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LANGUAGE AND POLITICS IN A PAKISTAN PROVINCE

The Sindhi Language Movement

Tariq Rahman

The province of Sind in Pakistan has been in turmoil since 1985. Armed conflict between Sindhis and Muhajirs (Urdu-speaking immigrants from India), Muhajirs and Pakhtuns (Pashto-speakers), and Islamic sectarian and other factions are daily in the news. Despite the army's Operation Cleanup from 1992 to 1994, the violence continues, and in March 1995 two American diplomats were killed in Karachi. The aim of this article is not to trace all the reasons for things having come to such a pass but rather to understand the Sindhi language movement, which aims to increase the use of Sindhi in formal domains, and relate it to politics—that is, the distribution of power and resources. An understanding of the movement, however, will provide insights into the ethnic aspects of the ongoing violence in Sind.

Roots of Ethnicity

Pakistan is a multilingual country with a population in 1994 of about 128 million. While multilingualism is not denied—though the 1981 census contained no question on language—the state denies the multinationality thesis endorsed by ethnonationalist leaders. The classical form of this thesis, argued by Gankovsky, is that there are four major nationalities in Pakistan: the Punjabi, Sindhi, Pakhtun, and Baluchi (Bangladesh, the former East Pakistan, has been left out here). To this list, the Siraiki was added in the 1960s and an effort to make Muhajir a nationality began in the 1980s.[1] The official point

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1. Yuri V. Gankovsky, *The Peoples of Pakistan: An Ethnic History* (Moscow: USSR Academy of Sciences, 1964), trans. by Igor Gavrilov and published in Pakistan, 1971; Christopher Shackle, "Siraiki: A Language Movement in Pakistan," *Modern Asian Studies*, 11:3 (1977), pp. 379–403.

TABLE 1 *Language Distribution in Pakistan (1981 Census)*

	Percentage	*Number of Speakers (millions)*
Punjabi	48.17	60.9
Pashto	13.14	16.8
Sindhi	11.77	15.0
Siraiki	9.83	12.6
Urdu	7.60	9.7
Balochi	3.02	3.8
Hindko	2.43	3.1
Brahvi	1.21	1.5
Others	2.81	3.6

SOURCE: *Population Census of Pakistan 1981; Encyclopaedia Britannica Yearbook 1994*

of view is that there is one Pakistani nation united by the bonds of Islam and the national language, Urdu.

This one-Pakistani-nation thesis is part of "official nationalism": the perception of belonging to one politically defined collectivity, the idea of which is imposed by dominant elites with the help of the state's apparatus. In the terms of Anderson's theory, the national language helps to imagine, and hence create the idea of a single unified entity.[2] Thus, it is Urdu that the ruling elites of Pakistan have supported and the ethnic nationalities have never accepted. To understand why this happened, let us briefly look at the role of language in the awareness of ethnic identity in Pakistan. In common with other postcolonial states, Pakistan inherited a dominant military-bureaucratic elite that was more modern in the Weberian rational-legal sense and therefore more adept at exercising state power than the professional politicians. This "salariat," as Hamza Alavi calls it, competes for employment and "has a tendency to divide and align along ethnic lines in order to draw wider support and solidarity in their struggle for a greater share of the available jobs as well as the limited places in institutions of higher education."[3]

In order to continue to occupy privileged positions and increase the possibility of lucrative employment abroad, the Anglicized upper level of the

2. Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities* (New York: Verso Books, 1983), Chapters 6 and 10.

3. Hamza Alavi, "Nationhood and the Nationalities in Pakistan," in H. Donnan and P. Werbner, eds., *Economy and Culture in Pakistan: Migrants and Cities in a Muslim Society* (London: Macmillan, 1991), p. 159.

salariat supports English. But to retain its hegemony over the less developed vernacular-educated provincial salariats, it supports Urdu through the apparatus of the state. This hegemonic role of Urdu (and Islam) was challenged by the Bengali Language Movement (1948–52) in East Pakistan, an outcome of the counterhegemonic aspirations of the Bengali salariat supported by the "Bengali subaltern classes."[4] Language-based articulation of identity was not confined to East Bengal. Pashto was an important component of Pakhtun nationalism, Baluchi of Baluch nationalism, and the leaders of southern Punjab, which was relatively less developed than central Punjab, used the symbol of Siraiki to create the awareness of a common Siraiki identity in that area.

