

## Sajjad Zaheer: *Urdū hindī hindustānī* (1947)

Many of the most prominent younger Urdu and Hindi writers of the 1930s and 1940s were united in their commitment to the Marxist ideals of the 'progressive' movement, even if they were divided by nomenclature between Urdu *taraqqī-pasandī* and Hindi *pragativādī*. Founded in London in 1935, the All India Progressive Writers' Association was from the outset dominated by members of the Communist party.

This passage is taken from a short pamphlet dealing with the vexed question of the choice of a national language for India, written by Sajjad Zaheer, a hard-line Communist writer who played a key role in the foundation and subsequent direction of the P.W.A. Published at Annas 12 in 1947, it was obviously written somewhat earlier, since it takes no account of the creation of Pakistan, to which all members of the Communist Party of India (including those from Muslim backgrounds) were opposed in principle.

Although the aspirations of left-wing writers in South Asia to reach the masses are frustrated by the stubbornly high levels of illiteracy in both India and Pakistan, Sajjad Zaheer was clearly aiming at a popular audience. The passage opens with seven deliberately short paragraphs, which set out very simply and very forcefully the entrenched attitudes of the Hindi and the Urdu camps, and are suitably dismissive of the Hindustani compromise suggested by Gandhi. The longer following paragraph rejects both extremes, and points with Marxist logic to the mass support for Hindi and Urdu, as clearly evident from their huge spread throughout undivided India. The suggestion that it is therefore the 'will of the masses' which must prevail in the formulation of language policy is made explicit in the final paragraph. Neither here nor elsewhere in the pamphlet does Sajjad Zaheer come down on the side of one language or the other: his eventual conclusion is, in fact, that both Hindi and Urdu should be the national languages of India, with a suitable enhancement of their shared elements. No matter which perspective they were writing from, therefore, no proponent of compromise was able to suggest any very realistic solution to the language question: and Sajjad Zaheer differs only in the greater role implied for Urdu from Premchand in his identically titled essay (15).

The style has most of the obvious features which typify Marxist writers of the period, no matter which European or Asian language they were writing in. The syntax is rather simple, and the choice of vocabulary straightforward. There is plenty of repetition to drive the points home, with the usual prominence being given to core ideological terms, e.g. the Urdu equivalents of 'masses', 'popular', 'progressive', 'democratic', etc.

The passage is taken from *Urdū hindī hindustānī* (Bombay: Kutub Publishers, 1947), pp. 5-7.

Similar views on the language question are expressed by Mohammad Din Taseer in Ahmad 1941, pp. 221-236.

جب ہندوستان کی ایک مشترکہ قومی زبان کا سوال اٹھتا ہے تو اردو ہندی کا جھگڑا کھڑا ہو جاتا ہے۔ ہندی کے حامی کہتے ہیں کہ ہندوستان کی راشٹر بھاشا ہونے کا حق صرف ہندی کو ہے۔ اردو والے اعلان کرتے ہیں کہ اردو ہی اس ملک کی قومی زبان بن سکتی ہے۔ ہندی والے اردو والوں کو، اور اردو والے ہندی والوں کو قائل نہیں کر سکتے۔ .... ان دونوں گروہوں کے درمیان گاندھی جی اور ان کے حمایتی کھڑے ہیں۔ اردو کی حمایت کرنے والوں کی اکثریت بھی گاندھی جی کے تصور والی ہندوستانی کو قبول کرنے کے لئے تیار نہیں ہے۔

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اس طرح ہم دیکھتے ہیں کہ ہمارے ملک میں تہذیبی میدان میں گویا دو ایسے کیپ بن گئے ہیں جو ایک دوسرے سے لڑ جھگڑ رہے ہیں۔ اور یہ تہذیبی جنگ دن بدن زیادہ شدید ہوتی جاتی ہے۔

