes in the public sphere. We can only suggest some answers here, since their implications were more long-ranging and involved as much the period under study as that following 1940. These questions regard women and the re-negotiation of space, norms and the sphere of emotions; peasants and the limits of their access into the political sphere; the limits of 'the public' and the non-vernacularization of the state. Such questions also address expansion and institutionalisation, but beyond the literary sphere.

The material emerging from women's journals showed that women's access to the public sphere (both the literary and the political one) took place under the aegis, so to say, of an overdetermination of roles. That is, it did not happen, or not chiefly, with a (feminist) discourse of women's rights or a reversal of womanly ideals and priorities. Rather, women reworked those ideals and norms at the margins. Thus, apart from a few instances, they did not overtly challenge or deny patriarchal roles and, consequently, authority: they publicly came out only when patriarchal authority was superseded by the higher one of Gandhi's. This suggests that in absence of a superseding authority such as Gandhi's, women would later find it difficult to legitimise their own agendas and come together and act on the basis of their own authority. Respectability and self-censorship acted as further curbs to women's

use of publicity. They, for instance, prevented women from using the carnivalesque or subaltern subversion that we find in so many popular satires of middle-class modernity, and also confirmed more easily male ideas about women's nature. Thus, if we go by the kind of literature women writers produced, women's access to the public sphere seems to have thrown up many more questions and tensions than it solved.

The question of peasants' participation in the nationalist political sphere highlights further tensions in the expansion of 'the public' in colonial India. Sahajānand's story showed how, even for a 'traditional' intellectual, political experience supported by rational arguments could lead to espousing the peasants' right to put forward their agenda for *svarājya*. It also showed how nationalist awakening provided a framework to undertake and legitimise autonomous initiatives. Yet, peasants' participation in the nationalist movement also showed the tensions, which historians like Gyan Pandey have recently investigated, around issues of leadership and responsibility. In other words: why did nationalist leaders feel their role towards the masses they rallied to be one of leadership without responsibility? Vinita Damodaran has spoken of 'Broken promises'; in fact, the case of women and peasants show that the expectations raised by public access created a momentum and a fervour of public activism, but these could not be institutionalised.

We may suggest here that this had partly to do with the political bi-lingualism and the tension between constitutional and non-constitutional politics that we discussed in the sixth chapter. Both, together with the cultural make-up of (Hindi) Congress politicians, gave rise to popular political expectations while seriously limiting the purview of 'the public'. As we have seen, entire domains such as that of the state, of personal authority, social practices and social conflict in Hindu society were kept 'out' of the purview of public discourse. The discourse of the public spoke of an overarching and fundamentally harmonious *jāti*, and all would attain harmony and prosperity once Indian rule would supplant the foreign one. Without discounting other important factors, we may suggest that such a limited notion of 'the public' could not envisage, let alone bring about, structural changes in the relationship between the state and society, among social subjects and between individual and group beyond a limited extent. As Partha Chatterjee and others have shown, the few plans to restructure the state and its agencies, e.g. education, were quickly scrapped as impractical even before they were sought to be implemented. 'National' institutions quickly lost tempo after 1947, as if independence had realized all the change that was needed.

Thus, when institutionalisation came, it carried little of the public momentum behind it, and this holds true in the literary as well as in the political spheres. Hindi itself still carries this fracture within, after what we saw was a 'phyrric victory' in the language question. On the one side there is the official and academic *śuddh* Hindi; on the other side that of colloquial use; rich, vivid but hopelessly subordinate to both English and official Hindi. A similar disjuncture can be seen at the level of cultural imagination, a disjuncture

that affected intellectuals and writers across the political spectrum. That is, Hindi writers after 1940 treaded a path of experimentation and political commitment, but without examining critically - apart from a few cases - the exclusions the language and cultural and historical categories they used carried within themselves. This inherently limited the scope of both their experimentation and their commitment. Once again, literature was to serve as an imaginative and well-fenced space in which one could be a revolutionary and a modernist, and still believe in the basic wholeness of 'Bhārtīy saṃskṛti'.

By contrast, the two decades between 1920 and 1940 tell us of period when institutionalisation was only under way, and when every writer, editor, teacher, translator felt he or she were exploring new possibilities and creating a bit of the nation every time they took up their pen.

Appendix. Biographies

What follows is a series of short biographies of the main Hindi personalities mentioned in the course of the thesis. Information were collated from a variety of sources, all quoted in the Bibliography. The choice of names, as well as titles and information, is partly dictated by the available information, and partly by the intention of giving as wide as possible a picture of the possible ways of being a 'Hindi intellectual' in this period. Accordingly, we have focused, when possible, on family background and occupation, social and caste position, literary *saṃskāras* in the family and education, link with the land and mobility, occupation and source of income, participation in the literary sphere and political activism, multilingualism and relationship with other Indian linguistic areas (mainly Bombay and Calcutta). A few general observations can be drawn.

Firstly, the majority of those who became actors in the Hindi public sphere belonged to either small zamindar or even peasant families, whose fathers and grand/fathers had sometimes diversified into teaching, law, the lower echelons of government service or the army; to service families who still served local landowners, worked as village *patwaris* and *kanungos*; to scholarly or priestly Brahmin families, who performed ritual duties in the village and sometimes taught at village *pathshalas*; and finally to Agrawal and Khatri merchant families. Thus, higher and middle-castes, whose linguistic competencies had been diverse, compacted around Hindi. Caste-wise, the spectrum hardly widened during the two decades: over half of the Hindi literary people were Brahmins, including a few Bumihars, while the rest was made up by Kayasthas, Agrawals, Khatris and Thakurs. The same came be said of the first women intellectuals. In many cases, it was the first generation to receive Western-style education, whether in English or the vernacular. Education itself varied a lot, even within each family, depending from family and local circumstances.

Secondly, compared to Bengal, for instance, only very few scions of landed or moneyed families, or highly-placed government servants, turned to Hindi. Thus, the important task of translating ideas, literary forms and sensibilities back and forth between English and the 'vernacular', of mediating class and cultural differences, was left to usually indigent and overworked vernacular salaried practitioners. Even the few exceptions like Rāykṛṣṇadās, Jayśaṅkar Prasād and Viśvambharnāth Śarmā 'Kauśik', for whom literature was a very serious delectation and who kept alive private salons for literary conversation, did not display the kind of 'cultural bilingualism' we find in the Bengali *bhadralok*, that ease in both the English and the 'vernacular' world.

Thirdly, whether writing was or was not the main source of income is an important discriminant. If so, teaching and journalism were the two possible avenues for the Hindi-educated. Teaching, especially in *pathshalas,* still required little or no qualification but was very poorly paid, while journalism was an easier option for the single intellectual in the city, whose family stayed back at the village, or who could count on the family land or the income of other men in the joint family. Yet, for men burdened with family responsibilities, the press was a risky choice. Both as a teacher and in the press, as salaried intellectuals Hindī literateurs had generally to face a condition of submission - either to the government or to the owners of the school or of the paper. It is a sign of the times that resignations and break-ups were far from infrequent. Consequently, Hindi intellectuals, especially if born in a village, led often a remarkably peripatetic and unstable life. Frequent changes of residence strengthened community feelings among Hindi literateurs: in each town or city there would be, in absence of a family, a 'family' of Hindi literati who could provide the wandering scribe with friendship, intellectual and often practical support.

Thirdly, although links with the land were hardly severed - often the family stayed back, pushing the lone intellectual into a lasting temporary accommodation - there was an unmistakable trend toward inurbation, especially towards the large provincial centres of Allahabad, Banaras, Lucknow, Kanpur, Jabalpur, Delhi, and of course Calcutta and Bombay. There were the job opportunities, and there were the Universities and colleges, after 1920 also with Hindi students. The journal's office, the poetry circle, the hostel and the coffee house became landmarks for a new cultivated youth, for which the public presence of Hindi was less of a hard-won conquest and more of a given fact, and the cultural contest of the turn of the century less urgent than producing good poetry. Although the families and the social background of the college- and University-going youth was not different from those of the Hindi activists of a generation earlier, the urban and sophisticated image of the 'young poet' definitely was.

Finally, most of the Hindi literary people mentioned below were involved in the nationalist movement at some point of their lives. A few became full-time Congress activists and leaders, many more supported the movement without giving up their occupation and saw their literary activity as an integral part of the movement. Also, whenever possible, they worked for 'national' institutions.

List of Biographies

'Baccan', Harivaṃś Rāy
Bakhśī, Padumlāl Punnālāl
Baṛathvāl, Pītāmbardatt
Benipurī, Rāmvṛkṣa
Bhārgava, Dulārelāl
Bhaṭṭ, Badrīnāth
Caturvedī, Banārsīdās
Caturvedī, Mākhanlāl
Caturvedī, Śrīnārāyaṇ
Cauhān, Subhadrākumārī
Dās, Babu Śyāmsundar
Dev, Acarya Narendra

Dīn, Lala Bhagvān
Dvivedī, Mahāvīr Prasād

Gauṛ, Kṛṣṇadev Prasād
Gauṛ, Rāmdās
Goyal, Rāmeśvarī
Gupta, Maithilīśaraṇ
Gupta, Śivaprasād

'Harioudh', Ayodhyāsiṃh Upādhyāy

Jośī, Hemcandra and Ilācandra

'Kauśik', Viśvambharnāth Śarmā
Kumār, Jainendra

Lakhanpāl, Candrāvatī

Mālavīya, Kṛṣṇakānt
Mālavīya, Madan Mohan
Miśra, Śyāmbihārī and Sukhdevbihārī

'Navīn', Bālkṛṣṇa Śarmā
Nehru, Rāmeśvarī
'Nirālā', Śuryakānt Tripāṭhī

Ojhā, Dr. G. H.

Pālīvāl, Śrīkṛṣṇadatt
Pāṇḍey, Rūpnārāyaṇ
Pant, Sumitrānandan
Parāṛkar, Bābūrāo Viṣṇu
Parivrājak, Svami Satyadev
Poddār, Hanumānprasād
Prasād, Jayśaṅkar
Prem, Dhanīrām
Premcand (Dhanpat Rāy)

'Ratnākar', Jagannāth Dās
Rāykṛṣṇadās

Sahajānand Sarasvatī, Svami
Sahāy, Śivpūjan
Sahgal, Rāmrakh Siṃh
Sampūrṇānand
'Sanehī', Gayāprasād Śukla
Sāṅkṛtyāyan, Rāhul
Śarmā, Padmasiṃh
Śarmā, Rāmjīlāl
Śāstrī, Hariharnāth
Sītārām, Lala
Śraddhānand, Svami (Mahatma Munśīrām)
Śrīvāstava, G.P.
Śrīvāstava, Navjādiklāl
Śrīvāstava, Pratāp Nārāyaṇ
Śukla, Devīdatt
Śukla, Rāmcandra
Sundarlāl, Pandit

Ṭaṇḍon, Puruṣottam Dās
Tivārī, Veṅkateś Nārāyaṇ
Tripāṭhī, Rāmnareś

'Ugra', Pāṇḍey Becan Śarmā

Vājpeyī, Ambikāprasād
Vājpeyī, Kiśorīdās
Varmā, Bhagavatīcaraṇ
Varmā, Dhīrendra
Varmā, Mahādevī
Varmā, Babu Rāmcandra
Varmā, Rāmkumār
Varmā, Vṛndāvanlāl
Vidyālaṃkār, Jaycandra
Vidyārthī, Gaṇeś Śaṅkar
Viyogī Hari

'Baccan', Harivaṃś Rāy (1907-)
Birthplace
Mohallā Mutthiganj, Allahabad.
Education
Educated at the local Municipal school; High School examination in 1925; B.A. from Kayastha Pathshala and Allahabad University in 1929, dropped out of his M.A. course in English literature in 1930 to follow Civil Disobedience. Enrolled again years later and awarded M.A. in 1939 (at 32) from B.H.U. B.T. from Teachers' Training College, Allahabad in 1939. Ph.D. from Cambridge University in 1954.
Occupation
Teacher, then lecturer in English, Hindi officer; poet
Career
Until 1934 worked irregularly for *Cāṁd, Bhaviṣya,* Abhyuday Press, Pioneer Press, Prayāg Mahilā Vidyāpīṭh, Allahabad Middle school and Agraval Vidyalay, where he taught Hindi between 1934 and 1938. First married in 1927, widowed in 1936. Started

writing poetry as a child, and shot to fame in 1935 with audiences at *kavi-sammelans* with his intoxicating poems on *Madhuśālā* - one of the few collections of Hindi Khari Boli poetry to be truly popular. From 1939 to 1952 taught in the English department of Allahabad University. Remarried in 1942. After his return from Cambridge in 1955, first appointed Hindi producer at Akashvani Radio Centre in Allahabad, then appointed Hindi officer at the Ministry of External Affairs in Delhi in 1955 through his personal contacts with J. Nehru. Took part as Indian representative in several international poetry meetings and official trips. Awarded Padmabhushan in 1976. A solitary figure, did not interact with fellow Hindi writers. Translated several Shakespeare plays.
Works
Terā hār (1932); Hindi translation of Khayyam's *Rubayyat* (1935); *Madhuśālā* (1935); *Madhubālā* (1936); *Madhukalaś* (1937); *Niśā nimantraṇ* (1938); *Ekānt saṅgīt* (1939); *Kyā bhūlūṁ kyā yād karūṁ* (autobiography, 3 vols.).

Bakhśī, Padumlāl Pannālāl (1894-1971)
Birthplace
Khairagarh, a small town in princely Central India.
Education
Educated at the local Victoria school with Pandit Raviśaṅkar Śukla, later to become Chief Minister of C.P. Read *Candrakāntā* and *Candrakāntā santati* before High school; failed Matriculation once, then B.A. in 1922 from Allahabad University.
Occupation
In 1916 he became a high school teacher in a nearby town, while contributing irregularly with articles and translations to Hindi journals. Editor of *Sarasvatī* (1920-25 and 1927-29).
Career
His seriousness and wide readings attracted Mahāvīr Prasād Dvivedī, who chose young Bakhśī to replace him as editor of *Sarasvatī* in 1920. Bakhśī had to face strong opposition, though his translations and reviews were of a class of their own. As his assistant Devīdatt Śukla recalled: 'after Dvivedī left we more or less stopped receiving articles, and we had to write two, three articles for each issue ourselves.' Despite the effort, Bakhśī resigned in 1925 and went back to teaching; returned shortly to edit *Sarasvatī* in 1927-29 before turning definitely to teaching English in Khairagarh and writing. In 1959 became head of the Hindi department of Digvijay Snātakottar Mahāvidyālay in Rajnandgaon.
Works
Viśva-sāhitya (1925)

Baṛathvāl, Pītāmbar Datt (1902-1944)
Birthplace
Jaharkhel (Garhwal)
Education
First traditional Sanskrit education at home, then Hindi and English at Srinagar Government High School, then at Kalicharan High School and D.A.V. college in Lucknow. B.A., M.A. and LL..B. at B.H.U. The very first Hindi D.Lit. from B.H.U. in 1934.
Occupation
Hindi lecturer
Career
A disciple of Ś. Dās, he worked for several years as director of the Nāgarī Pracāriṇī Sabhā section for the search of Hindi manuscripts. First appointed to teach Hindi literature at B.H.U. in 1931; in 1938 appointed lecturer at Lucknow University, where he taught until his early death.
Works
The Nirgun School of Hindi Poetry (in English); *Gosvāmī Tulsīdās*(1925) and *Rūpak-rahasya* (1931) with Ś.S. Dās.

Benīpurī, Rāmvṛkṣa (or Rāmbṛkṣa) (1902-1968)
Birthplace
Village Benipur, district Muzaffarpur (Bihar).
Education
Left school in 1920 before taking Matriculation in order to join Non-Cooperation. Passed Hindī Sāhitya Sammelan *viśārad* exam.
Occupation
Editor and writer.
Career
Tulsī's *Mānas* awakened his interest in literature and poetry, and he entered the literary field through journalism. Edited *Taruṇ bhārat* (1921, weekly), *Kisān mitra* (weekly, 1922), *Bālak* (monthly, 1926), *Yuvak* (monthly, organ of the Bihar Socialist Party, 1929), *Lok saṅgrah* (1934), *Yogī* (weekly, 1935), *Jantā* (Congress Socialist Party weekly, 1937) and *Cunnū-munnū* (monthly for children, 1950). Founding member of the Bihar Socialist Party (1929); first critical but then active in the Bihar Provincial Kisān Sabhā; took part in the 1930 and 1942 movements and went to jail. Very active in Bihar's Hindi literary life, he was among the founders of the Bihar Hindī Sāhitya Sammelan, and was its general secretary between 1946 and 1950. Propaganda secretary of the All-India Hindī Sāhitya Sammelan in 1929. Also edited Vidyāpati's poems, wrote a commentary on Bihārīlāl's *Satsaī* and a biography of Jay Prakash Narayan. Noted for his floral language and strong sentimentalism.
Works
Māṭīkī mūrateṁ (sketches and memoirs, 1941-45), *Patitoṁ ke deś meṁ* (1930-32), *Lāltārā* (1937-39), *Citā ke phūl* (1930-32), *Qaidī kī patnī* (1940), *Gehūṁ aur gulāb* (1948-50). Historical plays: *Ambapālī* (1941-45), *Sītākī māṁ* (1948-50), *Sandhamitrā* (1948-50), etc.

Bhārgava, Dulārelāl (1895-1975)
Birthplace
Lucknow
Background
Born in the Nawalkishore family of publishers of Urdu and Hindi books from Lucknow, originally from Sasni (Aligarh). His father Babu Pyārelāl was more devoted to Urdu and Persian, but Dulārelāl's first wife (who died in 1916) changed his *saṃskāra* to Hindi.
Education
Only up to Intermediate.
Occupation
Publisher and editor.
Career
In 1922, with the help of uncle Viṣṇunārāyaṇ Bhārgava, started the literary monthly *Mādhurī*, which opened a new era in Hindi literary journalism. Himself a poet in Braj, with *Mādhurī* Bhārgava helped a Braj resurgence, and in 1927 he was awarded the first Dev Puraskār for his *Dulāre-dohāvalī* amidst strong controversies. An enterprising editor and publisher, he launched his own venture with the monthly *Sudhā* and the publishing house *Gaṅgā-Pustak-Mālā*, devoted only to contemporary literary works. Published all the most distinguished Hindi writers of the period, to whom he would give high rewards and keep the copyright. His star seems to have waned at the time of Independence.
Works
Dulāre dohāvalī (1927).

Bhaṭṭ, Badrīnāth (1891-1934)
Birthplace
Village Gokulpura (Agra district).
Background
His father was the famous Sanskrit and Hindi scholar and commentator Rāmeśvar Bhaṭṭ.
Education
Educated upto to B.A.

Occupation
First literary editor, then Hindi lecturer at Lucknow University.
Career
Started working for the Indian Press, Allahabad, at Mahāvīr Prasād Dvivedī's bequest in 1916; there he was chief editor of the children's journal *Bālsakhā* for two years (1917-1919) and contributed regularly to *Sarasvatī*, where he wrote in favour of *svacchand* poetry in Hindi as early as 1913. Also contributed regularly to a famous humorous column in *Pratāp* called *Golmālkāriṇī sabhā*. Became the first Hindi lecturer at Lucknow University. Married outside his caste in 1921. Wrote only in Khari Boli, mostly humourous and historical plays.
Works
Candragupta nāṭak (1920), *Cuṅgī kī ummīdvārī* (1919), *Tulsīdās nāṭak* (1922), *Durgāvatī* (1925), *Vivāh vijñāpan, Miss amerikan* (1929).