The above explanation of the manipulation of language to create a sense of collective identity by elites is primarily instrumentalist, but it must be modified by considering the intersubjective reality of the participants—the actors in all movements. First, the elites themselves choose symbols such as language on partly primordialist or extrarational grounds in the sense that symbols with the potential to mobilize have salience in the world view of a people.[5] Moreover, once people do mobilize in the name of language, they genuinely feel its importance and develop strong emotional bonds with it. Whatever the rational reasons for the use of certain symbols and whatever their political consequences, ordinary people—and to a lesser extent the leaders—do not take them primarily as means to ends but as ends in themselves.

This is not to suggest that language has always been a marker of identity. In fact, in South Asia local loyalties and kinship lineages (*biradris* [fraternities], clans) determined identity until modern conditions created competition for jobs and the possibility of imagining a large linguistic community through communication.[6] Thus, language became a symbol of identity, and the Sindhi as well as other language movements can be seen as responses to modernity. As modernity was a consequence of the British conquest, let us look at the birth of modern Sindhi during the colonial period.

The official language of the Muslim Talpur rulers of Sind before the British conquest was Persian, though Sindhi, the indigenous language of the people, was used in the education of children and in business. The British, however, made Sindhi the official language at the lower level of education, administration, and the judiciary. To conciliate the Muslims, who formed a majority in Sind, they chose the Arabic-based script (*naskh*) for writing rather

4. S. M. Shamsul Alam, "Language as Political Articulation: East Bengal in 1952," *Journal of Contemporary Asia*, 21:4 (1991), pp. 469–87.

5. Quentin Skinner, "Some Problems in the Analysis of Political Thought and Action," *Political Theory*, 2:3 (August 1974), pp. 277–303.

6. Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1983), p. 127; Dietrich Reetz, "Ethnic and Religious Identities in Colonial India (1920–1930s): A Conceptual Debate," *Contemporary South Asia*, 2:2 (1993), pp. 109–22.

than the Hindu *khudawadi* script, but allowed Sindhi written in the *khudawadi* script to be taught to Hindus until 1870. By then it was unpopular even among Hindus because it did not help in getting government employment, and was withdrawn.

Sindhi written in the *naskh* script became a part of Muslim identity in Sind, and contributed in the 1930s to the mobilization of Muslim public opinion in favor of separating Sind from the Bombay Presidency to make it a Muslim-majority province. Thus, M. A. Jinnah, the founder of Pakistan, argued during proceedings of the third meeting of the subcommittee on Sind in 1931 that "the social and linguistic differences between the inhabitants of Sind and those of the Presidency of Bombay proper provided an impressive case to separate Sind from Bombay."[7] When Sind did become a separate province in 1936, Sindhi became the medium of instruction in state schools, and the Sind Legislative Assembly discussed the need to write dictionaries in the language, create new terms in it, and establish a university—in short, make Sindhi the vehicle of the much desiderated modernity. By 1947 when Sind became part of the new nation of Pakistan, Sindhi was the dominant language in the province, at least at the lower level; English was used by the bureaucratic and military elite.

Independence and the Changing Face of Sind

Until partition, Hindus had tended to dominate urban centers in Sind. Muslims represented only 42% of the total population of Karachi in 1941 but were over 96% by 1951. However, most of the newly arrived Muslims were Urdu-speaking *muhajirs* (refugees) from India. The demographic composition of urban Sind, according to the 1951 census, showed the Muhajirs at 57.55% in Karachi, 66.08% in Hyderabad, 54.08% in Sukkur, 68.42%, in Mirpurkhas, and 35.39% in Larkana.

