tional values, folk-beliefs and sociopolitical developments. An attempt has also been made to explore and explain the mechanics of name-change and the sociocultural factors responsible for it. Also included in this chapter is a discussion of popular nicknames which are found to be more individualisers than classifiers. An interesting feature of nick-names is their structural pattern which is examined in detail. The interplay of sociocultural factors and forces in Hindi names and nick-names highlights the complex relationship between language and society.

India has often been described as a sociolinguistic giant. This metaphor has in the main served to inspire awe and wonder and conse-quently dissuaded scholars in our country and abroad from approach-ing it and measuring its strength and vitality. The Indian heritage even in the field of sociolinguistic speculations has been of considerable value. The germs of many of the current trends in the field can be discovered in the ancient Indian linguists. It was more than 1300 years ago that the Indian grammarian Bhartrihari propounded the theory in his Vakyapadiya that the meaning of an utterance is determined not merely by its form but also by contextual factors such as the time, place, purpose, subject, syntactic relation and the context-of-situ-ation, each of which has been given a specific term and definition in Sanskrit. Another Indian linguist, Yaska, who lived long before Pa-nini, was well familiar with the language differences caused by the spatiotemporal factors. Coming to our own time we notice that the term sociolinguistics was for the first time used, not in the United States as is often claimed (Currie, 1952, 1980), but in India as early as 1939 in an article "Sociolinguistics in India" published in an Indian journal *Man in India* (Hodson 1939). The Indian subcontinent offers both a mine of infomation and a challenging field of enquiry which is so vast and varied that we can venture to till only a corner of it—each man at his plough in his particular furrow.

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