Caturvedī, Banārsīdās (1892-1981)
Birthplace
Firozabad
Background
Born in an Ārya Samāji family
Education
Educated upto Intermediate at Agra college. Literary education under the guidance of Braj poet Satyanārāyaṇ Kaviratna.
Occupation
First teacher, then editor.
Career
First started teaching Hindi at Farrukhabad in 1913, then from 1914 to 1920 taught at Daly College for Indian princes in Indore (with Sampūrṇānand). Involved in the issue of 'pravāsī bhārtīy', Indian indentured labourers, especially in Fiji; in 1924 he went to East Africa on an Indian National Congress delegation. Was secretary of the literary branch at the Hindī Sāhitya Sammelan meeting in Indore in 1918, where he met several important literary and political figures. In 1920-21 was in Shantiniketan with C.F. Andrews, and from 1921 to 1925 taught at the Gujarat Vidyapith in Ahmedabad; in 1927 worked on the editorial board of *Āryamitra* (Agra) and *Abhyuday* (Allahabad); there he met M.P. Dvivedī, P.D. Ṭaṇḍon, Pandit Sundarlāl and G.Ś. Vidyārthī. From 1927 to 1937 edited the monthly *Viśāl bhārat* (Calcutta), the Hindi venture of Ramanand Chatterjee, editor of *Modern Review* and *Prabasi*, and made it famous with his virulent 'public campaigns' (*āndolan*), e.g. against Ugra's *Cakleṭ* and 'obscene literature' (*ghāsleṭī sāhitya*), and against Nirālā and abstruse style. In 1937 moved to Tikamgarh, where he directed a local literary institution financed by the Raja of Orchha, and edited the monthly *Madhukar* (1940-52). Nominated member of the Rajya Sabha after Independence (1952-64), his house became a centre for Hindi literary people in the capital. Thanks to his literary contacts with Shantiniketan and political contacts with Gandhi had a certain clout in the Hindi literary world, and was a prolific correspondent.
Works
Satyanārāyaṇ kaviratna (1906); *Pravāsī bhāratvāsī* (1918); *Rāṣṭrabhāṣā* (1919); *Bhāratbhakta Eṇḍrūz* (1922); *Hṛdaytaraṅg* (1920); *Fijī kī samasyā* (1927); *Fijī meṁ pratijñā-baddh kulī-prathā*.

Caturvedī, Mākhanlāl (1889-1968)
Birthplace
Village Bavai (dist. Hoshangabad, C.P.)
Background
Born in a poor family of Radhavallabhan affiliation.
Education
Primary education in the village along with Sanskrit at home; Middle examination in 1903 and Normal school examination (for vernacular teachers) in 1904; English self-taught in 1906.

Occupation
Teacher, then editor and political activist.
Career
Appointed teacher at Khandva Middle School at Rs. 8 pm in 1904; started editing *Prabhā* (1913, monthly) and writing nationalist poetry under the pen-name 'Ek bhārtīy ātmā'; left teaching to join the terrorist movement and became a supporter of Tilak. In Kanpur came in contact with G.Ś. Vidyārthī, met Gandhi in 1917 and resolved to dedicate his life to the welfare of the country. In 1919 was moved to Jabalpur, where he edited the monthly *Karmavīr* with Mādhavrāo Sapre, Viṣṇudatt Śukla and Lakṣmaṇ Siṃh Cauhān. Active in the Madhya Pradesh Hindī Sāhitya Sammelan; organized a Provincial Political Assembly in Khandwa, and was first arrested in May 1925; took part in the Nagpur flag *satyagraha* in 1923, and when Vidyārthī was jailed in 1924 went to Kanpur to edit *Pratāp*. In 1926 elected to the Legislative Council on a Congress ticket from Mahakoshal. Presided the 1943 All-India Hindī Sāhitya Sammelan. In 1967 he returned the Padmabhushan honour when the Government of India postponed the term by which Hindi was to become the only national language.
Works
Kṛṣṇārjun yuddh (1918); *Himkirītinī* (1941); *Sāhitya devtā* (1941); *Himtaraṅginī* (1949); *Mātā* (1952).

Caturvedī, Śrīnārāyaṇ (1893-198?)
Birthplace
Village in Etawa district.
Background
His family, of Ramanuja Vaiṣṇava affiliation, settled in Etawa district. His grandfather was Sanskrit pandit at the first high school in Etawa, founded after 1857 by A.O. Hume. His father Caturvedī Pandit Dvārkāprasād Śarmā moved to Allahabad in 1892 because of his government job and settled in the same Ahalyapur *mohalla* where Bālkṛṣṇa Bhaṭṭ, M.M. Mālavīya and, later, P.D. Ṭaṇḍon also lived. After writing two biographies of Robert Clive and Warren Hastings in Hindi, his fater was dismissed from government service and survived on his writing.
Education
First at a local *pathshala*, where Pandit Sundarlāl was his teacher, than at the Government High School, where Amarnāth Jhā was his schoolmate. After passing Matriculation, enrolled at Ewing Christian College, where he moved from Science to Arts. After some hesitation enrolled in the Teachers' Training College in Allahabad, where Mackenzie was principal. Sent by U.P. government to London for higher studies in psychology and paedagogy.
Occupation
Teacher, officer in the Education Department.
Career
After a first stint of teaching and the Training College, he was appointed to teach in a government school, but joined the Kanyakubja High School in Lucknow instead, and turned it into an Intermediate College. After the sojourn in London travelled around Europe and to America and Japan, and returned in 1928. Appointed Inspector of Schools of Faizabad and Gorakhpur division, i.e. the highest education officer in a large part of eastern U.P. During the provincial Congress ministry he was appointed Education Expansion Officer by Sampūrṇānand. Actively defended and supported the use of Hindi in the education department and in the radio; in 1940 even launched a journal to this aim, *Ākāśvāṇī*. One of the leaders of the pro-Hindi group in the Hindi-Hindustani controversy; a very good 'cultural organizer', he was instrumental in starting *kavi-sammelans* for Hindi propaganda. Entertained excellent relations with the Indian Press, which published all his books, and after retirement was the last editor of *Sarasvatī* (1955-1979). His house in Daraganj and the in Lucknow was a meeting place for Hindi literary people and was commonly called the *darbār*. Wrote poetry under the pen-name 'Śrīvar'.
Works:

Coñc mahākāvya (1917); *A History of Rural Education in India* (1930); *An Educational Survey of A District* (1935); *Śikṣā vidhān paricay* (1935); *Samrāṭ pañcam jārj* (1936); *Manorañjak saṃsmāraṇ* (1965).

Cauhān, Subhadrākumārī (1904-1946)
Birthplace
A village near Allahabad
Family
Born in an educated but not affluent orthodox Rajput family which practiced *parda*.
Education
Educated at Crosthwaite college until Middle examination in 1919. Joined Annie Besant's Theosophical School in Banaras, but dropped out in 1921 for Non-Cooperation. In 1920 passed the Hindī Sāhitya Sammelan *prathamā* examination.
Occupation
Poet and Congress activist
Career
Started writing poetry at the age of six, continued throughout her education and political involvement and was published on the major Hindi journals; her poem 'Jhānsī kī rānī' was one of the most famous of the whole nationalist movement. The same year of her Middle school examination she was married to Lakṣmaṇ Siṃh Cauhān, later to become a Congress activist and editor, and moved with him to Jabalpur. Involved in Congress propaganda among women both in the town and in the district, she was one of the few middle-class women not to observe *parda*. First arrested during flag satyagraha in 1923, she was jailed again in 1941 for individual *satyagraha*. A mother of four, she did not observe *chuāchūt* and was known for her simple, straight-forward manners; her style was equally simple, and she wrote a lot for children, too. Elected member of the Legislative Assembly in 1936. Twice awarded the Seksāriya prize.
Works
Poetry collections: *Mukul* (1930), *Bikhre motī* (1932); *Trīdhārā, Sabhā kā khel;* short story collections: *Unmādinī* (1934) and *Sīdhe-sādhe* (1946).

Dās, Babu Śyāmsundar (1875-1945)
Birthplace
Banaras
Background
Born in a Khatri family; his father was a small cloth merchant who had moved from Amritsar; at his death the burden of the family and of business debts fell on young Śyāmsundar, who 'never lived in an owned house'.
Education
First traditional guru education, then English at the local Hanuman Seminary; after passing the Anglo-Vernacular middle examination in 1890, enrolled at Queen's Collegiate School, where he passed the Entrance examination in 1892; B.A. degree in 1897. Resisted an offer to enrol for an M.A., and tried unsuccessfully to enrol in the new Teachers' Training College in Lucknow.
Occupation
Teacher, then first Head of the Hindi department at B.H.U.
Career
After a brief spell at a local press, he became first Assistant Master, and later Assistant Headmaster at Besant's Central Hindu School in Banaras at Rs. 40 pm. In 1909 he left for a job with the State Office of the Maharaja of Kashmir, but returned soon in 1912. From 1912 to 1921 was Headmaster of Kalicharan High School in Lucknow, when he successfully faught back attempts to turn it into a 'national school'. In 1922 appointed Head of the newly-formed Hindi department at B.H.U., where he set up the courses with Rāmcandra Śukla. One of the founding members of the Nāgarī Pracāriṇī Sabhā (1893), most of his life and activity was devoted to setting up and managing the manifold literary enterprises of the association; he was chief editor of the monumental dictionary, *Hindī śabdasāgar* (1908-1929), which employed altogether seventeen

people, and was involved in the campaign for the official recognition of Hindi, for Hindi propaganda, in the search for Hindi manuscripts, in all the series of publications and in publishing several text-books, readers and manuals for the whole school curriculum. In excellent terms with the Indian Press in Allahabad, he first published all the Sabhā books at the Press.
Works
Sāhityālocan (1922); *Gadya kusumāvalī* (essays, 1925); *Rūparahasya* (1926); *Bhāṣā-rahasya* (1935); *Merī ātmakahānī*.

Dev, Acarya Narendra (1889-1956)
Birthplace
Faizabad
Background
Born in a wealthy and cultured zamindar family of Faizabad, which cherished both Persian and Sanskrit. Third-generation English educated, who had turned to law. Father was also active in public life and wrote text-books in English, Hindi and Persian as a hobby; the family library was open to the public.
Education
Educated first privately at home, read Tulsī and other Hindi books before going to school in 1902; matriculated in 1906 in Allahabad; lived in Mālavīya's Hindu Boarding House with Pandit Sundarlāl at the time of Svadeshi agitation. After his B.A. did an M.A. in archeology and ancient history at Banaras Queen's College (1913), where he studied Pali, Prakrit, epigraphy with Venice and Norman. L.L.B. in 1915.
Occupation
First lawyer, then lecturer and Vice-Cancellor at Kāśī Vidyāpīṭh; Congress Socialist Party leader; Vice-Chancellor of Lucknow and B.H.U. after Independence.
Career
First attracted to the 'garam dal' and to the educational ideas of Lala Hardayal and of Aurobindo while in Alahabad. Attended Congress sessions from 1905 until 1908, and rejoined only in 1916. First politically active in Annie Besant's Home Rule league, of which he founded a branch in Faizabad (1915), dropped his legal practice in 1920. Called to Banaras Kāśī Vidyāpīṭh, he taught ancient Indian history, Indian philology and modern Indian history there, became first Vice-Chancellor and then Chancellor (1926). Active during Non-Cooperation in Faizabad, in the last phase of the Avadh peasant movement. Personally close to J. Nehru. Founding member of the Congress Socialist Party (1934), was one of its leading leaders in U.P. Elected to Legislative Assembly in 1937; in charge of a committee to reorganise education. Edited Socialist monthly *Saṅgharṣ* from Lucknow from 1939. Confined in 1939-40 during individual *satyagraha*; arrested in 1942, when Kāśī Vidyāpīṭh was banned and professors and students dispersed in the countryside.
Works
While in jail, translated Poussin's French translation of the *Abhidharma-kosa* into Hindi, while his *Bauddha-dharma-darśan* was published after his death; with others, *Samājvād kā bigul* (1940); *Socialism and the National Revolution* (1946).

Dīn, Lala Bhagvān (1876-1930)
Birthplace
Village Barvat, district Fatehpur
Background
Born in a Kayastha family which had moved at the time of the 1857 rebellion from Raibareilly to Rampur, where they became 'Bakhśī' of the local Nawab. His father was a common clerk, away from home on his government *naukrī* most of the time.
Education
First in Urdu and Persian; then, after his mother died in 1887 and he moved to Bundelkhand with his father, attended a Madrasa at Nargaon Cantt. In 1893 admitted at the English school in Fatehpur, where he passed his Entrance examination in 1900.

Thanks to a scholarship of Rs. 8 pm. from the provincial government, enrolled at Kayastha Pathshala, Allahabad, but had to leave after the First year examination.
Occupation
Teacher, poet.
Career
First employed as teacher at the Kayastha Pathshala, then shortly as Persian teacher at the Zenana Mission Girls' High School before joining the State School in Chattarpur, where he worked until 1907. Received Hindi *saṃskāra* from his grandfather, who was a passionate *bhakta* and read him Tulsī's *Mānas*. In Chattarpur developed his interest in Hindi literature and in Braj poetry thanks also to the local public library. Learnt *alaṃkār* from a local pandit, and also the local language; published Braj poems in *Rasikmitra, Rasikvaṭikā* etc., and became himself editor of a Braj journal in 1905. A great wanderer, he used to roam around the hills in Bundelkhand. Thanks to Śyāmsundar Dās he obtained a place as Persian master at the Central Hindu school in Banaras, worked as editor of old Hindi texts for the Nāgarī Pracāriṇī Sabhā, and also on the dictionary *Hindī śabdasāgar*. Around 1915 started a Hindī Sāhitya Vidyālay to prepare students for Hindī Sāhitya Sammelan examinations. In 1921 joined B.H.U. as Hindi lecturer, and taught chiefly *rīti* poets. Married thrice, the second time to the renowned poet Bundelābālā, and then to her younger sister. Wrote both in Khari Boli and in Braj, and especially skilled at *samasyā-pūrtis*. Considered one of the few able commentators of Keśav Dās.
Works
Only two collections of poetry published: *Vīr pañcaratna* (1918), *Navī-bīn* (1926); *Alaṃkārmañjuṣā* (1931), *Vyaṅgyārthamañjuṣā* (1927); ed. *Tulsī-granthāvalī* (1923) with R. Śukla and Brajrantadās; authored commentaries on *Rāmcandrikā, Kavipriyā, Rasikpriyā,* Tulsī's *Kavitāvalī* and *Bihārī satsaī*.

Dvivedī, Mahāvīr Prasād (1864-1938)
Birthplace
Village Daulatpur, district Rai Bareilly
Background
His grandfather was a learned pandit who recited the Puranas to the Bengal army troops; his father had been a soldier and took part in the 1857 rebellion; he thereafter, fled to Bombay, where he worked at the service of a Vallabha Gosvami.
Education
First at the village *paṭhśālā*; in 1877 enrolled at the District School in Bareilly to learn English; had to take Persian since Sanskrit was not taught; shuttled between Unnao and Fatehpur before moving to Bombay with his father. There learnt Sanskrit, Gujarati, Marathi, Bengali and English.
Occupation
Literary editor
Career
In Bombay first joined the railways as a clerk, and was transferred to Nagpur and Ajmer. After passing an examination, became telegraph signaller, and after a series of transfers and promotions became head-clerk with the District Trafic Superintendent in Jhansi. In the meantime continued studying Sanskrit and old Hindi texts with scholars, and started publishing reviews. One such review of an Indian Press primer caught the attention of the publisher, Chintamani Ghosh, and Dvivedī was asked to edit the monthly *Sarasvatī*. After a few assurances he joined, although he kept living most of the time in Juhi, near Kanpur. Under his editorship, the prestige and the importance of the journal grew immensely, and Dvivedī is credited with having formed and standardised modern Hindi prose. His collaboration with the Indian Press resulted in a long series of books and text-books; in fact, he indirectly guided the Hindi literary policy of the Press as far as books and collaborators were concerned, and he was ever grateful to the publisher, Chintamani Ghosh, for the respect he was credited. His clear and stern views on language and literature earned him enormous prestige in the Hindi literary world, and to have published in *Sarasvatī* became a seal of recognition. He assembled a stable group of contributors, was at the centre of a dense network of Hindi scholars and

writers, and inspired many of the younger generation. Before he retired he chose his own successor, young P.P. Bakhśī, and also his successor, Devīdatt Śukla. After his retirement in 1920 moved back to the village, where he looked after his fields, opened a public library and infirmary and served as *sarpanc* until he died; also edited his many articles into a number of books. Although he presided the welcoming committee at the XIII Hindī Sāhitya Sammelan meeting in Kanpur in 1923 and remained a highly respected figure, he kept away from Hindi associations and was particularly critical of Śyāmsundar Dās, although he left his books and endowed a prize with the Sabhā. The last years in the village, without modern amenities, children or family, were spent in hardship and failing health.

Works

Translated Bhartṛhari, Kālidāsa, Jayadeva, Jagannātha etc. into Hindi; *Hindī bhāṣā kī utpatti* (1907); *Sampattiśāstra* (1907); *Hindī mahābhārata* (1908). Among the edited collections of articles: *Kālidās kī niraṅkuśtā* (1912); *Kālidās aur unkī kavitā* (1920); *Sukavi saṃkīrtan* (1924); *Sāhitya sandarbha* (1928), *Sāhitya sīkar* (1930), etc.

Gaur̤, Kṛṣṇadev Prasād ('Beḍhab banārsī') (1895-1965)

Birthplace

Banaras

Background

His father was a head clerk (*munsrim*) at the court in Banaras and contributed occasionally to English and Urdu papers.

Education

Educated first at Queen's College, then at Allahabad University, where he acquired an M.A. in English; also M.A. in political science from Agra University, B.T. from B.H.U. and first class in Hindī Sāhitya Sammelan *uttamā* examination.

Occupation

Teacher, poet and literary editor

Career

While still at school started writing articles, first in English and then in Hindi; contributed to K.P. Jaiswal's weekly *Pāṭaliputra* (Patna). Later started writing humorous articles and poems under the pen-name 'Beḍhab banārsī'. English teacher at D.A.V. college in Banaras, and accolite of J. Prasād's. In 1920 edited the humorous weekly *Bhūt*, and in 1937 *Khudā kī rāh par*; both ended over personal quarrels despite popular success. In 1938 he launched *Taraṅg*, but had to close down due to financial difficulties. Contributed humorous columns to several papers. From 1928 to 1930 was literary secretary of the Hindī Sāhitya Sammelan, and from 1945 to 1948 general secretary of the Nāgarī Pracāriṇī Sabhā.

Works

Among others the poetry collections *Beḍhab kī bahak* (1954?), *Kāvya kamal;* short stories: *Banārsī ekka* (1930), *Gāndhī kā bhūt, Ṭanāṭan.*

Gaur̤, Rāmdās (1889-1937)

Birthplace

Jaunpur

Education

First in Banaras and Allahabad; in 1903 B.A. from Muir Central College, Allahabad.