The better-educated Muhajirs, with a 23.4% literacy rate compared with 13.2% for Sind as a whole, took up technical, bureaucratic, and professional jobs in the province. The cultural complications were grave. The Muhajirs, who already viewed their urban Mughal culture as superior to that of Sind, now had a physical locale in which that culture could take root and flourish. As Urdu was an important aspect of this culture, along with the aesthetic sensibility of Delhi and Lucknow, both centers of Islamic culture in British India, it assumed an evocative symbolic role. In fact, Urdu had filled a similar role during the Hindi-Urdu controversy days, and its significance as a

7. Report, dated January 16, 1931, in Hameeda Khuhro, eds., *Documents on Separation of Sind from the Bombay Presidency*, vol. 1 (Islamabad: Institute of Islamic History, Culture and Civilization, 1982), p. 447.

marker of Muslim and Pakistani identity was perpetuated by the Muhajirs and the ruling Punjabi elite.[8] In short, the Muhajirs were for many reasons a nonassimilative urban group that had taken the place of Hindus in the cities of Sind. The conditions that had created the Hindu-Muslim antagonism of prepartition days existed as before—only now the antagonists would be Muhajirs and Sindhis.

The Separation of Karachi

The first major setback to the progress of Sindhi was the national government's creation of Karachi, Pakistan's largest city, as a separate administrative jurisdiction. Opposed by the Sind Legislative Assembly, the move was described by Assemblyman Hashim Gazdar as a step that

> could not only cripple Sind economically and politically, but would constitute a flagrant contravention of the Pakistan Resolution passed by the All-India Muslim League at Lahore, in 1940, which emphasizes the sovereignty and the territorial integrity of the autonomous units constituting Pakistan.[9]

It was felt that the Muhajirs, who had been given refuge by the Sindhis, were appropriating the soil of Sind. Moreover, even at that early period, misgivings about domination by the Punjabis were expressed.[10]

As a consequence of the decision, the University of Sind, which had been established in 1947, was forced to move to Hyderabad, a less developed city than Karachi. In 1952 a separate university was established in Karachi, and it clearly was more inclined to encourage Urdu than Sindhi. The Sindhi Language Movement, which had been going on since the anti-Bombay days, manifested itself in the form of the Sindhi-Urdu controversy in 1957–58 when the University of Karachi forbade students from answering examination questions in Sindhi. To this, the president of the Sind Hari Committee, reacted as follows:

> It is obvious to anyone that a Sindhi-knowing student cannot answer papers in Urdu as ably and efficiently (other considerations being equal), as an Urdu-knowing student. The disadvantage to the Sindhi-knowing students in relation to the Urdu-knowing students is at least 20% of marks.

He ended his pamphlet on a note of alienation: "This order of Karachi University amounts to a call to the Sindhi students: 'Leave Karachi, go to Sind if

8. Amrit Rai, *A House Divided* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1984).

9. *Legislative Assembly Debates, Sind (LAD:S)*, 10 February 1948, pp. 17–18.

10. Ibid., pp. 18–24; Also, G. M. Syed's interview in Javed A. Siddiqui, *G.M. Syed Ki Masbat aur Manfi Siasat* [Urdu: G. M. Syed's positive and negative politics] (Karachi: Shel Publications, 1987).

you want to retain Sindhi, Karachi is none of yours'."[11] Later, when the provincial minister of education was asked about the situation, he confessed that "everyone knows that the emphasis is greater on Urdu than on Sindhi."[12] This policy was resented by the Sindhis and language became a major symbol of the sense of deprivation—cultural, educational, economic, and political—to both Sindhi leaders and the emerging middle class intelligentsia.

The One-Unit Decision

In 1954 the provinces of West Pakistan were amalgamated to form one administrative unit. The Sindhi nationalists opposed this move as it did away with the separate identity of the province. Sindhi was now merely a regional language, and the Sindhi Adabi Sangat, referring to the 14 national languages in India, appealed to the government to make Sindhi one of the national languages of Pakistan. The Sangat mounted economic arguments:

> If the intention is not to see five million Sindhi-speaking people handicapped and put at a disadvantage in the field of education, trade and commerce, and public services as against Urdu-knowing fellow citizens—then it [Sindhi] is [the] absolutely essential language at least for Sind and its adjoining Sindhi speaking areas.[13]

The Sangat, in common with the rest of the Sindhi intelligentsia, was aware of the relationship between economic and political power and language.