دونوں فریق صرف اپنے کو سچائی پر سمجھتے ہیں۔ دوسری طرف انہیں صرف جھوٹ اور ضد اور تعصب نظر آتا ہے۔

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اب سوال یہ اٹھتا ہے کہ اگر وہ سب کچھ ٹھیک ہے جو اردو والے ہندی کے متعلق اور ہندی والے اردو کے متعلق سوچتے ہیں، اور اگر ان دونوں زبانوں کی بنیاد مصنوعی اور غیر فطری ہے، تو پھر اس کا کیا سبب ہے کہ ان دونوں زبانوں کی دن بدن ترقی ہو رہی ہے اور ان کی مقبولیت عوام میں بڑھ رہی ہے؟ ان میں ہماری قوم کے بہترین علمی، سیاسی، فلسفیانہ، مذہبی اور ادبی خیالات و جذبات کی ترجمانی ہو رہی ہے۔ ہندوستان کے ان علاقوں میں بھی جہاں دوسری زبانیں بولی اور لکھی جاتی ہیں، اردو اور ہندی کو لوگ شوق سے پڑھتے ہیں اور موقع پڑنے پر بولتے بھی ہیں۔ اردو اور ہندی کو ہندوستان میں ایک بین الاقوامی حیثیت حاصل ہو رہی ہے۔ بہت سے لوگ جو ہندوستان کی دوسری زبانیں بولتے اور لکھتے پڑھتے ہیں، اردو یا ہندی بولنا اور پڑھنا اپنا قومی فرض سمجھنے لگے ہیں۔ انجمن ترقی اردو اور اردو کی دوسری انجمنیں کالی کاٹ سے لے کر آسام تک اور چٹ گاؤں سے لے کر کراچی تک پھیل گئی ہیں۔ اسی طرح ہندی کو بھی سارے ہندوستان میں بہت زبردست مقبولیت حاصل ہو رہی ہے۔

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ظاہر ہے کہ جب تک کسی زبان کی جڑیں کسی قوم کی تہذیبی اور روحانی روایات میں پیوست نہ ہوں اور جب تک اس کی بنیاد کسی ایسی زندہ بولی پر نہ ہو جو کسی خاص گروہ یا طبقے تک محدود نہیں بلکہ عوام میں بھی رائج ہو، اس وقت تک وہ عمومی حیثیت حاصل نہیں کر سکتی، اور ایک جمہوری اور ترقی پذیر سماج میں کھجور کے ارتقاء کی آگے کار نہیں بن سکتی۔ چونکہ اردو اور ہندی ایسی زبانیں ہیں، اس لئے وہ ترقی کر رہی ہیں، اسی لئے ان میں صلاحیت ہے کہ وہ ہندوستان کے مختلف زبان بولنے والے علاقوں کے لوگوں کی مشترکہ زبان ہوں۔

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1–11 The shortness of the opening seven paragraphs (extended only by two further similarly brief paragraphs after 4 in the original) is a stark rhetorical device deliberately designed to draw attention to the polarization of pro-H and pro-U attitudes.

1 *savāl uṭhā hai*: ‘the question arises’, a common modern phrasal loan from E, cf. 12 below.

2 *rāštar-bhāšā*: the S loan so natural in H strikes a deliberately discordant note in U. But the PA equivalent *qaumī zabān*, naturally employed to describe the pro-U position in 3 below, has already somewhat begged the question in 1 *muštarakā qaumī zabān*, cf. the final 29 *muštarak zabān*.

5 *himāyati*: ‘supporter’, equivalent to the A loan 2 *hāmī*, also to the following *himāyat karne-vāloḥ*. A similar choice of the simple HU *-vālā* is to be seen in the use throughout the passage of the straightforward terms *hindī-vāle* and *urdū-vāle*.

6 *gāndhī jī ke tasavvur vālī hindustāni*: ‘the Hindustani conceived of by Gandhi’, illustrating the further common use of *-vālā* as an adj. ppn. formally comparable with *kā* but corresponding in sense to an E post-modifying phrase or relative clause.