Occupation

Teacher and poet

Career

Taught chemistry in several institutions, including B.H.U., which he left because of Non-Cooperation; Head of the Science Department at Gurukul Kangri. One of the very few authors of scientific articles and books in Hindi, was involved in Śivaprasād Gupta's Jnanmandal and was instrumental in the foundation of the Vijñān Pariṣad in Allahabad. He also wrote in favour of women's education on the pages of *Gṛhalakṣmī*, and wrote poetry under the pen-names 'Ras' and 'Raghupati'. Arrested in 1921, fined and sentenced to one year. At Śivaprasād Gupta's request he compiled a massive

compendium of Hinduism, *Hindutva* (1938). Also prepared a good critical edition of the *Rāmcaritmānas.*
Works
Vaijñānik advaitavād (1920); *Hindutva* (1938).

Goyal, Rāmeśvarī (1911-1936)
Birthplace
Jhansi
Background
Born in a nationalist family, the daughter of a railway officer and of the famous Congress activist and woman poet Pistādevī, herself the daughter of the Ā.S. principal of the D.A.V. college in Dehradun.
Education
Studied at Indraprastha College in Delhi; B.A. from Crosthwaite College and M.A. from Allahabad University.
Occupation
Poet; teacher.
Career
Became principal of the Āryakanyā Pāṭhśālā in Allahabad. While still a student, her poems started appearing in *Sudhā* from around 1928, and she was greeted as a promising talent. Also edited the girls' journal *Sahelī* for a short while. Active Congress campaigner. Married Prakāścandra Gupta in 1935. At her death there was a large public commemoration in Jhansi, and her sister in Banaras opened a school in her name, which is still standing.
Works
Jīvan-svapna (poems and prose poems, 1937).

Gupta, Babu Maithilīśaraṇ (1886-1964)
Birthplace
Village Cirgaon, Jhansi.
Background
Born in a merchant family with literary tastes.
Education
Educated at home in Sanskrit and Hindi, and at the local village school. Later taught himself Marathi and Bengali.
Occupation
Poet
Career
Free from financial worries and the need to work he could devote himself to poetry. His Khari Boli poems first appeared in a Calcutta magazine, *Vaiśyopkārak,* and then in *Sarasvatī,* where under the guidance and inspiration of M.P. Dvivedī he wrote on historical and mythological themes, e.g. illustrating plates of Ravi Varma's paintings. His first long poem, *Raṅg meṁ bhaṅg* (1910) was followed by the great success of *Bhārat-bhārtī* (1912), which sealed his reputation as nationalist poet and one of the most popular poets of the time. *Sāket*, a *mahākāvya* retelling the Rāmāyaṇa story, was equally popular and was awarded the Maṅglāprasād prize in 1932. A friend of Rāykṛṣṇadās and Jayśaṅkar Prasād's, Gupta would spend long periods in Banaras and was a regular presence at Hindi literary gatherings. His fifitieth birthday was celebrated with the first ever public felicitation for a Hindi living poet in 1936. Hailed as *rāṣṭrakavi*, he became member of the Rajya Sabha in independent India. His brother Siyāśaraṇ Gupta was also a well-known writer.
Works
Raṅg meṁ bhaṅg (1910); *Bhārat-bhārtī* (1912); *Sāket* (1932); *Hindū* (1927); *Gurukul* (1929); *Dvāpar* (1936), *Jaybhārat* (1952), *Viṣṇupriyā*.

Gupta, Babu Śivaprasād (1883-1945)
Birthplace

Banaras
Background
Born in one of the three most established merchant families of Banaras, the Śāh family of Raja Motīcand, originally from Azamgarh, hence the name of 'Azamagarh *gharānā*'; related to Bhagvān Dās.
Education
Studied for B.A. at Allahabad University, but was prevented by illness from taking the exam.
Career
The foremost Congress patron in Banaras, he was at the centre of several activities and enterprises in the field of education, literature, information, art, politics etc. In 1914 undertook a world tour (narrated in *Pṛthvī pradākṣiṇā*) which took him to Europe, America, Japan, China; on his way back to India in 1916 was detained in Malaysia for anti-British activities, and was relased only through the intervention of his uncle Raja Motīcand, of Benoy K. Sarkar and M.M. Mālavīya. In 1917 he founded the publishing house Jnanmandal with a detailed plan to print books of scientific and historical interest in Hindi; the daily *Āj* and the nationalist college Kāśī Vidyāpīth (1920) followed, the former as a limited company, the latter as a trust under the pledge that it would never receive government aid. Thus Śivaprasād Gupta emerged as the main patron of Congress activities in Banaras: his generosity toward students, educational institutions, families of jailed Congressmen, Congress *candās*, revolutionaries and literary people in need was discrete and unparalleled. He also emerged as a great patron of Hindi, vociferously supporting the introduction of Hindi in education and in public administration, and always ready to provide nationalist-minded literary people with work; his private secretary was Paripūrṇānand, Sampūrṇānand's younger brother. In 1920 became an active Congressman and a follower of Gandhi despite his sympathies for revolutionaries, and in the following decade was President of the Provincial Congress Committee, A.I. Congress treasurer and President of the U.P. Kisan and Labour Conference (1927). Convicted thrice during Civil Disobedience, suffered an attack of paralysis in jail. Erected Bhārat Mātā temple with a huge marble outline of India in 1936.
Works
Pṛthvī-pradakṣinā (1924)

'Harioudh', Pandit Ayodhyāsiṃh Upādhyāy (1865-1947)
Birthplace
Nizamabad, district Azamgarh
Background
Family originally from Badayun, moved to Nizamabad in the fifteenth century, and lived on zamindari and *paṇḍitāī*.
Education
Vidyārambh at five, first at home in Sanskrit; in 1872 joined the *tahsil* school at Nizamabad, where he studied Urdu and Persian. In 1879 passed the Hindi Middle school examination. After a short spell at Queen's College in Banaras to learn English, passed the Normal school (teachers') examination in 1887 and the *kanungo* examination in 1889. Bengali self-taught.
Occupation
First teacher, then *kanungo*; lecturer and poet.
Career
Appointed master at Nizamabad *tahsil* school in 1884 (married in 1882), was noticed by the Education department officer and became *kanungo* in 1889. Steady improvement to registrar *kanungo, sadar-nayab kanungo*; 15 years as inspector *kanungo* in the neighbouring districts, and 11 years in Azamgarh. Pensioned by the government in 1923, was then appointed to teach in the Hindi department at B.H.U., apparently not too successfully, since Ś. Dās complained that he would teach only Hindu *saṅgaṭhan* or his poetry. Finally appointed to teach Hindi in the Girls' branch of the university (!). His literary education started at home, then with a local scholar, who subscribed to

Bhārtendu's *Hariścandra candrikā* and *Kavivacansudhā*. A great friend of Babu Rāmdīn Siṃh of the Khadagvilas Press of Bankipur, was also in contact with George Grierson. One of the most respected poets of his generation, he wrote both in Braj and in Khari Boli and was often called to attend or preside *kavi-sammelans*. His *Priyapravās* was widely appreciated and was at the centre of a controversy when it failed to win the Dev Puraskār, which went instead to Dulārelāl Bhārgava. Published regularly in all the major Hindi journals. President of the XIV Hindī Sāhitya Sammelan meeting in Delhi in 1924. A fervent *sanatan dharmi*, he was given the title 'Kavi-samrāṭ' by the Bhārat Dharma Mahāmaṇḍal in 1912.
Works
Novels: *Ṭheṭh hindī kā ṭhāṭh* (1899), *Adhkhilā phul* (1907); tr. *Venis kā bāṁkā* (1928), *Rip van ṛinkal*. Several collections of poems: *Priyapravās* (1914), *Cokhe-caupade* (1924) and *Cūbhte caupade* were particular popular. Ed. *Kabīr-vacanāvalī* (1921) for Nāgarī Pracāriṇī Sabhā. Text-books: *Bāl-pothī* (5 vols.), *Vernacular Reader* (4 vols.), etc. Books of moral instruction: *Upadeś kusum*, *Nīti nibandh*.

Jośī, Hemcandra (1894- ?) and **Ilācandra** (1902-1982)
Birthplace
Almora
Background
Born in a cultured Kanyakubja Brahmin family originally from Jajmau (Kanpur) settled in Nainital; one ancestor was chief minister to the Raja of Kumaon.
Education
After his M.A., Hemcandra went to Europe for further study; after a sojourn in Germany, awarded D.Lit. from Paris University on economic and political thought in Ancient India according to the Ṛgveda. Ilācandra studied upto High school. French self-taught.
Occupation
Free-lance writers
Career
Hemcandra acquired a remarkable collection of books of foreign literatures, from which Ilācandra got his literary education before running away from home to Calcutta after high school. Both would later be instrumental in introducing contemporary world literature and literary trends in Hindi, and acquired a certain reputation for their 'modern' and sophisticated tastes; Hemcandra would send reports and reviews from Europe to Hindi journals. Ilācandra started writing poetry at an early age, and by the age of sixteen was published on the main Hindi nationalist journals. In 1919 became regular contributor to *Prabhā* with articles and short stories, and after 1927 to *Sarasvatī* and *Sudhā*. In 1929 an article in English on 'Recent Hindi literature' published in the *Modern Review* caused a stir for its mordant criticism of contemporary Hindi literature to an English audience. Until 1936 Ilācandra led a peripathetic life and career, moving between Calcutta, Allahabad and Lucknow; he worked for a while on the editorial board of *Cāṁd*, then became co-editor of *Sudhā* (1929); with Hemcandra they edited the journals *Viśvavāṇī* (1930) and *Viśvamitra* (1931) together in Calcutta. In Allahabad he aso edited *Saṅgam* and *Sāhityakār* for sometime, before being offered in 1936 a job as radio producer. Hemcandra would later contribute to the *Vyutpatti koś* (Etymological Dictionary) of the Nāgarī Pracāriṇī Sabhā. Ilācandra is credited with having introduced the psychological novel in Hindi, or rather giving an individualist twist to contemporary social novels; see e.g. *Ghṛṇāmay* (1929), *Sanyāsī* (1940).

'Kauśik', Viśvambharnāth Śarmā (1891-1942)
Birthplace
Ambala Cant., but originally from Gangoh (dist. Saharanpur)
Background
Son of a military storekeeper, he was adopted by his uncle, Indrasen, who became a lawyer in Kanpur and acquired land property outside Kanpur.
Education

Educated in Persian and Urdu at school upto Matriculation, and at home in Hindi and Sanskrit.
Occupation
Writer
Career
Initially started writing Urdu poetry, then moved to Hindi around 1909 and published short stories in the Kanpur weekly *Jīvan* and a few essays in *Sarasvatī*. After meeting M.P. Dvivedī was urged to translate from Bengali and write original stories; 'Rakṣābandhan' was his first story to be published in *Sarasvatī*. Prolific author, hisf short stories appeared in all the major Hindi journals and were mostly published by Ganga Pustak Mala. Also wrote a life of Rasputin and translated from Bengali. His humurous column 'Ḍubejī kī ciṭṭhī' appeared in the monthly *Cāṁd*.
Works
Short stories collections: *Galp-mandir* (1919), *Citraśālā* (1924), *Maṇimālā* (1929), *Kallol* (1933). Novels: *Mā* (1929), *Bhikhāriṇī* (1929). Also: *Saṃsār kī asabhya jātiyoṁ kī striyāṁ* (1924).

Kumār, Jainendra (1905-1988)
Birthplace
Koriyaganj (dist. Aligarh)
Background
Orphaned at a very early age, he was raised by his mother and by her brother, the renowned Mahatma Bhagvān Dīn, who had founded a Gurukul in Hastinapur in 1911 and was later involved in Congress activities in the Central Provinces.
Education
First at his uncle's Gurukul, where his name was changed from Ānandī Lāl to Jainendra Kumār; Matriculation from Punjab in 1919; later enrolled for B.Sc. at the Central Hindu School in Banaras, but left (under his uncle's advice) because of Non-Cooperation. Would later spend some time at the Tilak School of Politics in Delhi.
Occupation
Writer
Career
A restless and indecisive youth, after leaving school he moved to Jabalpur, where his uncle was in jail and where *Karmavīr* under Mākhanlāl Caturvedī had become an ashram for boys who had jined Non-Cooperation. Started writing reports, and helped his mother in shopkeeping. Arrested during the flag *satyagraha* in 1923. Not until he published his first novel, *Parakh* (1929, awarded Hindustani Academy prize in 1931) did he find some stability. He later grew close to Premcand and supported with him Hindustani in the Hindi-Hindustani controversy. Greatly influenced by Sharatchandra, he enjoyed a similar reputation in Hindi for his depiction of women's characters and his psychological studies.
Works
Parakh (1929), *Sunītā* (1935), *Tyāgpatra* (1937), *Kalyāṇī* (1939), *Sukhadā* (1953), *Vivarta* (1953), *Vyatīt* (1953), *Jayvarddhan* (1956).

Lakhanpāl, Candrāvatī (originally Śukla) (1904-1969)
Birthplace
Bijnaur
Background
Born in an Ārya Samāj family, the daughter of Jaynārāyaṇ Śukla, *Upaniṣad* translator into Hindi and the author of original works on sociology.
Education
Educated up to M.A. in Banaras and at Crosthwaite College, Allahabad.
Occupation
Teacher and writer
Career

After marrying Satyavrat Siddhāntalaṃkār, Vice-Chacellor of Gurukul Kangri, she taught at Mahādevī Kanyā Pāṭhśālā and later became Acharya of the Kanyā Mahāvidyālay at Kangri (later Dehradun). Chairwoman of the Mahilā Congress Committee in Dehradun, she took active part in the Civil Disobedience movement, was a Congress Dictator and toured villages untile she was arrested and given a one year sentence. In 1932 also President of the U.P. Political Conference in Agra.
Works
Mādar iṇḍiyā kā javāb (1927?); *Striyoṁ kī sthiti* (1932, awarded the Seksariya prize in 1934); *Śikṣā manovijñān* (1935, awarded the Maṅglāprasād prize).

Mālavīya, Kṛṣṇakānta (1883-1941)
Birthplace
Allahabad
Background
A nephew of Madan Mohan Mālavīya.
Education
B.A. Honours from Allahabad University.
Occupation
Newspaper editor
Career
From 1910 to 1935 edited and managed the very influencial political weekly *Abhyuday*, and from 1911 to 1924 the miscellany monthly *Maryādā*; in 1930, when all editors were in jail, his young son Padmakānt edited *Abhyuday*, and took over after 1935. Wrote favourably about the Russian Revolution and communism. Active Allahabad Congressman and Hindu Sabha member; general secretary of M.M. Mālavīya Independent Congress Party, campaigned for him in the 1926 elections. Municipal councillor in Allahabad, elected to the Legislative Council in 1932 and to the Legislative Assembly in 1936. In jail four times between 1920 and 1932, altogether for two and a half years. Author of political books, mostly on world politics, and of controversial 'useful' books on sexual relations and the family. Known at the time as the 'Kuṁvar Kanhaiyā' of Allahabad.
Works
Sohāg-rāt (1927), *Manormā ke patra* (1928).

Mālavīya, Pandit Madan Mohan (1861-1946)
Birthplace
Ahalyapur *mohalla,* Allahabad
Background
Son of a well-known *vyās*, expositor of the scriptures.
Education
Educated first at local Sanskrit *pāṭhśālās*, then at Muir Central College; B.A. from Calcutta University in 1884; had to drop out of M.A. course and start teaching Sanskrit at a local Government High School, and changed his name from Mallai to Mālavīya.
Occupation
Editor, then politician
Career
Early public activities included founding the Prayag Hindu Samaj, with his Sanskrit professor Aditya Ram Bhattacharya and Raja Rampal Singh of Kalakankar (1880), establishing the Bharti Bhavan library (1889), the Hindu Hostel (1903) and campaigning for cow-protection and on the Nagari vs Persian script issue. Author of *Court Script and Primary Education* (1897) and head of the 1900 delegation to Antony MacDonnell to have Nagari recognized as official script. First called by Rampal Singh to edit the first Hindi daily, *Hindosthan* (1877-79), went then back to study law. His successful career at Allahabad High Court started 1893; after Non-Cooperation he would take on only a few political cases and he pleaded for the accused of Chauri Chaura in 1922. Instrumental in starting very influential papers, the weeklies *Abhyuday* (1907) and *The Leader* (1909), and the Hindi monthly *Maryādā* (1910). Elected

municipal councillor and Vice-chairman of Allahabad municipality; nominated in 1903 and then elected to the U.P. Legislative Council; returned from there to the Vice-Regal Council, from which he resigned in 1920. At first opposed to non-cooperation and locally in competition with the Nehrus, was active in politics after 1920 mainly as Hindu leader and an ally of landed and industrial magnates. In 1923 reorganized the A.I. Hindu Mahasabha, in 1926 contested elections under the separate banner of the Indian Nationalist Party, and in 1935 with the Congress Nationalist Party. After his life-long dream of building a Hindu University in Banaras was realized in 1916, he moved there and acted as Vice-Chancellor.
Works
Court Character and Primary Education in the N.W.-P. and Oudh (1897).

Miśra, Śyāmbihārī (1873-1947)and **Sukhdevbihārī** (1878-1951)
Birthplace
Village Itaunja, district Lucknow
Background
Born in an eminent and scholarly Kanyakubja Brahmin family which lived on zamindari and moneylending; one ancestor had been granted the title Miśra from the original Dvivedī.
Education
After *vidyārambha* at home, both educated first in Urdu in the village, then at the Church Mission High School in Basti and finally in Lucknow. Śyāmbihārī first failed his Middle examination, then passed Entrance in 1891 from Jubilee High School, Lucknow. In 1893 passed Intermediate, in 1895 awarded a first class B.A., English honours from Canning College, Lucknow, and in 1896 M.A. from Allahabad University. Sukhdevbihārī passed his Middle school examination from Jubilee High School in 1893, and the Final and First year Art (F.A.) examinations in first class. In 1899 B.A. and gold medal from Canning College. L.L.B. in 1897.
Occupation
Civil servants and *divans*
Career
Śyāmbihārī became first a Deputy Collector, then a Secretary and *divan* in several princely states; worked also as Police Superintendent and Collector. From 1924 to 1928 was Honourable Member of the Council of State, and in 1928 was awarded the title Rai Bahadur; in 1933 the Maharaja of Orchha gave him the title of Raoraja, and in 1937 Allahabad University conferred upon him an honorary degree. Sukhdevbihārī was first a lawyer, then a sub-judge, and finally *divan* of Chattarpur state, where he called several Hindi writers from time to time. In 1913 he presided the Kanyakubja Conference in Sitapur. In 1927 awarded the title Rai Bahadur. In 1930 travelled extensively in Europe, and retired in 1931. Both were members of the Senate of several universities and served as examiners. Closely connected to the Nāgarī Pracāriṇī Sabhā, they were in charge o the search for Hindi manuscripts for several years. Their fame relies largely on their works *Hindī navratna* (1910-11), an anthology and introduction to the 'nine gems' of Hindi literature, and *Miśrabandhu-vinod* (1913), a voluminous compilation of about five thousand Hindi writers and works, based both on Śivsiṃh Seṅgar's *Śivsiṃh saroj* (1878) and on the catalogues of manuscripts produced by the search; the latter work was to be criticized by M.P. Dvivedī and Rāmcandra Śukla. Authoritative critics and reviewers, they also wrote history books in Hindi from English sources, and original historical novels.
Works
Hindī navratna (1911); *Miśrabandhu-vinod* (1913).

