PUBLICITY AND WRITING IN THE URBAN PUBLIC ARENA:
AID MOBILIZATION AND RHETORIC IN THE
CONSTRUCTION OF A COLLECTIVE IDENTITY
(1900s–1930s)

Introduction

The previous chapter outlined the setting and consolidation of the norms of Western medical practice by means of legislative initiative and through securing the institutionalization of western medical education. This process also represented an ideological monopoly of certain terms and parameters that were laid down and appropriated by western, scientific medicine and its professional practice. Government Enquiries and Reports, that evaluated the potential and possibility for Government patronage or regulation of indigenous medicine were coloured by these assumptions. Indigenous medical learning and its practice remained outside the realm of Government sanction and legitimacy, negotiating its demands from without, through the publicity and politics of the urban, public sphere.

This chapter examines the years during and after the Medical Registration Act, which reveal movements amongst Vaid practitioners to represent and identify their bearings collectively. Vaid publicists, in their rhetoric and writings in the vernacular press, and through corporate bodies, attempted to define the contents and boundaries of a professional identity. Their own corporate, mediating ambitions as well as the ideas and symbols politicized in urban public debate were fused, to elaborate upon institutional networks and ideological norms to fulfill this agenda.

The central question in this chapter pertains therefore to the construction of these overarching collective networks in fulfilling the aims of cobbled
together a ‘professional’ community. What were the ideas, concerns and priorities that were projected towards this end by Vaid Sammelans and Vaid writings? How was this organization and agenda received and interpreted, and what were the challenges and contradictions emerging within it from provincial, local concerns and politics in the 1920s-1930s?

The first section examines the growth of organizational and institutional mobilization amongst indigenous practitioners, in the emergence and development of corporate bodies and their networks amongst practitioners. The emergence of the early Vaid publicists through printing and publicity, and their mindset and aspirations were crucial to the leadership that organized the early Vaid Sammelans and conferences. Two organizations in particular, the Ayurved Sammelan and the All India Vaid Yunani Tibb Conference attempted to establish a unitary, centralizing control and agenda for institutionalizing indigenous education and norms of practice. However, these efforts were already being marginalized by new networks of publicity in the vernacular press and provincial level corporate bodies that were emerging in later years, forming their own collective, overlapping networks that increasingly brought in the languages of political alignment in the public sphere at the provincial, local level in Punjab.

The second section of this chapter reconstructs the efforts to identify and project a unified tradition and to frame the ideational boundaries of Vaid learning and practice. In the construction of a singular identity for Ayurvedic learning and its practitioners, a range of unifying ideas and symbols were projected by the Sammelan leadership and Vaid publicists. The authoritative basis and canon of Ayurvedic learning, the linguistic-cultural identification of Vaid practitioners, were beginning to be pressed forward. Some of these ideas made inroads in piecing together the self perception of Vaid practitioners in Punjab.
SECTION I

The employment of the vernacular press and publicity was the most important change that relocated the sphere and focus of medical practice amongst indigenous practitioners in the early decades of the century. The press and the publicity communicated to an urban, public readership and clientele shaped the professional world of the Vaid-publicist and anchored his orientation to this market through his pharmacy or Aushadhalaya.

The emergence of Vaid publicists and editors can be traced back as early as the 1890s and early 1900s when practitioners began to write health tracts, wrote and edited vernacular journals and mobilized publicity in the growing vernacular press. The plague and the social tensions that it triggered for instance, was an important concern that had elicited press-based opinions and participation from these practitioners and publicists.

Urban Vaid publicists, their priorities and concerns, threw up a leadership and encouraged mobilization in the years of the Medical Registration Bill debate. They formed an early leadership that shaped the networks and self perception of indigenous practitioners in these decades, and the ideas and concerns expressed in their rhetoric and writings reconstruct an emerging picture of Vaid mobilization within the arena of urban, public debate.

Indigenous practitioners in these years were reshaping the scope of their practice and extending their client networks by means of the market oriented pharmacy. Through the Ayurvedic pharmacy as a means of engaging with a commercial market for medical advice, the earlier relationships predominantly of personal, client ties and a largely local sphere of medical practice was now increasingly replaced by the cultivation of a wider clientele.
The diaries of Bhai Mohan Singh Vaid in the years between 1898-1914 provide a day to day account of his practice as well as references to that of his colleagues in Tarn Taran and Amritsar. Consultations and private visits in Amritsar district and even stays with clients in Lahore and around continued to be the norm for him. Generation-old ties with patients in a traditional patient-practitioner relationship attested to a continuing network of personalities and associations in his practice. However, the foundation of Mohan Singh’s Khalsa Pharmacy, his purchase of a private press to write and publicize, and his interest in machines and business offered by practitioners in Tibbi exhibitions indicated a new scope of concerns.

Patent medicines and Dawa-Daru preparations associated with certain pharmacies were already seeking out patrons amongst an urban clientele. Advertisements in newspapers or publicity through a Vaid’s own journal consolidated this aim. Not surprisingly, Vaid writings competed with each other to convince the public of their therapeutic efficacy, in an age that was popularly dubbed as being one of active, nuskhabazi.

Drugs and medical preparations competed with each other through advertisements and their success and popularity ensured the professional success of the Vaid publicist and sustained his pharmacy. These preparations were not only advertised, they also represented the courting of an impersonal clientele. Many journals and their Vaid editors supplied ‘health forms’ that encouraged medical advice and treatment that was conducted by post.