7 *P maidān*: here in its common sense of ‘battlefield’.

7 *E kaimp*: one of those loans from military usage (9), which have long been so well established in HU.

8 *laṛ jhagaṛ rahe haiḥ*: ‘are struggling’, lit. ‘are fighting and quarrelling’, a very common jingle-compound (524).

8 *din ba-din*: a P-type prepn. phrase (843).

8 *ziyādā šadīd hotī jāti hai*: ‘keeps growing ever more fierce’.

10 *fariq*: the technical term for a ‘party’ to a lawsuit, also used in the A dual (733) *fariqain* ‘both sides’.

10 *apne ko sacāi par samajhte haiḥ*: ‘think that they have truth on their side’.

13 *ḡair-fitrī*: the standard calque for ‘unnatural’ in modern U: cf. *A fitrat* f. ‘nature’.

14 *taraqqī*: ‘progress, development’. This is a key term in the U of all Leftist U writing, like ‘*avām* ‘the people, the masses’, and its derivatives.

15 ‘*ilmī*: ‘scholarly, learned’, also ‘scientific’.

16 *tarjumāni*: ‘representation’, derived from *tarjumān* ‘interpreter’, vs. *tarjumā* ‘translation’.

17 *mauqa’ parne par*: exactly equivalent to ‘when the opportunity arises’, and probably representing one of those phrasal loan-translations from E which are so common in modern U.

18 *bainal-aqvāmī*: ‘international’, i.e. bridging the country’s internal frontiers. The international status claimed for so many years by their respective protagonists for both H and U has really never been achieved in fact, unless viewed purely as a consequence of emigration from South Asia to many countries overseas. *bainal-aqvāmī* is formally an A prepn. compound (742).

19 *bolte aur likhte parhte haiḥ*: the position of *aur* is dictated by the pairing of ‘read and write’.

20 The Anjuman-e Taraqqi-e Urdu, whose chief spokesman was Abdul Haq (10), was the leading pro-U organization in India at this time.

20 Calicut in modern Kerala is one of the main centres of the Malayalam-speaking Mappilla Muslims. It is thus more appropriate here than *rās kumārī* ‘Cape Comorin’, the usual southernmost contrast to Assam.

20 *caṭ-gāoḥ*: Chittagong in modern Bangladesh, now usually referred to as *caṭ-gām*. The sentence was of course written before the Partition in August 1947, which left both Chittagong and Karachi on the Pakistan side of the new frontier.

21 *hindī ko bhī*: the mention of H almost as an afterthought is revealing.

22 *jab tak... nā hoḥ*: as usual, the single HU negative construction corresponds both to ‘so long as they are not...’ and ‘until they are...’ in E.

24 *bolī*: ‘spoken language’, vs. *zabān* or *bhāšā* (522).

- 24 *xās guroh*: 'elite group'. The positive identification with the 'avām at the expense of the *xavās* or 'elite' is a reversal of the values attached to these antonyms by U writers with conservative attitudes (11).
- 25 '*umūmī haisiyat*': 'popular character, mass status', reflecting the common origin of '*umūmī*' and '*avām*', from the A root 'MM.
- 26 *jumhūrī aur taraqqī-pazīr*: 'democratic and progressive', two more loan-translations from E commonly used in Leftist U writing.
- 26 *kalcar*: a phonetically-spelt E loan, frequently used in U as a synonym for A *tahzīb* or *saqāfat*: cf. the adj. *kalcaral*.
- 26 *ālā-e kār*: lit. 'tool of work', i.e. 'effective instrument', illustrating the way in which P izafat phrases often serve in U to represent E phrases consisting of an adj. and a noun.
- 28 *muxtalif zabān bolne-vāle 'ilāqoh ke logoh ki*: 'of the people of different linguistic areas'. The inf. ptc. is here used as an adj.