'Navīn', Bālkṛṣṇa Śarmā (1897-1960)
Birthplace
Village Bhayanam district Shajapur (Gwalior state)
Background
His father was a poor Vaiṣṇava Brahmin who moved to Nathdvara (Rajputana).

Education
After English Middle in Shajapur, went to Ujjain for high school at Madhav College. After Matriculation, moved to Kanpur in 1917 to start a B.A. at Christchurch College. Left in the final year to join Non-Cooperation.
Occupation
Newspaper editor, activist and poet
Career
First attended Lucknow Congress in 1913, where he met G.Ś. Vidyārthī, Mākhanlāl Caturvedī and M.Ś. Gupta; Vidyārthī was especially friendly. Once in Kanpur became part of the 'Pratāp family', became acquainted with Bhagavatīcaraṇ Varmā, Kauśik, Lakṣmīdhar Vājpeyī etc. Wrote both nationalist and love poetry, helped editing *Pratāp,* of which he became editor after Vidyārthī's death in 1931, and edited *Prabhā* from 1924. His short story 'Santu' was published in *Sarasvatī* in 1916. Involved in all Congress campaigns with Vidyārthī, was a follower of Gandhi's and later of Subhash Chandra Bose's. For several years member of the UP PCC, was member of the Constituent Assembly, where he was active in favur of Hindi's recognition; elected MP in 1952.
Works
Poems: *Kusum* (1936); *Apalak* (1952); *Urmilā* (1957), etc.

Nehrū, Rāmeśvarī (1886 -1966)
Birthplace
Lahore?
Background
Born in the distinguished Kashmiri Brahmin family of Divan R.B. Raja Narendranath of Lahore, once president of the Hindū Mahāsabhā and MLA. One forefather was advisor to Ranjit Singh.
Education
Educated at home in Persian and Arabic, and later in English.
Occupation
Editor and political activist
Career
Married in 1920 to Brajlal Nehru, Motilal Nehru's nephew, who was Accountant General of the Punjab and later became economic advisor to the Jammu and Kashmir government. Founded and edited with Umā Nehru, Shyamlal Nehru's wife, *Strī-darpaṇ* from Allahabad from 1909 to 1923. In 1909 founded the Prayāg Mahilā Samiti against *pardā*; both she and Umā were involved in the AIW (Associaton of Indian Women). Member of the Age of Consent Committee in 1926-27. In 1930 went to the Round Table Conference in London as representative of Indian women; in 1931 in Geneva at the League of Nations, toured Europe in1932. In 1934 turned to Harijan uplift, and in 1935 was elected vice-president of the Harijan Sevak Sangh. In 1937 visited Australia. In 1938 worked again in Harijan uplift activities in Central India. In 1942 was *nazarband,* and jailed when she violated the rules. Author of several unpublished books, her novel *Sūryadev kā āgaman* was serialised in *Manormā.* After independence was engaged in social work.

'Nirālā', Sūryakānt Tripāṭhī (Sūraj Kumār Tevārī) (1899-1962)
Birthplace
Village Garhakola, district Unnao, at the heart of Avadh
Background
Father was an officer in the army of the small princely state of Mahishadal in Bengal; owned some land and mango groves in the village.
Education
Little formal education. Self-taught Hindi through journals, chiefly *Sarasvatī* and *Maryādā.* Fluent in Bengali.
Occupation
Poet and literary editor

Career
After his father's death in 1917, and that of his wife, brother and sister-in-law in the influenza epidemic of 1918, had to provide for himself, his two children and his nephews. After a short term in the prince's service, thanks to a recommendation by M.P.Dvivedī, whose village was near Nirālā's ancestral village, appointed editor of the Ramakrishna Mission's Hindi periodical *Samanvay* in Calcutta in 1921. Acquainted with the world of Hindi literateurs in Calcutta, joined the '*Matvālā* maṇḍal' in 1923; first slim collection of poems in 1922, *Anāmikā* (reprinted in *Parimal,* 1929). First break-up with *Matvālā*'s owner in 1924; salaried translation work in Calcutta; again in *Matvālā*, but writing also political and topical articles for other magazines (e.g. 'Carkhā' on Gandhi and Tagore). Second break-up with *Matvālā*'s owner over the latter's predilection for 'Ugra', undiscriminate literary jobs. A friend of Pant's and Prasād's, but irritated over the enthusiastic reception of Pant's *Pallav* (1926), entered a bitter controversy with him. After a long illness in Banaras and Garhakola, returned to *Matvālā*, for the first time on a salary. Required formal qualifications for a job at *Sudhā* was first rejected. Started becoming a popular figure with students. Immersed in polemics with Chāyāvād detractors. From 1930 to 1940 lived in Lucknow, working for Dulārelāl Bhārgava's *Sudhā* and Ganga Pustak Mala. In the 1940s showed first signs of mental instability but kept writing. From 1945 lived alone in Allahabad. The most experimental and wide-ranging of the Chāyāvād poets, also author of original sketches, stories and short novels, is now considered one of the most original Hindi literary figures of this century.
Works
Poems: *Anāmikā* (1922, later as *Parimal*, 1929), *Gītikā* (1936), *Anāmikā* (1937), *Tulsīdās* (1938), *Kukurmuttā* (1942), *Aṇimā* (1943), *Belā* (1943), *Naye patte* (1946).
Prose: *Apsarā* (1930), *Alkā* (1933), *Cāturī camār* (as *Sakhī*, 1935), *Kullī bhāṭ* (1939), *Billesur bakarihā* (1942).

Ojhā, R.B. Mahapandit Gaurīśaṅkar Hirācand (1863-1947)
Birthplace
Rohira village (Sirohi state, Rajputana)
Background
Born in a Brahmin family which had moved from Mewar to Sirohi state in the sixteenth century.
Education
Educated first at home in Hindi, after *yajñnopavīt* underwent the traditional Sanskrit education in the Vedas, *gaṇit*, etc.; at 14 moved to Bombay for lack of proper educational facilities, and learnt Gujarati for six months before being able to enrol at Elphinstone College; matriculated from there in 1884. Meanwhile kept studying Sanskrit and Prakrit with the famous scholar Pandit Gaṭṭūlāl. Enrolled at Wilson College in 1886; a spell of ill-health interrupted his studies, but until 1888 he remained in Bombay to study ancient scripts and ancient history.
Occupation
Historian, curator
Career
In 1888 appointed head of the history office of Udaipur state; in 1890 became director of the newly-opened museum library of Victoria Hall; in 1908 appointed director of the Government Museum in Ajmer. In 1893 published the first Hindi book on the subject of ancient scripts (*Prācīn lipimālā*), which earned him the recognition of scholars and the membership of several scholarly societies; a revised edition came out in 1918. In 1902 wrote a biography of Colonel Tod and started writing notes on the translation of his *Antiquities of Rajasthan.* Also started publishing an *Itihās granthamālā.* Early member of the Nāgarī Pracāriṇī Sabhā, he edited its journal, *Nāgarī Pracāriṇī Patrikā* for several years and published his books with the Sabhā. Edited *Pṛthvīrāj vijay* and *Karamcand vaṃś* and authored several books on various Rajput dynasties. In 1911 awarded title of Rai Bahadur, and in 1928 of Mahapandit; President of the 1927 Hindī Sāhitya Sammelan, and in 1933 President of the Historical branch of the Baroda Oriental Conference; in 1933 was presented a huge felicitation volume, *Bhārtīy anuśīlan;*1937

awarded the title Sāhitya Vācaspati from the Sammelan, and an honorary D.Lit. from B.H.U. Wrote only in Hindi.
Works
Among others: *Solāṅkiyoṁ kā itihās* (1908); *Rājputānā kā itihās* (1923-); ed., *Madhyakālīn bhārtīy saṃskṛti* (1928).

Pālīvāl, Śrīkṛṣṇadatt (1895-1968)
Birthplace
Village Tanora, Agra district.
Background
Moderately affluent peasant family
Education
M.A. in Economics from Allahabad University in 1920; dropped out to join Non-Cooperation. Private study of religious scriptures.
Occupation
Newspaper editor and political leader
Career
Started writing for *Brahmoday*, then fled to Kanpur where in 1918 joined G.Ś. Vidyārthī's *'Pratāp* family'; editor of *Prabhā* under the name of Devadatt Śarmā, and of *Pratāp* from 1921 to 1923. Early influenced by Tilak, then by Satyadev Pārivrājak; involved in the Mainpuri Conspiracy case, was acquitted for lack of evidence. Active Congressman, moved to Agra, where in 1925 he founded the nationalist weekly *Sainik* (also daily from 1935), closed down and fined several times by censors. 1923-26 member of U.P. Legislative Council; 1928-31 member of Agra District board, later chairman. Leader of the Civil Disobedience campaign in Agra district; elected on a Congress ticket to the U.P. Legislative Assembly in 1934. The leading Congressman of Agra district, was first U.P. Congress Dictator in 1940; again in jail between 1942 and 1945. In 1946 elected unopposed to the Central Assembly, and President of the U.P. Kisan Congress.
Works
Sevā mārg (1920); *Mārksvād aur gāndhīvād*. Translated *The Eternal City* into Hindi.

Pāṇḍey, Rūpnārāyaṇ (1884-1958)
Birthplace
Lucknow
Background
Born in a poor Brahmin family in Lucknow, the son of a Sanskrit scholar.
Education
Orphaned at tender age, was educated under the tutelage of a local scholar. Studied Sanskrit at Canning College, passed the *prathamā*, but had to start working before he could take the *madhyamā* examination. Taught himself English, Bengali, Marathi, Gujarati and Urdu.
Occupation
Literary editor, translator
Career
One of the first professional translators and editors in Hindi. Started by translating the Purāṇas and the Śrīmadbhgavat; then Kṛttibās's *Rāmāyaṇa*, and later several Bengali novels and plays, among which Bankimchandra's essays, Tagore's *Āṁkh kī kirkirī* (1919), *Rājā rānī* (1925), etc. and most of Sharatchandra's novels: all in all, sixty translations and fifteen original works. In search of employment, he worked as editor first with *Nāgarī-pracārak, Nigamāgam-patrikā* (the journal of Bhārat-Dharma Mahāmaṇḍal, which awarded him the title 'Kaviratna'), then with Prasād's *Indu*, with the Indian Press in Allahabad, with *Kanyākubja* and finally with *Mādhurī*, where he remained, with some gaps, from 1923 to 1935. The stability and fame as an experienced editor brought him some wealth and a pompous style of living. Contributed regularly with Braj poems and articles to the main literary journals. Also edited *Śivsiṃh saroj* and wrote commentaries on Tulsī's *Rāmāyaṇa* and *Śivrāj bhūṣaṇ*.

Pant, Sumitrānandan (1900-1977)
Birthplace
Kasauni, district Almora
Background
His father was trasurer of Kasauni state and owned a tea estate; after his mother's early death, was brought up by his father and grandmother.
Education
First at the village school; in 1912 at Amora government school to learn English, and in 1918 at Jaynarayan High School in Banaras; in 1919 enrolled at Muir Central College for B.A., dropped out in the second year spurred by his elder brother.
Occupation
Poet
Career
Born in a cultured family and with literary-minded elder brothers, wrote copiously from an early age. In Banaras first read Sarojini Naidu, Tagore and the English Romantic poets. Thereafter wrote *Ucchvās* and *Granthi* (publ. 1920). In Allahabad his poems started to be published in *Sarasvatī* (the first Chāyāvādī poet to be published there) thanks to P.P. Bakhśī's personal encouragement, and his poetry collections were published by the Indian Press. Early recognition, especially after *Pallav* (1926). From 1931 to 1941 was guest of the Maharaja of Kalakankar, and edited *Rūpābh* (1938) from there, a literary journal which bridged between Chāyāvād and later poetry, both Progressive and Experimentalist. Pant himself moved on to various styles, first under the influence of Gandhi, then of the Progressives and lastly of Aurobindo Ghosh, a trajectoy not untypical for Hindi intellectuals. In 1942 founded a cultural centre in Almora, Lokāyān, established contacts with Uday Shankar's group, and wrote for one of his ballets. On that occasion toured South India and visited Aurobindo for the first time. From 1950 to 1957 was advisor for All-India Radio. Awarded Sahitya Akademi Puraskar in 1961.
Works
Ucchvās (1920), *Granthi* (1920), *Pallav* (1926), *Vīṇā* (1927), *Guñjan* (1932), *Yugānt* (1936), *Yugvāṇī* (1937), *Grāmyā* (1940), *Yugpath* (1948), *Kalā aur būṛhā cāṁd* (1958). Play: *Jyotsnā* (1934).

Parāṛkar, Bābūrāo Viṣṇu (1880-1955)
Birthplace
Banaras
Background
Born in a Maharastrian family; his father had moved to Banaras, studied there until *śāstrī* and became Head Pandit in government schools in Bihar.
Education
Mostly in Bihar, especially in Bhagalpur, first in Sanskrit, then in English upto Intermediate level at Tejnarayan College, Bhagalpur. After his father's death paid his studies with private tuitions, but after his mother's and sisters' death in the plague had to eventually give up.
Occupation
Newspaper editor
Career
After the death of his mother and sister went to Calcutta in search of occupation. First job with *Hindī baṅgvāsī* in 1906; then in 1907-10 at *Hitvārtā*, the Hindi edition of *Hitvādī*, with uncle S.K. Deuskar, who was chief editor there; wrote chiefly political articles and editorials. Meanwhile studied Hindi and Marathi at Bengal National College, where he came in contact with its principal Aurobindo Ghosh and Rasbehari Ghosh. 1910-15 assistant editor with daily *Bhāratmitra* with A. Vājpeyī. 1916-20 convicted for political reasons; in 1920 back to Banaras, where he joined Śivaprasād Gupta's nationalist daily *Āj* and made it, together with Śrīprakāś (1890-1971), one of the best Hindi papers. In 1930 during Civil Disobedience, when *Āj* was shut, edited and

published the cyclostyled bulletin *Rāṇbherī*. Arrested and fined Rs. 1000 for an article in *Āj* in 1930. Edited *Premcand smṛti aṅk* for *Hans* in 1937. President of the First Sampādak Sammelan at Vrindavan Hindī Sāhitya Sammelan; President of the XXVII Hindī Sāhitya Sammelan in Simla, at the heat of the Hindi-Hindustani controversy.

'Parivrājak', Svami Satyadev (alias Sukh Lāl) (1879-1961)
Birthplace
Ludhiana
Background
Born in a Thapar family of great religious eclecticism: his great-grandfather had embraced Sikhism, his grandfather was a Shaiva. Although himself a *sanatan dharmi*, his father sent him to a D.A.V. school and wanted him to join the railways.
Education
Matriculation in 1897 from the D.A.V. school in Ludhiana. Entrance from D.A.V. college in Lahore, where he became close to Lajpat Rai. Later graduated from Central Hindu College, Banaras. In 1905-7 spent two years in the United States at the universities of Chicago and Oregon, studying political science and economics.
Occupation
Public preacher
Career
After reading Dayānand's biography at school decided to become a *sanyāsī*. Five years of religious education in Dehradun, Kanpur and Kāśī. In the 1890s became an Ārya Samāj *pracārak*; his first article in Hindi appeared in *Sarasvatī*. Decided to go the United States to cure his eyesight, and collected the money for the passage by preaching in Gujarat. From America he corresponded with M.P.Dvivedī, and his reports in *Sarasvatī* became very popular. In the United States he also did fund-raising for his 'downtrodden country'. On his return he first settled in Almora, then in Dehradun, where he was appointed head-master of the local D.A.V. school. Soon left and tried various educational and literary enterprises in Calcutta and Banaras, and published some nationalist tracts; in 1913-14 worked as a Hindi preacher for the Hindī Sāhitya Sammelan, touring North India. Between 1913 and 1918 also toured continuously to preach *svadeśī* and *svarājya*. In 1918 was sent to South India to help the Hindi propaganda programme there. In 1923 left for Germany for further eye treatment, but despite several trips became blind. Also became attracted to Nazism, and wrote favourably about it and Hindu *saṅgaṭhan* in Hindi journals. After his return opened an ashram in Javalapur (Hardwar). Overall a highly original and colourful figure, inspired many younger minds.
Works
Amrīkā didarśan (1911), *Rāṣṭrīy saṁdhyā* (1911), *Hindī k sandeś* (1914), *Satya nibandhāvalī* (1914), *Sañjīvan būṭī* (1915), *Manuṣya ke adhikār* (1922), *Hamārī sadiyoṁ kī gulāmī* (1922), *Saṅgaṭhan kā bigul* (1922), *Merī jarman yātrā* (1924); *Qurān meṁ parivartan* (1924); *Bhārtīy samājvād kī rūprekhā* (1939).

Poddār, Hanumānprasād (1892-1971)
Birthplace
Shillong (Assam)
Background
Born in a family of Marwari merchants which moved to Calcutta in 1901.
Education
Educated in Calcutta in Hindi, Bengali, Gujarati, Marathi and English.
Occupation
Newspaper editor and publisher
Career
In Calcutta came in contact with Bipin Chandra Pal and Aurobindo Ghosh and took part in terrorist activities since 1910; jailed in 1916-18 for treason and banned from Bombay. In jail turned to spiritual path. Met Gandhi in 1915 and took the oath to 'serve the country' (*svadeś-sevā*). Since 1914 started writing articles for Hindi journals. Moved to

Bombay in 1918, where he became an ardent Tilak follower before changing once again in 1921 and turning to religious preaching. With Seth Jaydayāl Goyīṅkā set up, first in Bombay and then in Gorakhpur, the religious monthly *Kalyāṇ* (1926), which was to become the Hindi journal with the highest distribution ever and a powerful vehicle of reconfiguration of 'modern' Hindu identity. In 1927 set up the Gita Press in Gorakhpur, and in 1928 the English version of *Kalyāṇ*, *Kalyana Kalpataru*, came out. In 1929 Gandhi in Gorakhpur gave a speech at the Press; Poddār organized the 1929 Hindī Sāhitya Sammelan meeting there. In 1932 launched *Harijan sevak* with Viyogī Hari and Seth Ghanshyam Das Birla. After independence, took part in the movement to restore Krishna's 'birth-place' in Mathura. Author of several books and booklets on 'Hindu culture'.
Works: Hindū-saṃskṛti kā svarūp; Sinemā manorañjan yā vināś-sādhan; Strī-dharma-praśnottarī (1926)*; Bhakta-bālak* (1930); *Bhakta-nārī* (1930).