1 Bhai Mohan Singh Vaid Diaries, unpublished volumes, in possession of Sardar Ardaman Singh. (See chapter 3, section II).
2 Such as Safed Daru of Vaid Raj Pharmacy, Makardhwaj of Laxmi Pharmacy, Mool Raj Churan of Mahesh Aushadhalaya.
Hereditary Vaids and Hakims too successfully established pharmacies or Dawakhanas, such as the well known Hindustani Dawakhana established by Hakim Ajmal Khan or smaller pharmacies that were emerging even in small towns in Punjab. However, the use of the press and publicity allowed mobility to less pedigreed practitioners as well, whose advertising and sales were successful in forming a wide clientele and allowing such Vaid publicists too a role in shaping Vaid mobilization.

While many pharmacies were associated with standard preparations, it was Pandit Thakur Dutt Sharma, influential Vaid leader and owner of one of the most successfully run pharmacies in the north, the Amritdhara Pharmacy, that illustrated the rise and influence of the new Vaid publicists and their concerns. Thakur Dutt Sharma’s achievement in tying Ayurvedic practice with press based marketing and commercial success earned him an important place amongst Lahore’s wealthy classes. Without having a family lineage of medical practice, his pharmacy established itself through advertisements in local newspapers, until he himself bought a private press and began to publish a popular Vaid journal in Urdu, Deshpakarak. His success, as emphasized by colleagues and Vaid practitioners in an Abhinandan Granth later published to honour him, made him a model for Vaid practitioners in forging a successful, commercial career.

In a description of Lahore’s successful practitioners, a writer observed:

Practising alongside the allopaths [in Lahore] were quite [a] good number of Kavirajs, Vaids and Hakims dispensing Ayurvedic and Yunani Medicines. Many of them were widely known not only in Lahore but also in many other parts of North India. Topping the list was Pandit Thakur Dutt of Amritdhara: a medicine kept in practically in every household in the city. It provided instant relief in almost all

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1 Such as in Tarn Taran, Gujranwala, Sargodha, Gujrat, aside from larger pharmacies in Amritsar and Lahore.

4 Thakur Dutt Sharma’s speech on his career, Ghar ka Vaid, edited by Vaid Kishan Dayal, Amritsar, June 1929, p. 17.
kinds of common ailments....It came to be known as an all purpose medicine and made Thakur Dass [Dutt] a highly prosperous man. He built an imposing building named after Amritdhara in Gowlal Mandi...attached to it was a post office from where Amritdhara was dispatched all over the country and abroad.  

Vaid pharmacies, and the process of writing and editing by Vaid publicists were closely related. The place of Vaid writing emerged from the nature and exigencies of the pharmacy and its publicity. Vaid writing and its contents therefore had an important relationship with marketing and publicizing the pharmacies. By the 1920s, more than a dozen Vaid and Yunani journals were published from Amritsar and Lahore and all of them were supported by the working of a patron pharmacy. Many carried advertisements for a concern and offered lists of their drugs and preparations. Some pharmacies like the Lakshmi Pharmacy that published Zeena-e-Sehat, carried forward contact with a network of distributors and even offered company shares to their readers.

Vaid writings through their journals reached forward to a middling, literate readership in towns and cities. Vaid editors or publicists formed an ordinary or lay literati that was successful in reaching out to a readership that was emerging even in smaller towns. Many of these journals were from small towns such as Tarn Taran, Gujranwala and Gujrat and their subscription lists showed a circulation that extended into most of the urban centres in Punjab. The writings and products of some that had a longer and more popular lifeline even reached expatriate Punjabis in Bombay and Burma.

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5 Pran Neville, Lahore: A Sentimental journey, 1997, p. 204.
6 Such as the Khalsa Pharmacy for Dukh Niwaran, Amar Aushadhalaya, for Ayurved Marand, Sanyasi Aushadhalaya for the Sanyasi ofzargodha, Mahesh Aushadhalaya for Arogya Darpan, Hindustan Pharmacy for Ayurved Vigyan.
7 Zeena e Sehat, Editor, Proprietor of Laxmi Pharmacy, Bhagwan Das Vaid. place of publication not mentioned possibly Lahore, Jan 1937, p. 41.
8 Letters from subscribers in journals such as Tandrustil, an Urdu print of Vaid Raj, edited by Vaid Sudarshan, Lahore, March 1919, p.14; Ayurved Marand, edited by Kaviraj Harischandra, Amritsar, August 1928, pp 40-41, Feb 1929, pp 61-2.
9 Ibid.
Most journals based on their subscriptions, claimed a readership of up to 5000,\textsuperscript{10} both among indigenous practitioners, as well as revenue officials, professionals and petty Government servants with whom they maintained a regular correspondence.\textsuperscript{11}

Though the life span of these journals was uncertain and editors frequently reported losses, journals expired and then resumed printing with regularity and new journals continued to appear as rapidly. They were dependent for their funding mostly on the individual enterprise of the Vaid owner and a journal’s fortune continued to depend upon the pharmacy and its profits.\textsuperscript{12}

Vaid writing and publicity was coming up in an age when tract societies and Hand Bill Societies were being founded by reformist organizations such as the Chief Khalsa Diwan and the Arya Samaj. As mass publishing and the vernacular press grew in influence, these journals and writings in these years had a very specific set of ideas and clientele that they addressed. These journals were written in an ordinary style and vocabulary that was meant both for lay readers and practitioners. Editors specified that this accessible style and content was a deliberate choice that was aimed not only at

\textsuperscript{10} Dukh Niwaran publication details from M.S. Vaid family; Sanyasi, edited by Mahant Hari Sargodha, No. 3, Nov. 1910, p. 3. The Zeena e Sehat even reported an annual increase of 50\% in its readership in its issue, Dec. 1936, p. 5; the Ilme Sehat reported a subscription of a 1000 even in their first year amongst ‘businessmen, barristers, civil, military and public works officers’, July 1903, p.64.