The One Unit was continued during Ayub Khan's ten-year rule (1958–69). A report on education written during the early part of his regime reduced the importance of Sindhi but conceded that it should be used up to class 5 as the medium of instruction. The report went on to prescribe that "Urdu should be introduced as the medium of instruction from class 6 from 1963 and should continue progressively in the higher classes. It is necessary to give Urdu the same position in Sind as in the rest of West Pakistan."[14] The supporters of Sindhi submitted a memorandum to Ayub Khan pointing out that the proposals would reduce the role of Sindhi, which was a medium of instruction up to matriculation and a medium of examination up to graduation with a bachelor's degree.

Among other forms of protest, a Sindhi Day was celebrated all over the province on November 9, 1962, and eminent political and intellectual figures issued a communiqué demanding that the former status of the language be restored. "It is of some significance," noted one writer, "that only one Urdu-

11. Hyder Baksh Jatoi, *Shall Sindhi Language Stay in Karachi or Not?* (Hyderabad: Sind Hari Committee, 1957), p. 13.

12. *Legislative Assembly Debates: Pakistan (LAD:P)*, 9 March 1958, p. 1103.

13. Sindhi Adabi Sangat, *Declare Sindhi as an Official Language of West Pakistan* (pamphlet), Karachi, no date.

14. *The Report on National Education* (Karachi: GOP, 1959), p. 284.

speaking politician, Mahmudul Hag Usmani, was a signatory to that statement."[15] However, as it was Urdu that was taking the place of Sindhi, this was only to be expected. President Ayub, finding the reaction of Sindhis alarming, tried to conciliate them by suspending the orders. However, Sindhi was generally discouraged during the period, and the number of Sindhi language medium schools decreased, an inevitable consequence of the Muhajirs having become a majority in Karachi but seen as a conspiracy by Sindhi nationalists.

Even in Hyderabad, the Municipal Corporation resolved in June 1965 that Urdu would be used for official work because that was the policy of the West Pakistan government. The administrators, who were Urdu-speaking Muhajirs, were reputed in Sindhi nationalist circles to be anti-Sindhi figures.[16] The nationalists also complained that during this period signs written in Sindhi were replaced by those in Urdu on official buildings such as railway and bus stations; Sindhi writers were discouraged whereas the work of Urdu writers was favored; Sindhi publications were denied advertisements and Sindhi radio broadcasts were reduced.

Another bitter language debate arose in 1966 when a group of students tried to persuade the University of Sind to adopt Sindhi as the medium of instruction and examination at the university level. The Sindhi press agreed with the students and newspapers carried editorials in their favor. The alienation of Sindhis from the Muhajirs and the Ayub Khan government increased during the decade, and in March 1967 when Masroor Hasan Khan, an Urdu-speaking commissioner of the Hyderabad Division, ordered the arrest of students at Sind University, the nationalists got a symbol of resistance against all forms of tyranny much as the Bengali students had in February 1952.

General Yahya's Policy Toward Sindhi

Ayub Khan's government fell from power in March 1969 and General Yahya Khan imposed martial law once again. The new government circulated tentative proposals for a new educational policy, one of which was that Urdu would be the sole medium of instruction and official language in the western wing of the country while Bengali would enjoy the same status in the eastern.[17] To this, the Jeay Sind Naujawan Mahaz—the young people's Sind nationalist movement inspired by G. M. Syed—responded by pointing out that such a policy would harm Sindhi students and teachers, that is, sections of the lower salariat. The government's full policy proposal ran to eight

15. Iqbal Jafar, "The Parting of Ways," *Dawn* (Karachi), 4 August 1992.

16. Pir Aslam, *Sindhi Zaban Qaumi Zaban* [Sindhi language, national language] (Hyderabad: Sind National Students Federation, n.d.).