Prasād, Jayśaṅkar (1889-1937)
Birthplace
Banaras
Background
Born in a cultured and distinguished Agrawal merchant family selling scented tobacco for snuff and known as 'Sūṁghnī sāhū'; his father and elder brother were connoisseurs of art and literature. At his father's death in 1901 the family split and business went almost bankrupt. Much of Prasād's life was spent trying to recover the business from debts.
Education
First at home with a Braj poet; in 1899 enrolled at Queen's College, Banaras, but attended only upto 7th grade. After his father's death started helping at home with the business, and continued to study on his own. Self-taught Sanskrit, which he read widely, Pali, some Urdu and English.
Profession
Merchant, gentleman poet
Career
Much of his life was spent in Banaras, apart from a few pilgrimages; great friend of Rāikṛṣṇadās, and later through him of Maithilīśaraṇ Gupta, Kṛṣṇadev Prasād Gauṛ, Vinod Śaṅkar Vyās and Premcand. Started writing regularly from the age of fifteen. Unhappy with M.P.Dvivedī's policies on Khari Boli poetry, launched his own sophisticated journal, *Indu* (1909-1927), where he published his own and Rāykṛṣṇadās's poems. Hardly a public person, was only loosely attached to the Nāgarī Pracāriṇī Sabā, but would nonetheless visit the library assiduously. Although he wrote a lot and regularly in Braj, published only in Khari Boli after 1918. Deeply involved in ancient history, wrote copiously about it in the form of learned essays and highly original literary plays. Recognised as the first Chāyāvādī poet after the success of *Āṁsū* (1925), published widely in the most prestigious journals. His last few years were devoted to writing his *magnum opus*, the poetic epic *Kāmāyanī*, on the origin of man and civilisation after the last deluge. Also wrote several short stories and two novels.
Works
Poems: *Jharnā* (1918), *Āṁsū* (1925), *Lahar* (1933), *Kāmāyanī* (1936). Plays: *Viśākh* (1921), *Kāmnā* (1927), *Janamejay kā nāgayajña* (1926), *Skandagupta* (1928), *Candragupta* (1931), *Dhruvasvāminī* (1933). Short stories: *Chāyā* (1912), *Pratidhvani* (1926), *Ākāśdīp* (1929), *Āṁdhī* (1931), *Indrajāl* (1936). Novels: *Kaṅkāl* (1929), *Titlī* (1934).

Premcand, (Dhanpat Rāy) (1880-1936)
Birthplace
Village Lamhi, district Banaras
Background
Born in a Kayastha family of clerks and *kanungos*; his father was a postal clerk in government service.

Education
First in Urdu and Persian with a maulvi in a neighbouring village; then at the Mission School in Gorakhpur where his father was posted, and finally at the prestigious Queen's Collegiate School in Banaras, where he passed Matriculation in 1898. Refused free tuition, had to give up studying. In 1902-4 attended the Government Teachers' Training College in Allahabad; B.A. only in 1919, at the age of thirty-nine, from Allahabad University.
Occupation
Teacher, writer, literary editor and publisher
Career
First teaching job at the Mission School in Chunar in 1899, for Rs. 18 pm. After a series of temporary posts and the teachers' training joined government service: after a brief spell in Allahabad, from 1905 to 1909 taught at the District School in Kanpur and contributed regularly to D.N. Nigam's Urdu literary journal *Zamānā*; his first story was published in 1907. In 1906 married Śivrānī Devī, a child-widow; it was his second marriage. From 1909 to 1915 appointed sub-deputy inspector of schools in the 'backward' district of Hamirpur. His first collection of short stories (in Urdu), *Soz-e-vatan* (1909), was proscribed; thereafter he changed his pen-name from Navāb Rāi to Premcand. Between 1913 and 1915 gradually switched publishing from Urdu to Hindi; his first Hindi story, 'Saut', was published in *Sarasvatī* in 1915. In 1913 first serious bout of illness that will grow chronic; in 1915 allowed to go back to teaching, after attempts at taking over *Zamānā* prove unsuccessful. After failed attempts to leave government service for other teaching posts, finally resigned after Gandhi's visit to Gorakhpur. After a short spell at the 'national' Marwari school in Kanpur and Kāśī Vidyāpīṭh school in Banaras in 1921-23, started his own printing press, the Sarasvati Press, which would become not the source of independent livelihood, as he had hoped, but of endless financial troubles. In the years to follow his earning would chiefly go to pay for the press and the journals he would edit, the monthly *Hans* (1930) and the political weekly *Jāgaraṇ* (1932). Moved to Lucknow to work first as literary consultant to Dulārelāl Bhārgava for the Ganga Pustak Mala (1924-25), then as *Mādhurī*'s editor and in the publication department of Nawalkishore Press (1927-32). Meanwhile contributed short stories to the leading Hindi journals and wrote several novels. In 1934 attended the XXIV Hindī Sāhitya Sammelan meeting in Delhi with Jainendra Kumār. In 1934 tried to work as a script-writer in the Bombay movie industry, but the job and the environment did not suit him. In 1934-36 became actively involved in the Hindi-Hindustani controversy in favour of Hindustani: toured and gave speeches; among the founding members of the Bhārtīy Sāhitya Pariṣad, a new all-India writers' association, handed *Hans* over to it in 1935. Presided the first Progressive Writers' Association in Lucknow in 1936, shortly before his death.
Works
Several collections of short stories; major novels: *Sevā-sadan* (1919), *Vardān* and *Premāśram* (1921), *Raṅgbhūmī* (1925), *Kāyākalpa* (1926), *Nirmalā* (serialized in *Cāṁd* in 1925; publ.1927); *Gaban* (1931), *Godān* (1936); plays: *Saṅgrām* (1923), *Karbalā* (1924). Translated A. France (*Thais),* Gailsworthy and Sharar's *Fazānā-e-āzād* (1925).

'Prem', Dhanīrām (1904-1979)
Birthplace
Village Dariyapur, district Aligarh
Education
First at Atrauli D.A.V. school, then at Dharma Samaj College and Aligarh Muslim University. Medical degree in 1929 from the National Medical College in Bombay. In 1931 went abroad to Edimburgh for further medical studies.
Occupation
Medical doctor and writer
Career
Jailed for one year in 1921 in Aligarh during Non-Cooperation. Established a branch of the Ārya Kumār Sabhā in Aligarh. Lived and worked in England for a few years; after his

return, practiced in Bombay and Allahabad; edited *Cāṁd* and *Bhaviṣya* for a while after Mahādevī. Author of very popular 'social' short stories and one-act plays. Wrote two films for Ranjit Movie Company: *Do badmāś* and *Bhulbhulaiyā.*
Works
Vallarī (1932), *Prem samādhī, Prāṇeśvarī* (1931), *Veśyā kā hṛday* (1933); *Raṅg aur briṭiś rājnīti, Rūs kā jāgaraṇ, Vīrāṅganā pannā, Devī jon* (Joan of Arc).

'Ratnākar', Babu Jagannāthdās (1866-1932)
Birthplace
Banaras
Background
Born in a distinguished and wealthy family from Panipat district, whose ancestors had been officers of Akabar's court and who had moved first to Lucknow and then to Banaras with the decline of the Mughals; the family was known as 'Dillīvāl Agravāl Vaiśya'. His father was a literary connoisseur and a scholar of Persian and Braj, distantly related to, and a contemporary of, Bhārtendu Hariścandra. Poets would regularly visit the house.
Education
First in Urdu; in 1891 B.A. at Queen's College, Banaras, with Persian as second language; only started M.A. in Persian. Private study of medieval Hindi poetry, Urdu, Persian, Sanskrit, Prakrit, Apabhramsa, Bengali, Marathi, Punjabi, Ayurveda, Jyotish, music, history, archeology, etc.
Occupation
Official, poet
Career
In 1900 first appointed Chief Secretary in a small princely state, and in 1902 Private Secretary to the Maharaja of Ayodhya; after his death in 1906, became Private Secretary to his wife. Mostly occupied with managing work, had little time for literary pursuits until he retired in 1920. A typical exponent of the old Indo-Persian elite, first started writing poetry in Persian, then switched to Braj and became the most respected Braj poet of modern times. After his retirement became quite active in the Hindi literary scene: regularly attended literary gatherings and *kavi-sammelans*. Presided the XX Hindī Sāhitya Sammelan in Calcutta in 1922, and in 1925 the first All-India Hindi Kavi-Sammelan in Kanpur. Regularly published Braj poems in a variety of metres and especially of *śṛṅgāra rasa*, for Hindi journals, and edited and commented several texts of *rīti* poets. His commentary to Bihārīlāl's *Satsaī, Bihārī ratnākar* (1922), was widely praised.
Works
Poetry: *Hiṇḍolā* (1894); *Gaṅgāvataraṇ* (1927); *Uddhavaśataka* (1931).

Rayṛṣṇadās (1892-1980)
Birthplace
Banaras
Background
Born in the 'Rāy' family, one of the most established merchant families of Banaras, related to Bhārtendu Hariścandra and Rādhākṛṣṇa Dās. His father was a lover of Sanskrit and of poetry.
Education
Educated first at home, then at Queen's collegiate school.
Career
One of the central literary figures of Banaras, a connoisseur of poetry and art, at his *salon* on Ramghat scholars, musicians, writers and art-lovers assembled for half a century. Wrote poetry in Braj and Khari Boli from early on, spurred by M.P. Dvivedī and Maithilīśaraṇ Gupta, and published in *Sarasvatī*. A great friend of Jayśaṅkar Prasād, too, he helped editing his monthly *Indu* (1909). Very fond of travelling and of exploring artistic and archeological sites, he assembled a large collections of artifacts, Bhārat Kalā Bhavan, which he donated first at the Nāgarī Pracāriṇī and then to B.H.U. Also started a

publishing house, Bharti Bhandar in 1927, with the aim of encouraging cooperative publishing and higher royalties for writers; it was ceded to the Leader Press of Allahabad in 1935 (by then, a Birla concern).

Works

Prose poems: *Sādhnā* (1919), *Chāyāpath, Saṃlāp, Pravāl* (1929). Poems: *Bhāvuk, Brajraj.* Short stories: *Anākhyā* (1929), *Sudhāṃśu.* (1929) Art history: *Bhārat kī citrakalā* (1939), *Bhārat kī mūrtikalā* (1939).

Sahajānand Sarasvatī (Navraṅg Rāi) (1899ca.- 19?)

Birthplace

Village Deva, tahsil Syedpur, district Ghazipur.

Background

Poor Bhumihar zamindar family

Education

The first of his family and one of the first in the village to become literate, and an exceptionally bright and studious pupil, first attended Upper Primary School at Jalalabad in 1899. Final examination in 1902; Hindi Middle examination from Ghazipur in 1904, awarded a scholarship to continue. Enrolled at the German Mission high school in Ghazipur to study English, left just before taking Matriculation in order to become a *sanyāsī.* The following years were spent on pilgrimage and studying Sanskrit grammar and the Śāstras in Banaras.

Occupation

Sanyāsī, peasant leader

Career

After several years of wanderings and pilgrimages, in 1914 called to give speeches and *upadeś* at the Bhumihar Brahman Mahasabha in Ballia in support of Bhumihar's claim to Brahminhood. This was the first step of his subsequent career as an activist. Wrote pamphlets and two caste-histories to prove the claim: *Bhūmihār brāhmaṇ paricay* (1916), *Brahmarṣivaṃśavistara*, and a manual on *karmakāṇḍ* for Bhumihars, but refused to forge an *itihās* of Bhumihars in Sanskrit *ślokas*. Thereafter resumed his spiritual path for a time, but kept abreast of political events. After a meeting with Gandhi in Patna and attending Nagpur Congress in 1920 became active Non-Cooperator in Baksar: used to travel on foot as a *sanyāsī*, toured villages for propaganda. First jail sentence in Ghazipur, Faizabad and Lucknow, where met other nationalist leaders. In jail 'discovered' the *Gītā*, would later write a commentary on it. Founding member, and later president, of the Bihar Provincial Kisān Sabhā (1929). Established an ashram at Bihta, near Patna, for Bhumihar boys, it became the centre of his peasant activties. Suspended *kisan* activities during Civil Disobedience, resumed afterwards and engaged in intense propaganda, holding 120 meetings in three years between 1933 and 1935, with focus on tenancy reform and rent remission. Conducted independent enquiries into peasants' conditions in Gaya, Darbhanga, Purnea, involved in local struggles, entertained tense relations with Bihar Congress leadership. Several close collaborators were Congress Socialist Party members, and he gradually grew closer to CPI. By 1944 parted company with Communists, tried to move the BPKS near Congress again, but unsuccessfully.

Sahāy, Śivpūjan (1893-1963)

Birthpace

Village Unvans, district Shahabad (Bihar)

Education

First in the village gurudvara and with a maulvi, then in 1903 at Kayastha Jubilee School in Ara; Matriculation in 1912.

Occupation

Teacher, then literary editor

Career

The typical uncertain, impecunious and peripatetic career of a free-lance Hindi journalist and writer. As a student started contributing articles to various Bihar journals and was linked to the Ara branch of the Nāgarī Pracāriṇī Sabhā, one of the earliest to be founded. In 1913 worked for a year as Hindi copist at the civil court in Banaras; then moved to Allahabad, where he wrote and translated; in 1916 appointed teacher at his old school, and in 1918 at Ara Town School. Kept up literary readings thanks to the Sabhā library. In 1920 left government service and started teaching in a 'national' schoolin Ara. In 1921 edited *Marvāṛī sudhār* from Ara and opened a public library in his own village. His literary guru Īśvarīprasād Śarmā advised him to go to Calcutta, where in 1923 he became part of the '*Matvālā* maṇḍal' with Munshi Mahādev Prasād Seṭh, Navjādiklāl Śrīvāstava and Nirālā, on a voluntary basis; contributed to other Calcutta Hindi magazines at the same time. In 1925 shortly moved to *Mādhurī* under D. Bhārgava, but did not like the 'professional' environment and hierarchy there. In 1926 joined the the Pustak Bhandar at Laheriyasarai (Darbhanga), the most important Hindi publisher in Bihar, and moved to Kāśī; in 1930 moved to Sultanganj (Bhagalpur) to edit *Gaṅgā*, a literary journal, but that, too, did not last. From 1931-33 back in Kāśī, where he rented a room in Jayśaṅkar Prasād's compound and edited *Jāgaraṇ*; in 1933 returned to Laheriyasarai to edit the children's journal *Bālak* until 1939. In 1939 finally appointed Hindi professor at Rajendra College in Chapra (until 1949); became involved with the Bihar Hindī Sāhitya Sammelan; first Director of the Bihār Rāṣṭrabhāṣā Pariṣad in Patna in 1950. Awarded Padmabhushan in 1961, and D.Lit. by Bhagalpur University in 1962.

Works

Bihār kā bihār; Vibhūti; Dehātī duniyā (1926); *Grām sudhār; Annapūrṇā ke mandir meṁ.*

Sahgal, Rāmrakh Siṃh (1896-1952)

Birthplace

Village Rakhterha, near Lahore

Background

Son of a forestry officer.

Occupation

Editor and publisher

Career

Spent his youth in Jaunpur. At the time of Jalianwala Bagh was in Jalandhar, where he married Vidyāvatī Devī, who was educated at the Āryakanyā Mahāvidyālay and later taught at Crosthwaite school in Allahabad. Took part in the Non-Cooperation movement and worked with the Congress office in Allahabad; was on the first Congress delegation that toured the Avadh countryside at the time of the peasant agitations in 1920. In 1923 he launched *Cāṁd*, with little financial means but great business skills; it became the journal with the highest sales in the province. After the special 'Mārvāṛī aṅk' a Marwari youth from Calcutta assaulted him. Helped financially by Seth Rāmgopāl Mohtā from Bikaner. Established a Mātṛ Mandir for lone mothers and widows in Allahabad, which was also used as a secret meeting place for women revolutionaries like Durgā Bhabhi and Suśīlā Didi. In contact with Candrasekhar Azad and his group. His foray in political journalism, *Bhaviṣya* (around 1927) lasted only six issues; after being ousted from *Cāṁd* in 1933, he tried establishing a new publishing house in Dehradun, then reviving *Karmayogī* in Lucknow in 1938, and the monthly *Guldastā* in 1940. His last days were spent in acute financial crisis.

Sampūrṇānand (1891-1969)

Birthplace

Banaras

Background

Ordinary, educated Kayastha family.

Education

Primary school at Harish Chandra School, then at Queen's College, Banaras; B.Sc. from Allahabad University in 1911. Teacher's Training T.L. from Allahabad in 1916.
Occupation
Teacher, politician
Career
Started teaching at the 'national' Prem Mahāvidyālay after a vow that he would never work in government service until *svarājya*came; refused an offer to go abroad because 'too orthodox'. After a year at his old school in Banaras, left for Teachers' Training college. Thanks to the recommendation of the principal, Mr Mackenzie, took up a post at Daly College, Indore, from 1916 to 1918, where he met Banārsīdās Caturvedī. 1918-21 principal at Dungar College, Bikaner. Took part in the 1918 Hindī Sāhitya Sammelan meeting in Indore, where Gandhi was president, and started contributing to Hindi journals. Resigned to join Non-Cooperation in Banaras; soon secretary of the District Congress Commitee. Briefly edited *Māryādā* in 1921 before going to jail. Since 1922, member of AICC and professor of philosophy at Kāśī Vidyāpīṭh, with Narendra Dev, Śrīprakās, Acharya Bīrbal, etc. Involved in the publication work of Jnanmandal, published *Antarrāṣṭrīy vidhān* (1924) and *Samājvād* (1936, awarded the Maṅglāprasād prize) from there. 1923 elected to the Municipal Board, chairman of the education committee. In 1926 elected member of the provincial Legislative Council from Banaras city. First Congress Dictator for salt *satyagraha* in Banaras, arrested in 1932. Arrested again during individual *satyāgraha* in 1939 and in 1942. Three times president of UP PCC. Founding member of the Congress Socialist Party in 1934. Elected again to the Legislative Assembly in 1935, was Education minister in the Congress Government in 1938-39, and again in 1946. After Independence was Chief Minister of I.P. and Governor to Rajasthan.
Works
Bhārat ke deśī rāṣṭra (1918); *Antarrāṣṭrīy vidhān* (1924); *Samājvād* (1936).

'Sanehī', Śukla, Gayāprasād - 'Triśūl' (1883-1972)
Birthplace
Village Haṛhā, dist. Unnāv (U.P.)
Education
Educated until Middle examination in Hindi and Urdu.
Occupation
Tecaher and poet
Career
Became a Middle School teacher at 16. Continued to study old Hindi, Urdu and Persian literatures; began publishing poetry in Manoharlāl Dīkṣit's *Rasikmitra* (Braj poetry journal) in 1904 or 1905. Believed that training was necessary for poetry. Poem 'Kṛṣak-krandan', published in G.Ś. Vidyārthī's *Pratāp* in 1913, attracted M.P. Dvivedī's attention, and he asked Sanehī to write for *Sarasvatī* a poem on a 'kuprathā' like dowry. This was the first of a long series of poems on social issues and on Puranic characters and episodes in *Sarasvatī*. At Vidyārthī's urge, he started writing nationalist poems under the name 'Triśūl', while he kept writing on traditional Braj themes for Svami Nārāyaṇānanda's *Kavīndra*. After *Kavīndra* closed down 'Sanehī' himself edited the poetry journal *Sukavi* (1928-50). 'Triśūl's identity remained a mystery until Sanehī left his teaching job in 1921 and moved to Kanpur. One of the most famous nationalist poets of his day, he was instrumental in reviving *kavi-sammelans* for nationalist purposes, and was an extremely popular poet in that venue.
Works
Published collections: *Prem-pacīsī*, *Kṛṣak-krandan* (1913), *Rāṣṭrīy mantra* (1921), *Rāṣṭrīy vīṇā* (1922), *Triśūl taraṅg* (1931), *Kalā meṁ triśūl*,etc.