\textsuperscript{11} Regarding patwaris and Government officials who were subscribers for instance, an editor commented that they were a complaining lot and had an excessive interest in correspondence due to their feeling of having bought the whole enterprise simply by subscribing to a copy. Ilme Sehat wa Ilme Tibb, edited by Lala Kashi Ram, Lahore, July 1903, (edit.) p. 64.

\textsuperscript{12} Editorial in Ayurved Martand that described the short life of many Tibhi rasalar, partly because they did not cultivate a loyal clientele but also due to a nagging problem of funds. Mohan Singh Vaid too complained of repeated losses in some years that dogged Dukh Niwaran. Others pressed for a purchase for their medicines if the readers wanted the journal to be supported. Ayurved Martand, April 1928, Editorial; Dukh Niwaran, details from M.S. Vaid family; Al Ilaj, Chief editor Hakim Maulvi Abdullah Sahib Rodivi, Delhi ?, Sept. 1942, p. 2.
practitioners but also towards an ordinary public. Few aspired to the literary style and content of literary journals by elite writers, including instead, general information, travel tidbits and news that was aimed at an ordinary public readership.

These Vaid publicists were not news gatherers. Their own reporting of events and happenings borrowed from reports and coverage in bigger vernacular newspapers. Reports were communicated from the English press and from official Reports, making this genre of writing important in its place as a channel of exchange amongst a lay, urban readership and in weaving an important network of readers and publicity for their editors. The pricing of these journals, mostly between two to four annas, also made them affordable to this readership as compared to newspapers, and allowed individuals to subscribe to them.

Vaid writing in these journals as well as the tracts that they published, addressed reformist concerns that sought the improvement of the self and the community. The early Punjab journals rarely, if at all, reported concerns that spoke of indigenous practitioners as a wider community. In Punjab, reporting and discussions even of the Medical Registration Bill was rare or in passing in these journals.

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13 Editorial in Sanyasi specifying its accessible writing that was meant for an ordinary readership, Sanyasi, Nov. 1910, No.3, editorial.
14 Columns such as ‘Khabrein’, ‘Science ke Chutkule’, ‘Aapas ki Guftagoo’, and serialized stories. For example in Ilm e Sehat wa Ilm e Tibb, July 1903; Sanyasi, Jan. 1911; Zeena e Sehat, Jan. 1937 etc.
15 Most journals offered subscriptions for two annas, such as the Zeena e Sehat and some like the Ayurved Martand raised its subscription once its circulation increased from 1.5 to 2 annas, and the Arogya Darpan was sold for 4 annas. Title pages of Ayurved Martand, March 1929, Zeena e Sehat Jan. 1937; Arogya Darpan, 1905.
16 Between 1911 and 1914 neither the Dukh Niwaran nor Vaid Raj carry any such reports. Though their editors participated in the Tibb Conference at Amritsar and in local meetings to condemn the Bill.
Vaid concerns and their self-consciousness of the need to represent their learning and their practice to the public, was a means of educating the individual and strengthening the community and thereby addressed a broadly reformist agenda. Central to this process, was the act of recovering indigenous knowledge and its dissemination. The Vaid publicist and his writing aimed at communicating an awareness of Ayurvedic learning through health columns, and simplified writing on Ayurvedic authorities and texts so as to communicate amongst the general public an awareness about safeguarding the physical health of the community and the individual.  

Through self-help and medical advice in such writings, their Ayurvedic prachar also promised the return of wider self-confidence and prestige, allowing the pursuit of the various other material or cultural-political goals facing the community or society as a whole. Vaid writing in these early journals and tracts claimed that Ayurvedic prachar was closely linked to social renewal, and that reformist measures such as shunning child marriage, the birth of early children and the cycle of ignorance and weakness that they promoted was also condemned in Ayurvedic principles. The latter advised against these customs on the grounds of social health, and as undermining the strength of family and community life. Ayurvedic learning and its practitioners were therefore an important means of consolidating social reform and vehicles for reformist ideology.

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17 Health and hygiene for the child, women and family in articles on bathing, hygiene, diet, exercise were regular features in these journals including Quami Sehat, particularly in journals such as Vaid Raj, Zeena e Sehat, Ilm e Sehat, Ayurved Marland etc.
18 M.S. Vaid, Arogta Rakhyak, Amritsar, May 1917, pp 3-4, 16; and in the same on child marriage and the violation of Ayurvedic principles of brahmacharya, pp. 50-2., aside from writings in Dukh Niwaran.
19 Ibid.
The place of Ayurvedic learning and the wider social function of its practice were not defined in the sense of a wider professional agenda in these local writings. Ayurved prachar was viewed by these Vaid publicists as being accommodated within the agenda of community reform. For instance, aroga or preventing disease was an important theme in this writing partly since the plague years were followed by more intensive government efforts to emphasize sanitation and to organize conferences towards improving public health. But it was also because indigenous practitioners themselves perceived an independent, private role for themselves towards self-improvement and the consolidation of the strength of family and community, by rationalizing a public status and function for their learning.