17. *Proposals for the New Education Policy* (Islamabad: Ministry of Education, GOP, 1969), pp. 3–4.

points and was rather alarmist. The economic and political consequences also were made explicit as follows:

> Apart from the loss of economic and social privilege that this inability to compete on equal terms with others would impose upon the Sindhi-speaking youth of the country, it would keep them deprived of their legitimate share in all state services and thus would deny them full sense of participation in the governance of their country.[18]

The Mahaz, however, felt that Urdu was on a par with English in not being the language of the masses, and that it should not be imposed in the name of "national cohesion."

Language Riots

The tension between supporters of Urdu and of Sindhi led to riots in January 1971 and July 1972. The 1972 riots have been examined by the press and scholars[19] but the 1971 incidents have been generally ignored. One of the causes of the tension was the quota system that had been in effect for government employment and admission to educational institutions since 1949. Under it, 20% of vacancies were filled on merit and the remaining 80% according to the following formula: 40% reserved for East Pakistan, 23% for Punjab, and 15% for Sind, NWFP, Baluchistan, Azad Kashmir, and other administrative areas. Karachi's share was 2% but combined with Hyderabad and Sukkur (i.e., urban Sind) after 1973, this rose to 7.6%. The Muhajirs condemned the quota system as unjust, and Nawab Muzaffar Khan, convener of the Sind Muhajir-Punjabi-Pathan Mahaz (MPPM), brought the issue up in February 1970 when he decided to contest the election from Hyderabad.

Meanwhile, Sindhi nationalism, inspired by G. M. Syed and by Sheikh Mujeeb's autonomist rhetoric in East Pakistan, had become increasingly popular among students. The Jeay Sind Naujawan Mahaz decided to contest the 1970 elections on a platform of full autonomy for Sind. In August 1970 the syndicate of the University of Sind decided that Sindhi would be adopted as the "official language and language of internal correspondence."[20] Other voices were raised in support; in October, 108 Sindhi writers and intellectuals challenged the attempts of the ruling elite to make Urdu the dominant language of West Pakistan, and were supported by the Sindhi Adabi Sangat, which also demanded that the names of railway stations, parks, and gardens in Sind be written in Sindhi. A leading intellectual, Sheikh Ayaz, further demanded that Sindhi should be made the dominant language of the province,

18. M. Yusif Talpur, *A Memorandum on Proposals for a New Educational Policy and Sindhi Language*, Jeay Sind Naujawan Mahaz Publication no. 3, Hyderabad, 1969.

19. Feroz Ahmed, "The National Question in Sind," *Dawn*, 14 August 1972.

20. Sind University, Resolution no. 7, 21 August 1970.

and the Sangat, among others, praised the university for making Sindhi its official language.

The Urdu press branded Sindhi-language supporters as leftists, anti-Islamic, or anti-Pakistan dissidents. By the end of 1970, Sind was in a ferment. The Board of Intermediate and Secondary Education in Hyderabad resolved on December 21 that

> Sindhi be adopted as official language of the Board. Resolved further that the subject of Salis [easy] Sindhi be introduced as a compulsory subject for the students whose mother-tongue is Urdu from the year 1971–72 and who are appearing at the Secondary School Certificate Part-I Annual Examination to be held in the year 1972. It was also suggested by the Director of Education that the Government be requested to introduce it at appropriate level in High Schools.[21]

This created a law and order crisis. The Muhajirs, under the leadership of Nawab Muzaffar, organized anti-Sindhi processions, and the Sindhis retaliated in kind. There were clashes in Hyderabad, Mirpur Khas, Larkana, and other provincial cities. By the end of the month, disturbances spread to Karachi in the south, and to the northern interior where trains were stopped and Urdu newspapers burned. Excesses were committed on both sides, and Muhajirs began to demand that Karachi be made a separate province. The seeds of today's Muhajir-Sindhi conflict were sown.