Sāṅkṛtyāyan, Rāhul (Kedārnāth Pāṇḍe, alias Baba Rāmodar Dās) (1893-1963)
Birthplace
Village Pandaha, district Azamgarh
Background

Maternal grandfather was in the army.
Education
Formal education only upto Urdu Middle Standard; later, Sanskrit education in Banaras, Ārya Samāj education at Ārya Musāfir school in Agra and Buddhist education in Sri Lanka.
Occupation
Traveller-scholar, political activist
Career
After running away from his grandfather's home started a peripatetic life: first to Banaras, then to Calcutta, back to Banaras and as an ascetic in the Himalayas. Became *mahanta* Rāmodar Dās; travelled to South India. In 1914 in Agra, then as Ārya Samāj missionary in Lahore. Politically active since 1920, first as volunteer in Chapra with flood refugees, then as Non-Cooperator in Baksar; first jail sentence. President of District Congress Committee; first trip to Nepal. First trip to Sri Lanka in 1927 for nineteen months, then underground in Nepal and first trip to Tibet. First trip to Europe, the Soviet Union and Asia in 1932-33. Active in Kisān Sabhā agitation in Bihar in 1936, was jailed during the Congress ministry and, in a famous case, was refused treatment as 'political prisoner'; again member of Bihar Congress in 1940, and jailed between 1940 and 1942. In jail new conversion to communism and membership of the Communist Party; several trips to the Soviet Union. Prolific author of over 150 books on ancient Indian history and archeology, political science, Buddhism and Communism; editor and translator of Sanskrit and Tibetan texts; author of several travel-books and of a four-volume autobiography. Exercised great allure in the Hindi literary sphere for his vast scholarship and unsual familiarity with Central and East Asia. Author of several children's books, too, and a few novels. In 1939 presided over the Bihar Hindī Sāhitya Sammelan, and in 1947 over the A.I. Hindī Sāhitya Sammelan and the Progressive Writers' Conference; severed contacts with CPI in 1947 over the question of Urdu.

Śarmā, Padmasiṃh (1877-1932)
Birthplace
Nayak Nagla, district Bijnaur
Background
Bhumihar family of peasant-farmers.
Education
First in Urdu and Persian; Sanskrit (*Aṣṭādhyāya)* at the *pāṭhśālā* of Pandit Bhīmsen Śarṃa, a disciple of Dayānanda's in Etawa. Then studied *kāvyaśāstra* with Pandit Jīvārām Śarmā, and two years at the Oriental College in Lahore, where he met Nardev Śarmā. Then grammar in Jalandhar with Pandit Gaṅgādatt Śāstrī and philosophy in Banaras with Kāśīnāth Śāstrī.
Occupation
Ārya Samāj preacher, teacher, author
Career
Since 1902 preacher for the UP Ārya Pratinidhi Sabhā, and on the editorial board of *Satyavādī,* edited by Munśirām (later Svami Śraddhānand). In 1904, taught at Gurukul Kangri. 1909-17 taught at Jvalapur Mahāvidyālay, where he edited *Bharatoday;* for some years secretary of the managing commitee of the Mahāvidyālay. Close friend and correspondent of M.P. Dvivedī, contributed regularly with learned essays to *Sarasvatī.* A "purist", he did not agree with Lala Hansraj's mixed style for Hindi text-books. In 1918 called to work in the publication department of Jnanmandal, Banaras. There published a famous commentary on Bihārī's *Satsaī,* the *Sañjīvan bhāṣya* (1922), awarded the first Maṅglāprasād prize. A close friend of the Urdu poet Akbar Ilahabadi, he is considered the first "comparative critic" in Hindi. Banārsīdās Caturvedī, Hariśaṅkar Śarmā were among his disciples. Presided the XVIII Hindī Sāhitya Sammelan meeting in Moradabad in 1928. In his last years cooperated with Hindustani Akademi, Allahabad: his speech 'Hindī, urdu, hindustānī' was published in 1932.
Works
Sañīvan bhaṣya (1922); *Pad-parāg* (1929); *Hindī, urdu aur hindustānī* (1932).

Śarmā, Rāmjīlāl (1876-1931)
Birthplace
A village near Hapur, district Meerut
Background
Poor but cultured Brahmin family; his father was a scholar of Sanskrit grammar.
Education
English until 5th standard in the village, Sanskrit with a pandit.
Occupation
Literary editor, publisher
Career
Orphaned at young age, his family moved to Hapur in order for him to get a job. In 1899 moved to Meerut, found work as proof-reader at the Ārya Samāj press of Pandit Tulsīrām. Published two tracts: *Ṭake ser mukti* and *Ṭake ser lakṣmī.* Became Ārya Samāji and started taking interest in public affairs. Moved to Ajmer for another proof-reader's job, and then to Allahabad in 1905, where he was employed by the Indian Press at Rs. 30 pm. 1905-13 worked in the literature department of the Indian Press, writing children's books: e.g. *Bāl manusmṛti* (1907), *Bāl gītā* (1908), *Bāl viṣṇupurāṇa* (1909), *Bāl purāṇa* (1911); also textbooks *Bālvinod* and *Bālābodhinī* (1912). Translated I.C. Vidyasagar's *Sītā vanvās* (1909). In 1913 opened his own press, Hindi Press, publishing his own text-books and the children's journals *Vidyārthī* (1913) and *Khilaunā* (1924). Met M.M. Mālavīya and started contributing to *Maryādā* and *Abhyuday.* Involved in the Hindī Sāhitya Sammelan from the start, was general secretary from 1923 to 1928; the managing committee led by him tried to oust Harihar Śarmā and take over the Dakṣiṇ Bhārat Hindī Pracār Sabhā. Gandhi and Mālavīya had to intervene.

Śāstrī, Harihar Nāth (1904-1953)
Birthplace
Village Vajirapur, district Ballia (Eastern U.P.).
Background
Only son of a sub-inspector of police, Avatār Lāl, from Bihar. Orphaned at young age.
Education
Received his first schooling in Chapra, where he passed the High School examination. Went to Banaras for further education; in 1921 joined Kāśī Vidyāpīṭh.
Occupation
Trade unionist
Career
Before joining the Vidyāpīṭh stayed shortly at the Gandhi Ashrams in Patna and in Lahore, where he worked as a teacher and social worker under Lajpat Rai's influence. Jailed during Non-cooperation in 1921. After graduating from the Vidyāpīṭh, he worked first as member of Lajpat Rai's Lok Sevak Mandal amoung untouchables in Banaras. After training with trade union leaders in Bombay at Lajpat Rai's heed, was sent to work among labourers in Kanpur, living in the workers' quarter at Gwaltoli. Edited journal *Mazdūr.* By 1929 was general secretary of the Kanpur Mazdur Sabha, in 1931-37 its president. In 1933 elected president of the All India Trade Union Congress until 1935. Also in charge of its U.P. branch (1929). Founding member of the Congress Socialist Party, he was general secretary of UP CSP in 1934, and opened a branch in Kanpur in the same year. Member of the UP PCC, was elected MLA in 1937-39. Resigned after independence on the issue of Communists' hold over its executive and over AITUC.

Sītārām, R.B. Lala (Avadhvāsī) (1858-1937)
Birthplace
Ayodhya
Background
Family of *Rāmānandī* affiliation, originally from Jaunpur.
Education

First taught by Baba Raghunāthdayāl, then Urdu and Persian with a maulvi while he acquired Hindi proficiency by reading religious texts. Underwent formal education, too, and acquired a B.A. in 1879 before taking an L.L.B.
Occupation
Editor, teacher, government servant
Career
First edited *Avadh akhbār*, later taught at Banaras Queen's College before becoming Headmaster in Sitapur; later appointed science teacher in Faizabad and back in Banaras. In 1895 appointed Deputy Collector, retired in 1909. All along maintained a very close relationship with the Education Department, where he was examiner and member of the Textbook Committee. Appointed to write several volumes of *Hindi Selections* (1923) for the first University course of Hindi literature at Calcutta University. Involved in the Hindustani Academy, Allahabad. Wrote several text-books, and poetry under the pen-name 'Bhūp'.
Works
Meghadūta (tr., 1883); *Kumārasambhava* (tr., 1884); *Raghuvaṃśa* (tr., 1885), *Ṛtusaṃhāra* (1893); also translated *Śṛṅgāratilaka, Uttarārāmacaritmānas, Mālavikāgnimitra, Mṛcchakaṭika, Mahāvīrcaritra, Mālatīmādhava, Hitopadeśa*, etc. as well as some Shakespeare. Wrote *Ayodhyā kā itihās*.

Śraddhānand, Svami (Lala Munśīrām) (1856-1926)
Birthplace
Talwan, district Jalandhar (Punjab)
Background
Born in a Khatri family, the son of a devout Shivaite.
Education
Educated in a series of towns in U.P.: Banaras, Banda, Mirzapur, Banaras again and Allahabad; enrolled at Government College in Lahore for law.
Occupation
First lawyer, then Ārya Samāji educationist and political activist
Career
Came early under the influence of Svami Dayānand Sarasvatī; president of Jalandhar Ārya Samāj, started law practice. After an extensive fund-raising tour established the Kanyā Pāṭhśālā in Jalandhar in 1890, later to become Kanyā Mahāvidyālay in 1896, also with the support of the newly-organized Ārya Samāj women preachers of the Strī Samāj. The Kanyā Mahāvidyālay was to be a pioneering institution in female education and an important instrument for Hindi propaganda in the Punjab. Active production of text-books and original curriculum. In 1900, in polemics with the compromising and pro-English policy of D.A.V. colleges, founded Gurukul Kangri, first in 1900 in the Vedic *pāṭhśālā* of Gujranvala, then on donated land on the banks of the Ganges near Hardwar in 1902; principal between 1902 and 1907. Opened a Mahāvidyālay section in 1907 for Vedic studies, Ayurveda and humanities (in Hindi). Initially not involved in politics (in contrast with the revolutionary activities at D.A.V. college in Lahore), the Gurukul grew progressively political. In 1919 Śraddhānand started the nationalist daily *Vijay* under the editorship of his son, Prof. Indra Vidyāvācaspati (1889-1960), and an Urdu daily, *Tej;* involved in Non-Cooperation and Khilafat propaganda. Took *sanyās* in 1917. One of the animators of *śuddhi* activities in the Ārya Samāj, held regular *śuddhi* conferences at the annual Gurukul anniversary celebrations, registered a Bhārat Śuddhi Sabhā in 1911, and renewed activism with the new Hindū Mahāsabhā in 1923. Killed by an enraged Muslim in 1926.
Works
Jāti ke dīnoṁ ko mat tyāgo (1918); *Kalyāṇ mārg ke pathik* (autobiography, 1924); *Khatre kā ghaṇṭā* (1926).

Śrīvāstava, G.P. (1891-1976)
Birthplace
Chapra, district Saran

Background
Father was railway clerk always on transfer for his *naukrī.*
Education
First education at Chapra in Urdu with a maulvi; when his father settled in Gonda, moved there and passed Matriculation in 1909. In 1910 took Entrance examination at Canning College in Lucknow; B.A. in 1913 and L.L.B. in 1915.
Occupation
Lawyer and writer
Career
Started contributing regularly humororus stories for Īśvarīprasād Śarmā's journal *Manorañjan* (Ara, 1912). Well-known humorous writer, published for all major Hindi journals, especially *Cāṁd* and *Sudhā*. Awarded Coronation medal by the British Raj in 1937; made notary public of Gonda district. Also translated R.C. Dutt's *The Lake of Palms* (1926).
Works
Among others: *Lambī dāṛhī* (1914), *Mār-mārkar hakīm* (1917), *Mardānī aurat* (1920), *Ulaṭpher* (1926), *Dumdār ādmī* (1927); *Gaṅgā-jamanī urf prem-rahasya* (1927), *Vilāyatī ullū* (1932); *Dilkī āg urf diljale kī āh* (1933).

Śrīvāstava, Munshi Navjādiklāl (1888-1939)
Birthplace
A village near Ballia (Eastern U.P.)
Background
After his father became a *sadhu*, had to provide for the family from very early on.
Occupation
Editor
Education
Hindi, Urdu, Bengali self-taught
Career
Moved to Calcutta forced by want and first worked as a postman. Thanks to contacts with various printers and journalists taught himself Hindi, Urdu and Bengali. Before joining the '*Matvālā* maṇḍal', with Mahādev Prasād Seṭh, Śivpūjan Sahāy and Nirālā, worked as a clerk for a soap- and oil-factory. Looked after the accounts of *Matvālā* and wrote the popular humorous column 'Matvāle kī bahak'. When Mahādev Prasād Seṭh wanted to move the journal to Mirzapur, went back to the soap factory and started his own *Mast Matvālā*, but could not support it for long. Left Calcutta for Allahabad, where he edited *Cāṁd* from 1933 to 1935 after Rāmrakh Siṃh Sahgal's departure. After a few other unsuccessful ventures in Calcutta died in severe penury. A public appeal was launched to raise a subscription for his family.

Śrīvāstava, Pratāpnārāyaṇ (1904-1978)
Birthplace
Kanpur
Background
Born in a wealthy family whose ancestors were officers during the Nawabi period.
Education
First at the Kanpur Ārya Samāj school, where Bhāgavatīcaraṇ Varmā was his classmate, then Matriculation in 1921 and B.A. in 1925 from Christchurch College; in 1927 L.L.B. from Lucknow University.
Occupation
First lawyer, then free-lance writer
Career
While still studying for an M.A. in 1928, offered a post as judge in Jodhpur State, but soon returned to Kanpur. In 1924 started his first novel, *Vidā*, an 'original social novel', which received wide acclaim when it was published in 1929 by Ganga Pustak Mala with an enthusiastic foreward by Premcand. Published then a series of novels mostly about upper middle-class characters, each time selling the rights to the publisher; none

however achieved the same success and critical acclaim of the first. A solitary figure, he built a housed and lived by writing and by renting part of it.
Works
Novels: *Vidā* (1929). *Pāp kī aur* (1930), *Vikās* (1938-39), *Vijay* (1937-38), *Bayālīs* (1942?), etc.

Śukla, Devidatt (1888-1970)
Birthplace
Village Baskar, district Unnao
Education
In 1908 to Banaras to study Hindi and Sanskrit; failed Intermediate examination
Occupation
Literary editor
Career
While in Banaras to study had two articles published in *Hindī baṅgvāsī* and *Bhārat jīvan*, the old Banaras weekly. After failing his Intermediate examination, applied in vain to *Bhāratamitra* in Calcutt and *Abhyuday* in Allahabad; started working in Banaras as a clerk first in the office of the Trafic Superintendent and then in that of the Superintendent of Police. Moved to a teaching job in a small town near Kanpur, then to the Education Department of Alvar state. In 1914-18, with a fellow-villager, travelled further away to a job in Mahasamund (CP); but one article in *Maryādā* (in favour of the joint-family system) and two (translated) articles in *Sarasvatī* attracted Dvivedī's attention. After he was recalled home to look after the family property, Śukla visited Dvivedī - who lived nearby and who knew his uncle, a noted expert in Ayurveda - for advice. Dvivedī offered him three potential posts: Śukla chose the one least paid but closer to Divedī, at the Indian Press. His understated style of work and writing, and his readiness to undertake any kind of writing or translation work, won him the favour of Dvivedī and of the publishers, and he rose steadily in the firm, acquiring experience in all aspects of Hindi publishing. So much so that when P.P. Bakhśī finally resigned from the editorship of *Sarasvatī* in 1928, Dvivedī suggested Śukla's name instead of looking for a more glamorous editor elsewhere. A typical self-made Hindi publicist, and his presence in the Hindi world was a quiet one: he did not try to use his position in the Press to wield power, nor did he seek self-aggrandisement but a quiet pride in his work. Until retirement his abode in Allahabad was a tile-covered room on top of a house in the 'Black Town', where he cooked his own meals. A few photographs show him at home in only a *dhotī*, and one in meditation covered in ashes - he was a *śākta* - quite a different identity from that in the office.

Śukla, Rāmcandra (1884-1941)
Birthplace
Village Agona, district Basti
Background
Father was a *sadar kanungo*, himself educated at Queen's College, Banaras, upto Entrance examination and was fluent in Urdu, Persian and Sanskrit.
Education
Vidyārambh in Rath, district Hamirpur; in 1898 Middle school examination in English and Urdu from the Anglo-Jubilee School in Mirzapur, and in 1901 Final examination. To Kayastha Pathshala in Allahabad to study; failed both first year (F.A.) in 1901 and pleadership examination in 1902.
Occupation
Teacher, literary editor, Hindi lecturer
Career
In Mirzapur developed literary taste and knowledge in Hindi, Urdu, Sanskrit and English thanks to Kedārnāth Pāṭhak and Badrīnārāyaṇ Caudhrī 'Premghan'. First joined the collector's office, then the local Mission School as drawing master. At Ś. Dās's call moved to Banaras in 1908 to work on the *Hindī śabdasāgar* for the Nāgarī Pracāriṇī Sabhā; involved in various Sabhā projects, including the *Nāgarī pracāriṇī patrikā*, where

he published several scholarly articles, and translations. In 1921 appointed with Lala Bhagvān Dīn as first Hindi lecturer at B.H.U.; after Ś. Dās's retirement became Head of the Hindi department. Translated Arnold's *The Light of Asia* in Braj verse as *Buddhacarita*(1922), Samuel Smiles's *Plain Livng and High Thinking* as *Ādarś jīvan* (1914), and J. Edison's *Pleasures of the Imagination* as *Kalpanā kā ānand* (1905). Edited (with Lalal Bhagvān Dīn and Brajratna Dās) the three volumes of *Tulsī granthāvalī* (1923), the complete works of Jāyasī (1924), Sūrdās' *Bhramar gīt* (1925). Author of several text-books, his history of Hindi literature (1923-29, rev. ed. 1940) is still the standard reference work in Hindi. Essays: *Cintāmaṇi* (2 vols., 1939, 1945)

Sundarlāl, Pandit (1886-1981?)
Birthplace
Village Khatauli, district Muzaffarnagar
Background
Born in an average Kayastha family, the son of Pandit Totārām, a renowned Arya Samajist and petty government servant.
Education
Educated first at Saharanpur; B.A. at D.A.V. college in Lahore, where he befriended Lala Hardayal. In Allahabad to study law, was rusticated in 1906 in a famous political incident and was prevented from taking the L.L.B. examination. Called 'Pandit' by M.M. Mālavīya and Tej Bahadur Sapru because of his keen interest in, and mastery of, religious scriptures.
Career
First under the influence of Lala Lajpat Rai, helped collecting funds for Aurobindo Ghosh and other Bengali revolutionaries in 1905-7. At the 1906 Calcutta Congress came in contact with Motilal Nehru and became a full-time political worker. In 1909 founded the political fortnightly *Karmayogī* (18.000 readers in a month), which was forced to close down in 1910, and Sundarlāl was sent to jail. In jail he took *sanyās* as Someśvarānand; remained a bachelor and a *brahmacārī*. Also implicated in the Delhi Conspiracy Case with Hardayal in 1913. Underground between 1912 and 1916. In 1919 briefly edited Sahgal's weekly *Bhaviṣya*, and in 1920 a daily by the same name - which was also forced to close down in 1921. Presided over U.P. Provincial Political Conference in Kanpur in 1929. In 1931-32 put in charge of Congress activities in the Central Provinces; worked in Jabalpur with Mākhanlāl Caturvedī and Lakṣmaṇ Siṃh Cauhān. In the language controversy militated for Hindustani. Excellent public speaker.
Works
Vaidik rāṣṭragīt (1911) was poscribed; *Bhārat meṁ aṅgrezī rāj* (1929) was banned with furore.