The world view and concerns of the emerging Vaid publicists were in an important sense located in an understanding of their publicity and writing being related to the local frame of reformist concerns and the immediate politics of community building. Their pharmacies and journals were predominantly enterprises of individual initiative and sustenance within a movement that was only gradually opening out to audiences and Vaid collective concerns beyond the local sphere.

Yet the Vaid publicist, in his concerns for his pharmacy and practice, was also seeking a wider public profile and social status amongst a public of readers and clients. Representing his interest in the market required sanction and legitimacy that was only partly addressed in his writings on and identification with reformist community concerns. The Vaid publicist therefore simultaneously also engaged with the object of securing his interests and to identifying himself with a wider community of practitioners.

20 Ibid., including other tracts such as Kutumbh Chikitsa, Amritsar, 1928, pp 3-5; Grah Prabodh Shastar ate Aroga, Amritsar, 1914, pp. 4-6.
The need for wider mobilization and collective mediation was to emerge over the issue of the Medical Registration Bill. However, in the Vaid publicist’s engagement in the urban medical market and his participation in public debate and rhetoric in the vernacular press, there were already both the issues as well as the medium to engage with new preoccupations.

Regulation and intervention were important concerns that needed to be addressed by the government; they were now the subject of private initiative too. Vaid publicists limited the initial ‘professionalising’ of the new corporate bodies that they founded in these years, but it was their own interests that also shaped and broadened the engagements and agenda of the Vaid Sammelans and conferences. In the following years, their own evolving perceptions and consolidating interests were to shape the nature of local mobilization and new ideological alignments.

The earliest corporate bodies founded by Vaid publicist leaders were formed in the late nineteenth century, in cities like Bombay and Allahabad. However, it was in the years of the debate over the Medical Registration Bill that the largest and most lasting of these societies were founded. From Punjab, well known pharmacy owners and publicists participated in these early conferences and were also an important part of the executive and standing committees that worked out the constitution of these bodies.

Pandit Thakur Dutt Sharma was involved by Hakim Ajmal Khan in framing the rules of constitution of the All India Vaid Yunani Tibb Conference in Delhi\(^2\) and he and certain prominent Voids were members of the Provincial committees even in the early years of the Ayurved Sammelan. In the attendance and local level participation of these conferences, a number of

Vaid and Hakim publicists such as Bhai Mohan Singh, Hakim Abu Tarab, and Vaid Sahib Dayal, who were all editors of journals and pharmacy owners, also attended sessions of these conferences in Amritsar and Lahore. These conferences had exhibitions where practitioners interacted and participated in pharmacy displays and others distributed and sold copies of their writings and tracts. Vaid publicists were active in advancing funds personally for these jalsas and exerted themselves even in these early years to collect chanda from neighboring colleagues and practitioners.

Many of the conferences and mandals that emerged in these years had a short lifespan. They consisted of practitioners who had come together over a local issue such as a local Ayurvedic dispensary as in the case of the Poona Vaid Mandal, and lapsed once the issue had been addressed. In the case of the debate over the Medical Registration Bill, many small conferences were mobilized over the issue, including in Punjab, and most of these quietly passed away once the Act had been cleared.

The two larger organizations that influenced and represented Vaid professional politics in the coming decades and were crucial in attempting to shape a common professional interest were the Ayurved Sammelan and the All India Vaid Yunani Tibb Conference with their base in Allahabad and Delhi respectively.

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22 Editor of Ahl e Sunnat woh ul Jamaat, Amritsar.
23 Report of All India Vaid Yunani Tibb Conference, for 1914, date of publication not mentioned (Delhi, 1915?). (Henceforth, A.I.V.Y.T.C.).
24 Note on preparing for Tibbi numaish for the Vaid Yunani Tibb Conference of 1914 at Amritsar, Diary noting by Mohan Singh Vaid on 8.3.1914. M.S.Vaid also noted his attendance of the District Vaid Yunani Tibb Committee meeting in 1929 and that he purchased tracts from Vaid Kishan Dayal, Editor, Ghar ka Vaid. Personal communication Sardar Ardaman Singh; M.S. Vaid Diaries, 5, and 6 Jan. 1929.
25 M.S. Vaid diaries, note on 14.2.1914.
The Ayurved Sammelan's direct influence and engagement with Punjab's practitioners was to widen in later decades, with a small band of practitioners from the larger cities of Punjab already forming a regular contingent.²⁶ Until the 1930s, it was the All India Vaid Yunani Tibb Conference that enjoyed broad-based representation amongst Punjab's urban practitioners with a number of its annual jalsas being held in Punjab's cities.²⁷

The leadership in both conferences was remarkably close in their aims to mobilize a community of practitioners, to demarcate definite institutional and organizational boundaries for indigenous practitioners and to associate them with a unified canon of learning and practice.

The Medical Registration Act and the Government's growing support for institutionalization of western medicine had identified certain norms and standards for western medical learning and practice, and segregated and regulated it in the structure of its practice. In their initiatives to mobilize and to establish institutional networks these new corporate bodies partly imitated this vision by setting themselves as spokesmen and regulatory authorities in the realm of indigenous medical practice.

Just as the All India Vaid Yunani Tibb Conference worked through its Standing Committee, the Ayurved Sammelan also founded the Ayurved Mahamandal to define and pursue institutional structures and organizational checks upon Ayurvedic education and its norms of practice.²⁸ The Ayurved Mahamandal was established so as to coordinate the activities of provincial practitioners.