After the 1971 war and the emergence of Bangladesh, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto's Pakistan People's Party came to power. The chief minister of Sind, Mumtaz Ali Bhutto, now said that he would fulfill his election promise to give the Sindhi language the same role in the province it had enjoyed before the One Unit period. Threatening those who would create disorder, he declared that if he "had ten lives, all those" would be sacrificed "over the name of Sind."[22] Meanwhile, the Muhajirs in general, and the students of Karachi University in particular, were demanding that Urdu should be an official language of Sind along with Sindhi. And at the end of June 1972, on the heels of the chief minister's dramatic declaration, Sind Governor Mir Rasul Bux Talpur assured the Muhajirs that their demands would be satisfied.[23]

In these difficult circumstances, the Sind (teaching, promotion, and use of Sindhi language) Bill of 1972 was introduced. Its controversial provisions pertaining to education and employment stipulated in Clause 4:

> (1) Sindhi and Urdu shall be compulsory subjects for study in classes IV to XII in all institutions in which such classes are held;

21. Board of Intermediate and Secondary Education, Hyderabad, Resolution no. 21, 21 December 1970.

22. *LAD:S*, 26 June 1972, p. 123.

23. Sohail Mahmood, *The Sind Report: A Province in Turmoil* (Lahore: Classic Publishers, 1989).

(2) The introduction of Sindhi as compulsory subject shall commence at the lowest level, namely class IV, and by stages to be prescribed, be introduced in higher classes up to class XII;

and in Clause 6:

Subject to the provisions of the Constitution, Government may make arrangements for progressive use of Sindhi language in offices and departments of Government including courts and Assembly.

The bill was submitted to the Legislative Assembly on July 3 and discussed on July 5 at the home of Ishtiaq Hussain Qureshi, a former vice-chancellor of Karachi University and an active member of the pro-Urdu lobby. The Muhajirs, fearing that Sindhi would be used everywhere in Sind to their detriment, suggested an amendment that Urdu *and* Sindhi should be made official languages of the province.[24] But for the Sindhis, this would amount to the division of Sind.

Feeling ran so high that on July 7, even before the bill had been passed, the supporters of Urdu rose up against the Sindhis. Mumtaz Bhutto told the Assembly that "there have been disturbances in parts of Karachi today where innocent by-passers [sic] were molested and attacked."[25] Within the Assembly, feeling also ran high. No sooner was the bill introduced than Nawab Muzaffar objected to it, saying that adequate notice (3 days) had not been given. The speaker pointed out that members had the bill on July 3 and that it had even been published in newspapers on the 5th. Emotional, sometimes very bitter and acrimonious speeches followed on both sides, and the amendments suggested by the opposition were not accepted. The opposition walked out and the motion was carried. On July 8 the Urdu newspaper, *Jang*, carried lurid headlines proclaiming the death of Urdu, and soon the whole of Sind was aflame with the bloodiest language riots Pakistan had seen. The scale of violence was unprecedented and parts of Karachi and Hyderabad were under curfew. It was only when Z. A. Bhutto himself announced a formula for reconciliation and went on a tour of Sind that the violence came to an end.

The compromise solution was a 12-year reprieve granted to the Muhajirs through an ordinance issued by the governor of Sind on July 16, which said: "No person, otherwise qualified for appointment or promotion to any civil service, or a civil post in connection with the affairs of the province of Sind, shall be discriminated against only on the ground of want of knowledge of Sindhi or Urdu language."[26] The 12 years elapsed but government jobs could still be obtained without knowledge of Sindhi.

24. Muzaffar Hussain, "Letter to Shorish Kashmiri," in *Chattan* (Lahore), 26 June 1972.
25. *LAD:S*, 7 July 1972, p. 70.
26. *Sind Government Gazette*, extraordinary, 22 July 1972.

The most ominous consequence of the conflict has been its legacy of bitterness. Even more potentially explosive is the rise of Muhajir ethnicity. The Muhajirs not only rejected the possibility of assimilation but were not prepared to accept minority status. They wanted equal power in Sind and language was one way of securing it.