Ṭaṇḍon, Puruṣottam Dās (1882-1962)
Birthplace
Ahalyapur *mohalla*, Allahabad
Background
Born in a Khatri family, the son of an ordinary government clerk affiliated to the Radhasoami *sampradāy*.
Education
First in Hindi with a local maulvi; Middle examination in 1894, Entrance in 1897; Intermediate in 1899at Kayastha Pathshala with Ramanand Chatterjee as principal. B.A. in 1904 from Muir Central College, B.L.L. 1906 and M.A. in History in 1907.
Occupation
Advocate, political leader
Career
Early under the cultural influence of Bālkṛṣṇa Bhaṭṭ and the political influence of Madan Mohan Mālavīya. After two years of legal practice joined the High Court as Tej Bahadur Sapru's junior in 1908; practised until 1920, when he stopped because of Non-Cooperation. Interested in politics from the time of the pre-1900 Nagari campaign; took first part in a Congress session in 1906 as a delegate. Edited *Abhyuday* (1910-11) and

Maryādā, vocal especially on women's education and Hindi. In charge of the Hindī Sāhitya Sammelan from the very beginning right after the first meeting in Banaras in 1910. For years, until the present building was erected, the Sammelan office was in his own house. 1914-18 in Nabha State as Law minister at Mālavīya's heed. Presided Mālavīya's Kisān Sabhā in 1918. Jailed in 1921 for the first time; thereafter presided the XIII Hindī Sāhitya Sammelan in Kanpur in 1923. Refused to join the Hindū Mahāsabhā. In 1921 elected chairman of Allahabad Municipality, was instrumental in estabishing the Prayāg Mahilā Vidyāpīth and the Hindī Vidyāpīṭh (1925); the latter institution, however, did not flourish. Accepted a job as secretary of the Ārya Samāj Punjab National Bank in Lahore from 1925 to 1929, where he became member of Lajpat Rai's Sevants of the People's Society, and its president in 1928 after Lajpat Rai's death. While in Lahore not politically active, but after 1929 President of the Allahabad District Congress Committee during Civil Disobedience and the no-rent campaign. Arrested again after a public meeting in that regard. Elected MLA from Allahabad City in 1936, he was made Speaker of the Legislative Assembly during the Congress ministry, and again in 1946. Convenor of the UP Report on Agrarian Conditions in 1936, and one of the chief supporters of zamindari abolition. At first reluctant to severe Gandhi's relationship with the Sammelan over the Hindi-Hindustani issue, he eventually kept firmly on the Hindi side and accepted Gandhi's resignation. After Independence took over Mālavīya's mantle as J. Nehru's chief opponent in Allahabad and UP; in a famous incident he was elected Congress President in 1951 defeating Nehru, but had to resign under the latter's pressure.

Tivārī, Veṅkateś Nārāyaṇ (1890-1965)
Birthplace
Kanpur
Education
M.A. in history in 1910 from Allahabad.
Occupation
Editor and politician
Career
Joined Gokhale's Sevants of India Society (1910-30), active in Allahabad Congress. General secretary of the U.P. Provincial Congress Committee from 1914 to 1918. Secretary of the government of India deputation to British Guyana in 1921-22. Member of the U.P. Legislative Council in 1927-30, particularly active during Civil Disobedience and the No-rent agitations in the countryside. Edited *Abhyuday* and *Maryādā* in 1916-17 and again in 1918; then editor of the Leader Press' Hindi weekly *Bhārat*, Allahabad, in 1928-30. Collaborated with the India Press first in 1907, but after 1920 contributed regularly to *Sarasvatī.* Elected MLA in 1937 and in 1946, he became Parliamentary Secretary (Chief Whip) in the provincial Congress ministry of 1937. When Sampūrṇānand refused to establish Urdu as the second official provincial language, arousing a storm of protests from the Muslim League, Tivārī wrote a long series of articles in the Hindi press in his support, to show that the 'people's language' was Hindi and not Urdu. In 1953 became editor of the daily *Jansattā* in Delhi.

Tripāṭhī, Rāmnareś (1881-1962)
Birthplace
Village Koiripur, district Jaunpur
Background
His grandfather had some land at village Sultanpur, in a small princely state, and worked there for a *baniya*; his father joined the army of Nabha state, rose to the rank of *havaldar.*
Education
First in Urdu at the village until inspector of schools Rāmnārāyaṇ Miśra (one of the founders of the Nāgarī Pracāriṇī Sabhā) urged him to study Hindi instead. After Upper-primary examination in the village went to study English, against his father's wishes, at the high school in Jaunpur, but coud not continue after 9th standard.

Occupation
Publisher, writer
Career
First literary exposure through the Hindi journals subscribed by the school: *Hindī baṅgvāsī, Hindī kesarī. Candrakāntā* was his first novel. After a short spell as a teacher in a *pāṭhśāla,* fled to Calcutta to study further. At first bookseller for the Ārya Samāj preacher Tekcand. Prevented by illness from studying, cured only by a long sojourn in Shekhavat (Marwar). There, with the help of Marwari friends, opened a public library with over five thousand Hindi, Sanskrit and English books, and could study at length. After his father's death in 1915 returned from Marwar, and in 1917 settled in Allahabad. Already wrote Braj poetry under a teacher's guidance; in Allahabad started the first of his fortunate publishing ventures, *Kavitā-kaumudī*: an elegant and extremely well-produced seven-volume anthology of Hindi, Braj, Urdu, Sanskrit and Bengali, and folk poetry. In 1918 became member of the Home Rule League. In 1920 took part in Non-Cooperation and toured the Jaunpur area for the Tilak *svarājya* Fund. In 1921 was fined and jailed for a year. After some indecision in 1924 started his own publishing house, Hindi Mandir, and in 1931 acquired his own press. He published literary books, children's books and text-books, particularly for Sāhitya Sammelan Hindi examinations; involved in the Hindi propaganda scheme in Madras. From 1919 to 1930 collected folk songs, touring all over North India: produced a three-volume *Grām-gīt* (1930), the first of its kind in Hindi. A good wrestler and swimmer, he took a five-year *brahmacarya* vow under the influence of Gandhi and Satyadeva Parivrājak. In 1931 he also started editing a children's journal, *Bānar*, which became very popular. Tripāṭhī himself was a respected Khari Boli poet. After selling all his titles to the Sasta-Sahitya-Mandal retired to Sultanpur, where he had been granted some land; he built a house, planted an orchard and settled there.
Works
Poetry: *Milan* (1928); *Mānasī* (1927); *Svapna* (1929); *Pathik* (1932, Hindustani Academy prize). Novels: *Vīrāṅganā* (1911); *Vīrbālā* (1911), *Lakṣmī* (1924). Editor, *Kavitā-kaumudī* (seven volumes, 1917-24); *Grām-gīt* (1930).

'Ugra', Pāṇḍey Becan Śarmā (1900-1967)
Birthplace
Chunar, district Mirzapur
Background
Born in an extremely poor and troubled Brahmin family. His father was an addicted gambler and his elder brother a wayward fellow who acted in Rāmlīlā *maṇḍalīs*.
Education
Only a little primary education in Chunar, was expelled for rowdy behaviour. Later he would partly resume his education in Kāśī under B.V. Parāṛkar and Śivaprasād Gupta's tutelage.
Occupation
Free-lance novelist
Career
Orphaned early, grew under the 'tutelage' of his elder brother, who took him along to play in his Rāmlīlā *maṇḍalī* in Ayodhya, an experience he would later write frankly about in his autobiography. After a brief spell in Banaras he found himself in Calcutta, where he worked for some time as a shop-clerk. At the time of Non-Cooperation he returned to Banaras, joined the movement and went to jail. In 1920 wrote a nationalist *khaṇḍakāvya, Dhruvdhārṇā*, and contributed regularly nationalist stories for *Āj*; learnt *alaṃkāras* from Lala Bhagvān Dīn. Edited the special issue 'Vijayāṅk' of the Gorakhpur paper *Svadeś*, which was proscribed, and landed in jail again. To Calcutta for the Congress session, remained there at the *Matvālā* office: the owner Mahādevprasād Seṭh was ritually linked to Ugra's family. There he started writing sensational social novels that, according to a contemporary, 'sold like peanuts'. It was against his collection of stories about male homosexuality, *Cakleṭ*, that Banārasīdās Caturvedī launched his campaign against obscene literature. When *Matvālā* faced closure, Ugra moved to

Bombay to work in silent films, but earned mostly debts. From Bombay moved to Indore, where he edited *Vīṇā* and *Svarājya* for some time, and the monthly *Vikram* from Ujjain. From 1945 to 1948 was again in Bombay, then in Mirzapur until 1950, and after a year in Calcutta moved eventually to Delhi.
Works
Cand hasīnoṁ ke khutūt (1927); *Cakleṭ* (1927); *Budhuā kī beṭī* (1928), *Dillī kā dalāl* (1928); *Mahātmā Isā; Cumban; Śarābī* (1930); *Ghaṇṭā; Sarkār tumhārī āṁkhoṁ meṁ* (1937); *Jījījī* (1943); *Apnī khabar* (1960), etc.

Vājpeyī, Ambikāprasād (1880-1968)
Birthplace
Kanpur
Background
Family traditionally of Sanskrit scholars; his father however studied only a little *mahājanī* and went to Calcutta in search of work, first worked as a clerk, then as a middleman. The family remained in Kanpur.
Education
First in Urdu and Persian in view of getting a job in the law-courts; when one cousin established a school nearby in 1889, joined it before going to Banaras, Calcutta and eventually back to Kanpur District School; Matriculation in 1900; one teacher's Hindi *śikṣāvalī* turned him from Urdu to Hindi.
Occupation
Editor
Career
After some hesitation joined Allahabad Bank as a clerk for three years first; then, thanks to a relative, entered the editorial board of the popular Calcutta paper *Hindī baṅgavāsī*. Left after learning the rudiments of the trade. Between 1907 and 1910 worked in Calcutta, teaching Hindi to Bengalis and Europeans and editing the journal *Nṛsiṃh*, under Tilak's influence. In 1911 was offered the editorship of *Bhāratmitra*, and soon launched a daily edition on the occasion of the Delhi Darbar. Gradually joined by B.V. Parāṛkar, Yaśodānandan Akhaurī and other literary people. Broke with the managers in 1919 over ideological differences. In 1916 established the Calcutta branch of Tilak's Home Rule League; in 1917 was vice-president of the welcoming committee of Calcutta Congress; in 1921 in jail during Non-Cooperation, with C.R. Das, Maulana Azad etc. Between 1920 and 1930 edited from Banaras the political paper *Svatantra*, which became very popular; it closed down when asked to furnish a security of Rs. 5000. Between 1904 and 1919 worked on a project for a Hindi grammar: *Hindī kaumudī*. In 1928 was made Hindi B.A. examiner by Calcutta University, and in 1930 for M.A. In 1939 presided the Hindī Sāhitya Sammelan meeting in Banaras at the height of the Hindi-Hindustani controversy. For years member of the AICC; after 1947, was member of the UP Legislative Assembly.
Works
Hindī kaumudī (1919); *Hindī par fārsī kā prabhāv* (1937; in English as *Persian Influence on Hindi* in 1936); *Bhārat-śāsan-paddhati* (1923-24); *Hinduoṁ kī rāj-kalpanā; Samacārpatroṁ kā itihās* (1953).

Vājpeyī, Kiśorīdās (1898-1981)
Birthplace
Ramnagar (district Kanpur)
Education
Started in 1915 on a traditional Sanskrit curriculum in Vrindavan with Kiśorīlāl Gosvāmī, a *gosvāmī* of the Nimbarka *sampradāy* who had opened a press, edited the journal *Vaiṣṇava sarvasva* and wrote historical romances. *Śāstrī* degree in 1919.
Occupation
Teacher, grammarian, editor
Career

After his *śāstrī* degree moved to the Punjab in 1919 at the time of Jallianwala Bagh. There he started teaching Sanskrit teacher at a Sanatan Dharma High School in Karnal district, and the love for the national language became mixed with that for 'national freedom'. His manual of poetics with nationalist verses as examples was proscribed by the government (*Ras aur alaṃkār*, 1931). Involved in Sammelan activities, published his first Hindi articles on poetry and on grammar (of which he was to become an expert) in *Mādhurī*. Decided to quit teaching and become a full-time literary journalist: after an unhappy encounter with *Sudhā's* Dulārelāl Bhārgava, joined *Cāṁd* in Allahabad. Resigned after Sahgal criticized Madan Mohan Mālavīya. After a short spell at *Mādhurī's* publication department, working on the critical edition of *Śrīmad bhāgavat*, he went back to teach at Hardwar Municipal school (1929-30), where he was expelled for taking part in the Civil Disobedience movement. During the movement did political work in Agra with Śrīkṛṣṇadatt Pālīvāl, then went back to his job in Hardwar. In 1938 conducted a public campaign against the naked Naga babas at Hardwar's Kumbha mela. Another public campaign against bribery in government offices cost him his job during the Congress ministry, and only Ṭaṇḍon's intervention reinstated him. Active in Hindi propaganda in Punjab and Kashmir; organized the 1942 Hindī Sāhitya Sammelan annual meeting at Bhaini Sahab in the Punjab.
Works
Rasa aur alaṃkār (1931); *Hindī śabdānuśāsan; Acchī hindī; Sāhityik jīvan ke anubhav aur saṃsmaraṇ*.

Varmā, Bhagavatīcaraṇ (1903-1981)
Birthplace
Safipur village, district Unnao; childhood in Patkapur *muhalla,* Kanpur
Background
His father was a lawyer in Kanpur
Education
First at the Ārya Samāj school, then at Theosophical School in Kanpur; Intermediate in 1924; B.A. and LLB from Allahabad University (Holland Hall) in 1928.
Occupation
First lawyer, then free-lance writer
Career
After his father's early death and the death of his mentor in 1920, had to look after the family amidst great financial pressures. Early under the influence of G.Ś. Vidyārthī, published his first poem in *Pratāp* in 1917; early friendship with V. Śarmā 'Kauśik', then with B. Śarmā 'Navīn' and Ramāśaṅkar Avasthī. Urged by Vidyārthī to read V. Hugo and to write articles on Marx, Mazzini and prominent French revolutionary leaders for *Prabhā* in 1922-23. Early fame as a Chāyāvādī poet, published widely in Hindi journals; first publicly recognized at the *kavi-sammelan* on the occasion of XIII Hindī Sāhitya Sammelan meeting in Kanpur in 1923. His first novel *Patan* (1929) was a flop, but subsequently he would become one of the best-known and widely-read Hindi novelists; also good short-story writer. In Allahabad in contact with K.K. Mālavīya. After University tried his hand unsuccessfully at law practice in Hamirpur, then again in Allahabad. Once, short of money, wrote a collection of poems for Ganga Pustak Mala in one day: *Ek din*! After the success of *Citralekhā* and of the film based on the novel was hired by a movie company in Calcutta as a script-writer; later in Bombay, and finally settled in Lucknow. After 1957 comfortable earning from royalties.
Works
Poems: *Madhukaṇ* (1932), *Prem-saṅgīt* (1937), *Mānav*. Novels: *Patan* (1929), *Citralekhā* (1934), *Tīn varṣ* (1946), *Ṭeṛhe-meṛhe rāste* (1946), *Bhūle-bisre citr* (1959).

Varmā, Dhīrendra (1897-1973)
Birthplace
Bareilly.
Background
Born in an Ārya Samji Kayastha family of zamindars.

Education
First traditional Sanskrit education; his father wanted to send him to Gurukul Kangri, but he finally formally enrolled in 1908 at D.A.V. college in Dehradun before moving in 1910 to Queen's Anglo High School in Lucknow (where he was Dulārelāl Bhārgava's classmate). Intermediate in 1916 from Muir Central College; B.A. in 1918 and M.A. in Sanskrit in 1921, was one of G.N. Jhā's favourite students; awarded two-year government scholarship (Rs. 100 pm) for a D.Lit. In 1934 went to Europe to study phonetics; awarded a D.Lit. from Paris University with a thesis on Braj Bhasa.
Occupation
Lecturer in Hindi
Career
Appointed first Hindi lecturer at Allahabad University in 1924; set up the Hindi department there, with Devīprasād Śukla (1924-29), and later with former students Rāmśaṅkar Śuka 'Rasāl' and Rāmkumār Varmā. Designed a different curriculum from B.H.U., more open to modern and contemporary literature, to linguistics and the history of language, and to comparative Indian literature. Encouraged research in all these subjects. Linked with the Hindī Sāhitya Sammelan, for which he was examiner, and secretary of the Hindustani Academy. In 1935 became Reader, and in 1945 Professor; until his retirerement in 1959 was Head of the Hindi departement. Author of several text-books. Wrote critically about Hindi's claim to *rāṣṭrabhāṣā* status, and his silence during the Hindi-Hindustani controversy was greatly resented in the Hindi camp.
Works
Brajbhāṣā vyākaraṇ (1937); *Aṣṭachāp* (1938); *Merī kālij ḍāyrī* (1951); *Hindī rāṣṭra yā sūbā hindustānī* (1930); *Vicār-dhārā*. Ed. *Hindī sāhitya koś* (1975)

Varmā, Mahādevī (1902-1987)
Background
Born in a Kayastha service family originally from Farrukhabad; her father was the first in the famįly to learn English, after running away from a prospected clerical job: B.A. from Ewing Christian College and M.A. in English from Allahabad University. Quite anglicized, he taught Indian princes, first in Darbhanga, than in Bhopal and finally at Daly College for princes in Indore; became then *divan* of the nearby small state of Narsinghgarh. Educated all his daughters and later supported Mahādevī's choice of living on her own. Her mother was not educated but well versed in the religious oral tradition of Vallabhan devotion.
Education
Liberally educated at home in literature (both Sanskrit and Braj), music and drawing, composed poetry first as a child. In 1918 sent to Crosthwaite College, Allahabad, where she stayed throughout her studies until her B.A. in 1929 (in 1925 Allahabad university stopped being co-educational), with English, Philosophy and Sanskrit as chosen subjects. Subhadrā Kumārī Cauhān and Rāmeśvarī Goyal were her school-friends there. Later M.A. in Sanskrit from the same university.
Occupation
Writer, principal
Career
Started writing as a child, and from 1922 onwards, while still at College, published poetry in *Cāṁd* and attended selected poetry-readings at the Sukavi Samāj; in the beginning wrote *samasyā-pūrtis*, then switched to *pragīt* under Pant's influence. Early recognition in the Hindi literary sphere; the collection *Nīrjā* (1934) was awarded the Seksāriyā award. Considered with Rāmkumār and Bhagavatīcaraṇ Varmā one of the 'small triad' of Chāyāvād. However, the unpleasant affair when she was chosen to preside the Lucknow A.I. *kavi-sammelan* in 1937 alienated her from public appearances. Married around 1913, refused later ever to live with her husband, who complied. In 1930 took to wearing *khadi* and teaching in two villages outside Allahabad; she would write about them sketches in *Atīt ke calcitra* and *Śṛṅkhlā kī kaṛiyāṁ*. After a women's *kavi-sammelan* to mark the opening of the Mahilā Vidyāpīṭh College in 1932, chosen to become its principal. Between November 1935 and July 1938 edited *Cāṁd*; her 'Viduṣī

aṅk' was especially praised. Also instrumental in setting up a 'writers parliament' in Allahabad, Sāhityakār Saṃsad, with government funds. Thanks to the Vidyāpīṭh, in contact with most Congress leaders of the province.
Works
Poems: *Nihār* (1930), *Raśmī* (1932), *Nīrjā* (1934), *Dīp-śikhā* (1942). Sketches and essays: *Atīt ke calcitra* (1941), *Śṛṅkhalā kī kaṛiyāṁ* (1942), *Smṛti kī rekhāeṁ* (1943), *Sāhityakār kī āsthā* (first ed. 1940).