²⁶ The provincial representatives to the Ayurved Sammelan were based on area and number of members as follows: U.P. and Awadh–14, Assam and Bengal–12, Bombay–10, Punjab–8, all other northern States far less. Sudhamidhi, No. 4, 1912-13, p. 5.
²⁷ At least two of its meetings in 1914 and 1931 were held in Amritsar and Lahore respectively.
²⁸ Sudhamidhi, No. 4, 1912-13, reference in attached supplement p. 5.
branches of the Sammelan as well as to distribute responsibility for organization, publicity and education. 29

The annual Sammelan or jalsa that these bodies hosted was however the main forum and venue where they publicized and debated their project to represent a unified professional community. The annual Sammelan was meant to attract the public gaze. 30 With this aim in mind, in its initial years the Vaid leadership deliberately chose to seek publicity in the choice of its venue and the timing of its jalsa. The Sammelan or jalsa was public and visible, with the organizers judging the success or failure of a particular event by its press coverage. The inaugural day, always covered in the vernacular press, was marked by a procession that wound its way through the host city, punctuated with lay participation. 31

In what was the usual format of a three-day Sammelan or jalsa, kavi durbars and Tibbi Mushairas were a standard and popular agenda, 32 much like many other contemporary public gatherings. The nazms at the All India Vaid Yunani Tibb Conference were meant to encourage an ambience of togetherness as they pressed for unity against ambitious doctors and quack Pansaris and lamented Government neglect. 33 Some sessions even hosted poetry sessions of distinction as cultural events with a patronage of not only local poets but also of invitees from afar. 34

29 Ibid.

30 Description for instance of the Ayurved Sammelan procession. Sudhanidhi, No. 1, 1912-13, Editorial.

31 Ibid. Some reports such as that of the A.I.V.Y.T.C. jalsa of 1931 noted the lack of attendance and press coverage. Ayurved Martand, June 1931, p. 2.

32 For example at the conference of the District Vaid Tibbia Committee of Amritsar, Mushairas and the josh they generated, along with the presence of well known poets and the recitation of their nazms and qasidas were reported as having formed a unifying tehriq amongst the audience. Ghar ka Vaid, Jan. 1929, pp 39-40.

33 Ibid.

34 Ibid.
In this sense these bodies were not merely seeking publicity and support but also asserting their social status and distinction as patrons of culture. In their association with important public figures, the Vaid Sammelan reassured and projected both to practitioners and the lay public, the continuing social sanction that was enjoyed by indigenous practitioners.

Sammelans and conferences competed to demonstrate their prominence in their guest lists. The All India Vaid Yunani Tibb Conference in its jalsas in Delhi (1911) and Amritsar (1913) had an impressive list of local Raises, honorary magistrates as well as municipality members. Vaid and Hakim leaders such as Hakim Ajmal Khan, Pandit Ram Prasad Sharma, who was the Raj Vaidya of Patiala, also deployed their influence to invite the socially prominent of each city, including well-known speakers and public men from outside.35

Various Vaid leaders encouraged their flock to lobby and compete for political leverage amongst public men as well as to participate in the arenas of local, municipal politics. These political classes were to serve them as important mediators in mobilizing funds and towards implementing the agenda for which these organizations were campaigning. Like the representative role of Vaid Sammelans, Vaid or Hakim political representatives were to serve as an additional focus and symbol of collective interest. Many practitioners were also successful in making these inroads, notably Vaid publicists even in small of municipalities like Tarn Taran.36

Sammelan leaders found the vernacular press and its publications, tracts and journals an invaluable medium in projecting collective activity and interests. The All India Vaid Yunani Tibb leadership always rued its lack of a home

35 Report, All India Vaid Yunani Tibb Conference at Amritsar of 1914, p. 75.
36 By 1917, Bhai Mohan Singh was a Municipal Councillor in the Tarn Taran Municipality. Dukhi, Jeewan Bhai Sahib, p. 311.
journal and its lack of a substantial number of publications such as health
and medical tracts. The Ayurved Sammelan on the other hand, published a
range of tracts on the Ayurvedic tradition and disease prevention. An
interesting example of the successful collaboration of Sammelan-initiated
mobilization, and its support and elaboration through the local vernacular
press is illustrated in the introduction of a professional Dhanvantri Diwas
worship.

It was with the formation of Vaid corporate bodies that the first instances of
collective and corporate piety and the celebration of Dhanvantri Diwas
began to be encouraged and popularized in Vaid writing as well as in the
vernacular press. The Ayurvedic Sammelan leadership in particular had an
important role in projecting the birth of this Vishnu avatar or Dhanvantri as
a common professional deity for Ayurvedic practitioners. As a result, by the
1930s, even smaller towns and cities in North India reported the celebration
of Dhanvantri festivities, all commonly timed and with an effort at similar
forms of worship. 37

The initial popularity of the festival amongst practitioners was clearly
related to the support and publicity that it received from popular, Ayurvedic
journals in Hindi such as the Sudhanidhi. 38 The editor of Sudhanidhi,
Jagannath Prasad Shukla, was an important leader of the Ayurved
Sammelan and his journal was a significant forum for reporting the
Sammelan's activities. This journal came out with special Dhanwantri
issues in autumn every year. Initially, its editor wrote entire sections in the
Journal that delineated to its readers the forms and rituals of Dhanwantri
worship. 39 In an editorial, he outlined that the Dhanwantri puja was not

37 See reports discussed in the next chapter on celebrations of Dhanwantri Diwas by the
Punjabi Vaid Mandal and Amritsar Vaid Sammelan.
39 Ibid.
aimed merely at personal devotion or worship, it also aimed at a gathering of practitioners and included their striving for organizing get-togethers for practitioners, amongst the public. These gatherings in turn were to serve as occasions to raise and discuss common themes and unifying ideas regarding Ayurved.