The Rise of Muhajir Ethnicity and the Sindhi Response

By the 1980s the Muhajir identity had crystallized as separate from the Pakistani; the emphasis was no longer on Urdu though the language was assumed as a necessary part of this identity. According to Hamza Alavi:

> There was an overnight ethnic redefinition. They [the *muhajirs*] abandoned the Islamic fundamentalist Jamaat-e-Islami and the traditionalist Jamiat-e-Ulema-e-Pakistan and massively rallied behind the new MQM. Instead of moving towards an end to communalism, however, the rise of the MQM signified a further consolidation of communalism in Pakistan.[27]

However, the consensus in most serious studies is that the domination of the Punjabis over industry, the bureaucracy, and the military challenged Muhajir domination after the late 1960s,[28] and that the rise of the new Muhajir identity was a response to this development.

By the 1980s the Muhajirs no longer dominated the higher echelons of the civil bureaucracy in Pakistan. And in Karachi, a big city with many educated young people, the Muhajir youth were extremely frustrated. In these circumstances, they were attracted to the MQM, which appeared to offer them a direction, solidarity through a new ethnic identity, and of course the power of a well-organized group. The MQM now directly demands an equal share in power in Sind—despite being only about 22% of the population—and even flirts with the idea of carving out a separate Urdu-speaking province. And it does not entirely ignore the language issue. When it entered into an alliance with the PPP during the first Benazir Bhutto government in 1989, Article 12 of the agreement was meant to safeguard Urdu:

> Culture has central importance in our everyday life. It is the essence of the whole experience of the community. Those inhabitants of the province whose culture and language are different have the full right to preserve them and promote them.

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27. Hamza Alavi, "Politics of Ethnicity in India and Pakistan," in Hamza Alavi and John Harriss, eds., *Sociology of Developing Countries: South Asia* (London: Macmillan Education Ltd., 1989), p. 243.

28. S. Akbar Zaidi, "Sindhi or Muhajir: Contradictions, Conflict, Compromise," in A. Zaidi, ed., *Regional Imbalance and the National Question in Pakistan* (Lahore: Vanguard Press, 1992), pp. 338–39.

This compromise, which was anathema to the Sindhi nationalists, was confirmed by a Special Committee of the Senate, which said:

> In Sindh both Urdu and Sindhi should be taught in all educational institutions and used as the official languages. Enough resources should be mobilized for the development of both at all levels and in all departments of public life. Efforts must be made that every child studying in Sindh and every official serving in the province is in a position to understand and speak both these languages.[29]

Although no government has risked provoking the Muhajirs by changing the status of Urdu in Sind, the Sindhi nationalists have never given up their efforts. The Sind Graduates Association, the Sindhi Boli Sath, and similar associations have continued to work toward increasing the use of Sindhi by writing letters to newspapers; publishing articles, books, and journals; and maintaining a consciousness of the importance of Sindhi as a marker of identity. The Sindhi Language Authority, established in 1990, has undertaken language planning, adding new words and technical terms, and publishing scholarly books in Sindhi. But in Karachi and parts of Hyderabad, the strongholds of Urdu, Sindhi is ignored as it has been in the past.

Conclusion

The issue of language is clearly related to identity formation in Sind, and language remains a marker of the existing ethnic division. The Muhajirs, who were ethnically diverse, originally shared only the experience of having migrated from India and the Urdu language, and the MQM in the late 1980s stressed the experience of migration. For the Sindhis, however, language became their major symbol of identity, transcending local loyalties in response to the Muhajir challenge. The Sindhi language movement and the Urdu-Sindhi conflict can be seen in relation to the competition between these two groups for power (jobs, goods, and services) in Sind, which the coming of the modern state with its expanded bureaucracy, urbanization, and education as a means of social mobility has brought about.

It is unlikely, under the circumstances, that Sindhi will become the language of power in the whole of Sind as it is presently constituted. That it will remain a powerful symbol of Sindhi nationalism can be safely predicted, although it appears to be losing its position as the major symbol. Autonomy, internal colonialism, and Punjabi domination rather than language will perhaps characterize future mobilization against the center's rule in Sind. But language as an issue will not lose its appeal even if it moves down the list of priorities of the Sindhi nationalists.

29. *Report of the Special Committee of the Senate on the Situation in Sindh*, Islamabad, 1989, p. 46.