Varmā, Rāmcandra (1889- 1969)
Birthplace
Banaras
Background
Born in a Chopra family originally from village Akalgarh, district Gujranvala (Punjab), where all Chopras were called 'Divan' from the time of Maharaja Ranjit Singh.
Occupation
Free-lance translator and literary editor
Occupation
From a very early age acquainted with Babu Rāmkṛṣṇa Varmā, owner of the Bharat Jivan Press; started contributing articles to *Bhārat jīvan* and meeting Hindi literary people there. Edited *Hindī kesarī* from Nagpur in 1907-8, then started working at the dictionary project for the Nāgarī Pracāriṇī Sabhā; later edited the concise version of the dictionary, the *Saṅkṣipta hindī śabdasāgar* (1933). Closely connected with the Sabhā, he also helped editing the *Nāgarī pracāriṇī patrikā* between 1913 and 1916. Also edited the daily version of *Bhārat jīvan* after the First World War started; took over *Bhārat jīvan* at Rāmkṛṣṇa Varmā's death. Extremely prolific translator and compiler of over sixty Hindi books from English, Urdu, Marathi, Gujarati, Bengali and Persian - biographies, text-books etc. on a wide range of literary, political, historical and generally 'useful' subjects - Rāmcandra Varmā exemplifies the kind of strenuous work that was required in order to make ends meet as a Hindi literary editor.
Works
Among the many translations: Bernier's travels, S. Smiles' *Thrift* and *Self-Help*, Muhammad Husain 'Āzād's *Darbār-i-Akbarī* (as *Akbarī darbār*, 1924-29), Svami Rāmdās's *Dāsbodh; Chatrasāl* (1919); *Sāmyavād* (1919); *Ham svarājya kyoṁ cāhte haiṁ; Mevāṛ patan* (1928); *Hindū-rājya-tantra* (1928); *Bhāratīy striyāṁ* (1927); *Sāmarthya, samṛddhi aur śānti* (1927); *Goroṁ kā prabhutva; Dharmoṁ kā itihās; Prācīn mudrā* (1924), *Grāmīṇ samāj*; Sharatchandra's collected works (1936-39), etc. Hindi-Urdu dictionary (1936).

Varmā, Rāmkumār (1905- ?)
Birthplace
District Sagar (CP)
Background
His father was a Deputy Collector, always on transfer.
Education
First Hindi education at home by his mother Rājrānī Devī, herself a poet. Primary education in various schools in Central India. In 1920 passed the Hindī Sāhitya Sammelan *prathamā* exam, first class; while studying for Entrance, left school in 1921 and started singing and composing songs for *prabhat pheris*, selling Khadi and giving public speeches. In 1925 went to Allahabad University; B.A. in 1927 and Hindi M.A. in 1929. Later Ph.D. from Sagar University.
Occupation
Hindi lecturer, poet
Career
Published poems from an early age; very fond of *Rāmcaritmānas*. His poem 'Deś-sevā' fetched the Rs. 51 Khanna prize in 1922. R.S. Sahgal asked his poems for *Cāṁd*. Immediately after his M.A. appointed lecturer in the Hindi department. Widely published in all major Hindi journals, was considered one of the three 'minor

Chāyāvādīs' with Mahādevī and Bhagavatīcaraṇ Varmā. His collection *Citrarekhā* won the Dev Puraskār in 1935. Author also of plays and several text-books.
Works
Poems: *Vīr hamīr* (1922), *Cittāuṛ kī citā* (1929), *Añjalī* (1931); *Citrarekhā* (1935), *Jauhar* (1941). One-act plays: *Pṛthvīrāj kī āṁkheṁ* (1938), *Reśmī ṭāī* (1941), *Rūp-raṅg* 91951). Criticism: *Sāhitya samālocnā* (1929), *Kabīr kā rahasyavād* (1930), *Hindī sāhitya kā ālocnātmak itihās* (1939); ed. *Ādhunik hindī kkāvya* (1939).

Varmā, Vṛndāvanlāl (1889-1973)
Birthplace
Ranipur, a kasba near Jhansi
Background
Born in an established but declining Kayastha family, whose ancestors had once been in the army of Chatrasāl and *divan* of the state. His father was a registrar *kanungo*.
Education
First at Lalitpur district school, then after Middle school examination at High School in Jhansi, where he distinguished himself in English and sports. After a short spell in the *kanungo* office, joined Victoria College in Jhansi, and moved to Jhansi in 1913 to join L.L.B.
Occupation
Lawyer and writer
Career
A voracious reader with a vivid imaginationation, and a passionate sportsman, started writing very early; his first plays were bought by the Indian Press in 1905 but not published. Thanks to the uncle who sponsored his education, became acquainted with Bhārtendu's works; as school prizes he first read *Ivanhoe* and *Talisman*. Also read Tod, Max Müller, Darwin, and plenty of European literature. In Agra became acquainted with G.Ś. Vidyārthī and Badrīnāth Bhaṭṭ, and with the latter wrote a humorous column in *Pratāp* called *Golmālkāriṇī sabhā*. Actively involved in public life he wrote reports for *Pratāp*, but in conflict with the local Congress activists campaigned for C.Y. Chintamani in 1920. Also took part in Congress and Hindī Sāhitya Sammelan meetings. A keen hunter and wanderer, he travelled a lot around Jhansi. Close friend of Vidyārthī and M.Ś. Gupta. Wrote occasionally for most Hindi journals but did not take up writing seriously until 1927. Initiated the co-operative movement in Jhansi in 1924, and in 1936 was elected chairman of the district board. The most popular and original historical novelist in Hindi, he specialised in writing about Central India, especially Bundelkhand; his works, which span almost four decades across Independence, include among others: *Gaṛhkuṇḍār* (1927), a romance on the backdrop of a caste conflict in the 14th century; *Virāṭā kī padminī* (1929), another romance set in the 18th century; *Musāhibjū* (1937), a short novel set around 1800, at the time of the British treaties and annexations; *Jhānsī kī rānī Lakṣmībāī* (1946, initially banned in Central India); *Mādhavjī Sindhiyā* (1948); *Mṛgnainī* (1950), one of his most famous works, set in 15th-16th century Gwalior; *Bhuronvikram* (1955) was an unusual leap in the late Vedic period; *Ahilyābāī* (1955); *Mahārānī Durgāvatī* (1961); and, posthumously, *Kīcaṛ aur kamal*, on 12th century Kalinjar, and *Devgāṛh kī muskān*, set in the 11th century (both 1973).

Vidyālaṃkār, Jaycandra (1896-1977)
Birthplace
Kijkot, district Lyallpur (Punjab)
Background
Born in an Ārya Samāj family whose every member was involved in the nationalist movement: his brothers Dharmacandra, Devacandra and Indracandra Nāraṅg founded a publishing house in Allahabad, Hindi Bhavan; his sister Pārvatī Devī took to teaching at an Ārya Samāj school for girls after she was widowed in 1908, and in 1910 became a public preacher; later became Headmistress of the Vedic Dharma Girls' School in Amritsar and kept contacts with revolutionaries in Bengal, United Provinces and Punjab.

Education
Studied and graduated at Gurukul Kangri.
Occupation
Historian
Career
Taught at Gurukul Kangri, then at Gujarat Vidyāpīṭh; in 1921 was appointed lecturer in history at the National College founded by Lajpat Rai; Bhagat Singh and Sukhdev were among his students. Taught at Bihār Vidyāpīṭh from its inception. His *Bhāratvarṣa kī kahānī* (1924) was written especially for children; *Bhārat kā bhaugolik ādhār* (1925) was found objectionable by the police during the Patna Conspiracy Case because it would help revolutionaries indentify easy targets in India's communication network; his monumental *Bhārtīy itihās kī rūprekhā* (1934) won the Maṅglāprasād prize. In 1936, with Rajendra Prasad's help, founded the Bhārtīy Itihās Pariṣad; on the editorial board of the *Bhārtīy itihās* in twenty volumes, presided by Jadunath Sarkar. Went to jail in 1942. Later suffered from economic and health problems.
Works
Bhāratvarṣa kā itihās (1924); *Bhārat kā bhaugolik ādhār* (1925); *Bhārtīy itihās kī rūprekhā* (1934); *Bhārtīy vaṅmay ke amar ratna* (1936), etc.

Vidyārthī, Gaṇeś Śaṅkar (1890-1931)
Birthplace
Kanpur
Background
Born in an average Kayastha family, his father was a schoolmaster in an Anglo-Vernacular school in Gwalior district.
Education
1907 Entrance examination from Christ Church college, Kanpur; admitted to the Kayastha Pathshala, Allahabad, where he met Pandit Sundarlāl, had to leave after a few months due to financial difficulties.
Occupation
Newspaper editor, political leader
Career
First job in the currency office in Kanpur for Rs. 30 pm. in 1908, resigned in 1909. A short spell of teaching for Rs. 20 pm. Introduced to M.P. Dvivedī, was hired to assist him on *Sarasvatī* in 1911 for Rs. 25 pm.; meanwhile accepted an offer from *Abhyuday* in 1912 and moved to Allahabad as assistant editor at Rs. 50 pm. After a year's experience there, back to Kanpur in 1913: founded the weekly *Pratāp* in the populous Philkhana *mohalla* with no financial support. First special issue, *Rāṣṭrīy aṅk*, in September 1914: 60 pages of articles for 40 *annas*. The Pratap office became a meeting place for political activists (even revolutionaries, like Bhagat Singh in 1924) and Hindi literary people. A '*Pratāp* family' was established Gayāprasād Śukla 'Sanehī' (Triśūl), Ramāśaṅkar Avasthī, Śivnārāyaṇ Miśra (the manager), Bālkṛṣṇa Śarmā 'Navīn', Śrīkṛṣṇadatt Pālīvāl, etc. Literary friendships with M.Ś. Gupta, V. Varmā, Premcand, Mākhanlāl Caturvedī, etc. In the 1920s Pratap Pustak Mala published political biographies, socialist propaganda and nationalist pamphlets and song-books. Direct political involvement started as founding member of the Kanpur branch of Annie Besant's Home Rule League in 1916 (Tilak's photo hung above his desk). Took part and reported on 1916 Lucknow Congress; organized the Ek-lipi-ek-bhāṣā Sammelan there. Thereafter became Gandhi's follower. Full coverage of Champaran's enquiry, support for Kanpur's mill strikes in 1919. Took over monthly *Prabhā* from M. Caturvedī in 1920. Jailed after a libel case following reports on Munshiganj firing on peasants' meeting. Convenor of Congress District Conference in Kanpur in 1921, with delegates from villages and wards of the city. President of Fatehpur Political Conference in 1923, prosecuted for his seditious speech; at the news of his arrest, most bazaars in Kanpur closed. In Naini central jail 1923-24 (*Jel-ḍairī*) became a fervent reciter of *Rāmcaritmānas*. 1925 secretary of the welcoming commitee of Kanpur Congress. Despite his opposition to Council entry selected as Swaraj Party candidate for 1926 elections; elected with overwhelming majority; 1927-

29 member of the Legislative Council. Involved in political and propaganda work in the district, in 1929 founded Congress ashram in village Narwal. President of UP Political Conference in Farrukhabad, urges the adoption of an economic resolution. Killed during the 1931 Kanpur riots.

Viyogī Hari (Hariprasād Dvivedī) (1896-1988)
Birthplace
Chattarpur State (Bundelkhand)
Education
Orphaned at young age, educated first at home in Sanskrit and Hindi; in 1915 Matriculation from Chattarpur High School. Studies at Intermediate College interrupted.
Occupation
Literary and social activist, poet
Career
Keen interest in Indian philosophy, cultivated under Babu Gulābrāi's tutelage, who at the time was *divan* at Chattarpur. A *protege* of the Rani, toured India's pigrimage places with her. In 1915 met P.D. Ṭaṇḍon in Allahabad, who detained him in order to have him work as a volunteer for the Hindī Sāhitya Sammelan and the *Sammelan patrikā*; became one Ṭaṇḍon's closest assistants. Involved in Sammelan work, wrote text-books and commented anthologies for the Sammelan examinations and helped Ṭaṇḍon founding the Hindī Vidyāpīṭh in 1925. On a pilgrimage to the South in 1921 took *sanyās* and changed his name to Viyogī Hari. Particularly fond of Tulsī's *Vinaypatrikā*, wrote a commentary and poetry in Braj. In 1932 left the literary field to work in Delhi for the Harijan Sevak Sangh, and edited the Hindi version of *Harijan sevak*. Later involved in the *bhūdān* movement. Author of about forty books.
Works
Braj mādhurī sār (1923); *Vīr satsaī* (1928 awarded Maṅglāprasād prize); *Viśvadharma* (1930), etc.

Select Bibliography

I. Hindi journals

I.I Main sources

Wherever possible, we have given the dates of change of editorship (not always mentioned in the journal), and the date when the journal stopped publication; the last line shows the issues consulted. All the main sources were collected at the Hindī Sāhitya Sammelan Pustakālay in Allahabad.

Cāṁd (1922 -194?): monthly, Allahabad.
Editors:
Rāmrakh Siṃh Sahgal (1922-33),
Navjādiklāl Śrīvāstava (1933-35),
Mahādevī Varmā (1935-38),
Catursen Śāstrī (1938-).
I, 6 (April 1923) to XVIII, pt. 2, 5 (April 1941).

Gṛhalakṣmī (1909-1929): monthly, Allahabad.
Editors: Gopālādevī Prabhākar, (Thakur Śrīnāth Siṃh).
V, 2 (April-May 1913) to XV, 6 (August-September 1924).

Mādhurī (1922-1950): monthly, Lucknow.
Editors:
Dulārelāl Bhārgava and Rūpnārāyaṇ Pāṇḍey (1922-1926),
Premcand and Kṛṣṇabihārī Miśra (1926-1931),
Rāmsevak Tripāṭhī (1931-32); Mātādīn Śukla (1933-35),
Rūpnārāyaṇ Pāṇḍey and B. B. Bhaṭnāgar (1935-1950).
I, 6 (December 1922) to X, pt. 1, 6 (January 1932).

Maryādā (1910-22): monthly, Allahabad; 1921-22, Banaras.
Editors:
P.D. Ṭaṇḍon, Kṛṣṇakānt Mālavīya,
Sampūrṇānand, Premcand (from XXII, 1, October-November 1921).
I, 1 (November 1910) to XXIV, 6 (*caitra 1979*, March-April 1922).

Sammelan patrikā (1913 -): monthly, Allahabad.
Editors:
Girijākumār Ghoṣ (1913-14),
Viyogī Hari (1924);
Rāmkumār Varmā (1927);
Jyotiprasād Miśra 'Nirmal' (1940);
I, 6 (February-March 1913 to XXIX, 11-12 (May-July 1942).

Strī-darpaṇ, (1909-1928): monthly, Allahabad; from XXIX, 4 (October 1923) in Kanpur.
Editors:
Rāmeśvarī, Umā and Rūpkumārī Nehru;
Sumati Devī and Phulkumārī Mehrotrā in Kanpur.
V, 6 (December 1911) to XL, 6 (June 1928).

Sudhā (1927-194?): monthly, Lucknow.
Editors:
Dulārelāl Bhāragava; assistant editors: Rūpnārāyaṇ Pāṇḍey,
Nirālā, Ilācandra Jośī.
I, pt. 1, 5 (December 1927) to XIV, pt. 1, 5 (December 1940)

Viśāl bhārat (1928-1938): monthly, Calcutta.
Editor:
Banārsīdās Caturvedī.
I, 1 (January 1928) to XIX, 1 (January 1937).

I.II Other journals consulted

Āj (1920-): daily, Banaras.
Editors: Bābūrāo Viṣṇu Parāṛkar, Śrīprakāś.
Selected issues.

Hans (1930-45): monthly, Banaras.
Editor: Premcand.
I, 1 (March 1930) to I, 5 (July 1930)

Kalyāṇ (1926-): monthly, Bombay, then Gorakhpur.
Editor: Hanumān Prasād Poddār.
II, 3 (November 1926) to XII, pt. 10, No. 11.

Nāgarī pracāriṇī patrikā (1896-): first three-monthly, then monthly, Banaras;
Editors:
Śyāmsundar Dās, Sudhākar Dvivedī, Kāśīdās, Rādhākṛṣṇa Dās;
Ś. Dās, Rāmcandra Śukla, Rāmcandra Varmā, Benīprasād;
G.H. Ojhā, Candradhar Śarmā Gulerī, Munshi Devīprasād (since 1920, again three-monthly);
At different times, also Vāsudevśaraṇ Agravāl, Kṛṣṇadev Prasād Gauṛ and Sampūrṇānand were also involved.

Prabhā (1913-): monthly, Khandwa (CP); since 1920, Kanpur.
Editors:
Mākhanlāl Caturvedī, G. Ś. Vidyārthī, Bālkṛṣṇa Śarmā 'Navīn'.
Selected issues.

Pratāp (1913, 1920): weekly, daily, Kanpur.
Editors: G.Ś. Vidyārthī, Bālkṛṣna Śarmā 'Navīn'.
Selected issues.

Prem (1926-), organ of Prem Mahāvidyālay, monthly, Vrindavan.
Editor: Acharya A.T. Gidvāṇī.
I, 1 (1926) to II, pt. 2, 5 (July 1928)

Saṅghars̤ (1938): organ of the CSP, weekly, Lucknow.
Editors: Narendra Dev, Sampūrṇānand.
I, 1 (26 December 1937) to I, pt. 2, 3 (January 1938).

Sarasvatī (1900-1975): monthly, Allahabad
Editors:
Mahāvīr Prasād Dvivedī (1903-1920);
P.P. Bakhśī (1921-25 and 1927-29)
Devīdatt Śukla (1928-1946).
1913, 1915-16, 1930-38.

Vidyāpīṭh (1928-): quarterly, published by Kāśī Vidyāpīṭh, Banaras.
Editors: Bhagvān Dās, Narendra Dev.
I, 1 (1928) to IV, 1 (1936).

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