The large Vaid sammelans and conferences as well as the influential Ayurvedic journals had an important role in attempting to bring together a sense of common professional hierarchy and to forge networks amongst practitioners. They acted in a sense as bodies that conferred sanction, status and legitimacy to practitioners. Vaid sammelans themselves were important occasions in the presence of an assembly of practitioners and a lay public, for granting titles and honorifics and to give awards for distinction. Visiting Vaid leaders for instance, were frequently honored with titles of Ayurved Udarak or more grandiose sounding honorifics.40

Vaid sammelans and journals often gave accounts of the careers of notable practitioners, and carried obituaries that discussed the contributions of deceased practitioners in the light of the cause of Ayurved prachar.41 The Ayurved Sammelan also attempted to enumerate and identify ‘legitimate’ practitioners in an early effort to compile a Vaid Directory.42 Not only did this make the Ayurved Sammelan assume the powers to decide who was a ‘qualified’ practitioner, but was also an exercise in underlining the strength or volume of its representation of a corpus of practitioners.

41 Such as speeches on the careers and achievements of Gannath Sen, Ram Prasad Sharma etc. Obituaries, Sudhanidhi, Vol.20, No.2, p. 120, as well as at all the inaugural sessions of Vaid committees and conferences.
42 Sudhanidhi, No. 4, 1911-12, p. 19.
These efforts served to consolidate the leadership and agenda of a close and mutually interacting group of socially mobile, urban publicists. Vaid leaders were informing and influencing each other by their position in the vernacular press and publishing, as well as bolstered by the commercial success of pharmacies and by their newfound position in sammelans. It was the interest and vision of the urban publicist practitioner and the quest for wider sanction in the public sphere as well as in relation to the government that was being elaborated.

These corporate bodies also had a leading role in pressing forward for a uniformity or standardization of indigenous medical education. Contrasting the norms set by western medical colleges, a spokesman at the All India Vaid Yunani Tibb Conference brushed aside the increase in small pathshalas asking instead for the planning only of large, centralized colleges for teaching indigenous medicine. This leadership frequently raised the spectre of quackery, and suggested that the only means to effectively combat it was to produce distinct, 'legitimately qualified' practitioners from a uniform, institutionalized system of education.

Hakim Ajmal Khan, founding leader of the All India Vaid Yunani Tibb Conference pursued these aims by establishing the Tibbia College in Delhi for which he mobilized funds both from royal patrons such as Rampur, Nabha and Patiala states as well as from the Government of India. Another branch of the Conference, the powerful District Vaidic Yunani Tibb Committee of Amritsar also set up a college, following the curriculum and norms that had been set for the teaching of Yunani and Ayurved in the parent Tibbia College. The Conference also continued to strive for

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43 The Ayurved Sammelan also emphasized the opening of larger institutions arguing that they would provide 'complete teaching', Sudhanidhi, No. 3, 4, 1928, p. 83.
institutional recognition from the Government, campaigning, for example that the public funds collected for the King Edward College at Lahore needed to be justified by resuming Ayurvedic and Yunani classes in that college.45

The Ayurved Sammelan took up this interest by founding the Ayurved Vidyapeeth, a body to supervise all aspects of standardized Ayurvedic education. The Vidyapeeth was revived in 1912, when its functions were outlined: it was to hold Ayurved related examinations all over the country, to decide the curriculum of all Ayurvedic pathshalas, to publish textbooks, as well as to award degrees such as Ayurved Visharadh and Ayurved Acharya.46

The Ayurved Sammelan was successful in financing a college in Allahabad47 and also associated itself closely with the fund raising and support involved in the setting up of the Hindu University at Banaras. Its members and Vaid leaders such as Pandit Thakur Dutt Sharma presented notable donations to nationalist leader Madan Mohan Malaviya on his visit to Lahore, with the knowledge of the latter’s sympathy for Ayurvedic learning.48

The Ayurved Vidyapeeth was a project that achieved some success with its examinations and the number of institutions vying to be recognized by it showing a rapid increase. By the late 1920s, a number of even smaller towns

45 Sudhanidhi, 1911-12, No.3, p. 50.
46 Ibid, 1911-12, No. 4, pp. 8-9.
47 Sudhanidhi, Vol. 4, 1913-14, No. 9, p. 361.
48 Kaviraj Pratap Singh, Kavi Vinod Vaidya Bhushan Shriman Thakur Dutt Sharma, Jan. 1958, pp. 8-16. These funds collections and patron networks would show as examined later in the study, the specifically Hindu, political idiom of the Ayurved Sammelans concerns as well as that of prominent Vaid publicists.
in North India, including centres such as Abohar and Ferozepore in Punjab were hosting its examinations and many small pathshalas and their alumni such as the Panchanad pathshala of Amritsar, further consolidated their reputation and prided themselves on being recognized by the Vidyapeeth, and the Visharadh and Acharya titles that they could confer.

Important challenges to this agenda to institutionalize indigenous medical education however remained. The Ayurved Sammelan and Vaid-Tibb Conference had aimed to introduce an impersonal institution based system of education to replace the personal, individually supervised Guru or Ustaad-based system of education. The Ayurved Vidyapeeth’s conception of affiliating smaller pathshalas was supposed to be an interim arrangement that would give way eventually to large centralized institutions. Until the 1940s, the Vidyapeeth and its network of smaller pathshalas still predominated. No Sammelan or conference leadership was able to mobilize funding for large colleges through private support as had been done by Hakim Ajmal Khan, leading to a much narrower and circumscribed version of the institutional base envisaged by their leadership.

Smaller, private, independent colleges continued to grow at the local level, announcing themselves through frequent advertisements in Vaid journals. Pathshalas and Guru-Shishya relationships in the family or by associating themselves with a lineage of teaching continued to be a frame of reference or status. Contemporary biographies of practitioners continued to boast of these credentials and they were also underlined in the Vaid directories.

In existing institutions such as the Ayurvedic section within the D.A.V. College, its expansion was slow until the 1930s when some local patronage

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49 Sudhanidhi, Vol. 13, No. 4, p. 88.
50 Interview with Pandit Kishan Kant, Katra Parja, Amritsar.
came its way and its structure and facilities were expanded. It remained nevertheless a poor cousin of the main D.A.V. College. In the case of both the D.A.V. College and the Tibbia College at Lahore, Government Reports as well as Tibbi journals corroborated that their alumni scarcely survived the intense competition in cities such as Lahore to establish themselves as notable physicians. The Government Report stressed the lack of public reputation and prestige of these college-educated practitioners, and the latter source criticized the lack of adequate practical training amongst these students, and identified most of the city’s rising practitioners as those who had migrated from outside and taken up practice. The rationalization of Ayurvedic medical practice, its assumption of professional features, remained ambivalent since its legitimacy depended upon its acceptance amongst a public of clients.

To standardize indigenous medical practice and prescriptions by giving it a single, compiled textual aspect in the form of a pharmacopoeia was key to the agenda of professionalisation elaborated by the Vaid leadership. The Ayurved Sammelan’s project was taken up by the Vidyapeeth and the All India Vaid Yunani Tibb Conference regularly asked practitioners for contributions towards this effort.

To share and reveal nuskhas was a means to change the way practitioners perceived their practice; from individual family-based preparations the medicines became part of a wider, collective corpus. There was therefore, constant rebuking of the manner of medical practice that relied on secret nuskhas often with the result that the preparations died out with a particular

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51 Sudhanidhi, 1911-12, No. 4, p. 19.
53 Ibid.
54 Sudhanidhi, 1911-12, No. 4., p. 19.
55 Report of A. I. V. Y. T.C., 16 iijas, Resolution No. 2, pp 54-5
Speakers were therefore asked to share the composition of their specialized preparations at Vaid sammelans, such as for instance *khandaani* preparations for leprosy; batches of students were even invited to their *Aushadhalayas*. A text consisting of *nuskhas* compiled by well-known practitioners was edited, with a Committee for testing and standardizing measurements.\(^{57}\)

Bodies such as the Ayurved Sammelan therefore projected themselves as a directing authority that guided and selected the trajectory for reforming indigenous medical learning and practice, and as sole spokesman in mediating Ayurvedic prachar to the lay public. Their writing and publicity therefore constantly stressed their efforts in projecting a united, professional community’s interests.

By the 1920s and 1930s, the All India Vaid Yunani Tibb Conference was already projecting the campaign against the Medical Registration Bill as its own successful crusade over the designs of conspiring doctors. The fact that the Medical Registration Bill had not extended its provisions to penalizing indigenous medical practice, was counted as an achievement of the Conference.\(^{58}\) Appointing itself as the official mediator of these interests, the Delhi-based Conference made it a point to emphasize its representative nature to the Government. It promised that local causes would be taken up with provincial authorities, especially those that related immediately to the city and practitioners hosting a particular conference. Representations were also made for recognizing ‘legitimate’ practitioners by the appointment of Boards of Medicine. In its own projection as a national level authority, the All India Vaid Yunani Tibb Conference made it a point to interface with the

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\(^{56}\) *Ayuurved Martand*, April 1928, p. 12.

\(^{57}\) *Report of A I V Y T C.*, 16 ijas, pp 54-5.

\(^{58}\) Ibid, p. 25.
Government of India over issues such as instructing provincial Governments to employ indigenous practitioners in District Boards and Municipalities.59

The fact however, was that there was a real absence of a centralized issue and campaign except in the years of the Registration Act and in the immediate heat of its agitation in the following years. Further, the medical department and the concerns of indigenous medicine were devolved to the provincial Government, undermining the wider, national level focus that the Ayurved Sammelan or the All India Vaid Tibb Conference were claiming as their mantle.

The limitation in communicating a unified and centralized politics amongst indigenous practitioners was frequently observed by Vaid leaders and critics. Many commented on the need to mobilize a constructive agenda beyond the annual spectacle of Sammelans or jalsas. At the All India Vaid Yunani Tibb Conference at Lahore, in 1931, the passing of important resolutions was followed by a disappointing evaluation by a speaker on the limited progress in achieving the goals reiterated by the Conference: 60

In these past sixteen years that have passed by, [we have] gathered hoards of Resolutions that have been produced. How many of you however have bothered to make an effort towards their implementation? The Conference [still] has no office, nor building, nor adequate funds, nor independent means of its own. It has not sufficiently spread into the provinces and districts...are these not the important works that all of you should take forward?61

The Ayurved Sammelan leadership too realized the lack of crucial networks and branches in provincial and local spheres. In 1928, an article in Sudhanidhi reflected on the policy and the weakness of the Ayurved

60 Ibid.
61 Ibid.
Sammelan. 62 Not only did the Vaid practitioners need to demonstrate a change in the attitude and energy in the prachar of Ayurved, it also asked for them not to take a public clientele for granted. The Vaids as a single community needed to cultivate not only improved moral norms of practice and service but also to make efforts to realize and convey these reforms to the public. 63

While these critical enquiries were beginning to be posed in the 1920s, the structure and relations of the early leadership of these groups also partly explained both their initial successes as well as their lingering limitations. In the initial years between 1910 and 1918, when the All India Vaid Yunani Tibb Conference was founded, it reaped the advantages of charismatic leaders such as Hakim Ajmal Khan, combined with the momentum of unifying issues. Both the Conference as well as the Sammelan were able to mobilize practitioners based upon a defensive campaign centred around the Medical Registration Act that was projected through the public profile of these leaders. Hakim Ajmal Khan, Pandit Ram Prasad Sharma and Pandit Gannath Sen had their own public credentials as RAISES or Raj Vaidyas of princely states that made them natural leaders or intermediaries.

Even in public debate and press-based polemic, Vaid leaders mostly spoke in their individual capacities and public profiles. The responses of Vaid mandals or Sammelans and their publicity was not always entirely efficient. More often than not, any criticism from Vaid bodies awaited the occasion of a Sammelan and its body of resolutions, and this too only shadowed or followed that of their publicist leaders.

63 Ibid.
In organizational terms too the leadership and executive initiative in these bodies did not change hands for many decades, with an aged Pandit Gannath Sen making the Presidential address to the Ayurved Sammelan in 1930, and admitting that his failing health implied that he would not be able to see the Sammelan’s struggle to its conclusion. Younger leaders were appearing at the level of the smaller local groups but in bodies like the All India Vaid Yunani Tibb Conference, even after the death of Hakim Ajmal Khan the Conference continued to be controlled by his family members and close associates. Allegiances and coteries in these groups owed direct and personal commitment to individual leaders rather than the platform of a corporate body, Hakim Ajmal Khan’s passing away therefore prompted what was noted as the abrupt departure of Vaid Man Singh, the long standing secretary of the Conference. These leaders and patrons represented the specific politics of Vaid mobilization and representation.

The structure of Sammelan organization and leadership apart, even the Government did not encourage the claims of leadership and mediation on the basis of representing professional numbers alone. For instance, Hakim Ajmal Khan’s deputation of practitioners to the Viceroy Hardinge was centrally in his capacity as a Muslim leader and leading Rais. The Government’s recognition of criteria often dwelt on the strength of the collective networks and community profile represented by these public men.

Pandit Thakur Dutt Sharma for instance, was an important Arya leader as the Secretary of the Wacchowali Arya Samaj. His influence extended not only amongst Hindu Council members such as Gokul Chand Narang but also amongst political and public leaders outside Punjab. His inclusion as a

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64 Presidential address to the Ayurved Sammelan at Mysore. *Ayurved Martand*, March 1931, p. 46.
witness in the Madras Committee enquiry on indigenous medicine as well as his membership of the Punjab Board of Enquiry on Indigenous Medicine drew from all these political networks, including his prominent leadership of the Punjab Brahman Sammelan.⁶⁶

Neither the All India Vaid Yunani Tibb Conference nor the Ayurved Sammelan was to have, as we shall see, in subsequent years, representation to provincial Boards of Medicine on their own account, with preference being given to representations of head of Institutions such as the D.A.V. College or the Islamia Tibbia College.

An important challenge to the wider agenda of the Ayurved Sammelan and the Delhi-based Conference was emerging in the form of provincial and district level committees, mandals or corporate bodies that were beginning to be founded in the 1920s and expanding in the following years. In Punjab itself, in the mid-1920s many new bodies such as the Punjab Tibbi Conference, and the Punjab Vaid Mandal had emerged.

Even existing organizations or those of these bodies that were affiliated to the larger Sammelan or Conference already posed important challenges to the latter’s centralizing tendencies. Control from Delhi and the predominance of Delhi practitioners in positions within the administration of the All India Vaid Yunani Tibb Conference was also often challenged. In Punjab, the influential District Vaid Yunani Tibbia Committee of Amritsar was affiliated to the Conference. However, the Amritsar members frequently disputed the monopoly of control over resources and appointments made by the Delhi-based leadership.

⁶⁶ Ibid.
During the sixteenth Annual Conference, the discussion of the resolution to form a board to examine and standardize drugs was questioned by the Amritsar Committee members led by Hakim Abu Tarab. They formed an important voice in asking that such a board compulsorily have half of its members consisting of outside practitioners and not be merely monopolized by Delhi members. Some years later, in 1931, the Amritsar Vaid Mandal during the jalsa in Lahore was to seek a commitment from a Conference office bearer, Pandit Ram Prasad Sharma, for Vaid leaders to be more fully informed and associated with the All India Vaid Yunani Tibb Conference’s administering executive.

The tensions and competition between local bodies and their leaders had also begun to spill into the larger bodies and fragment their unifying agenda, serving to further question the hold of this leadership. During a discussion on the need to expand and affiliate suba and zilla-level bodies during the All India Vaid Yunani Tibb Conference, the Amritsar faction of Vaid and Hakims again opposed the inclusion of a local rival, the Provincial Tibb Conference, within the Conference. They opposed the affiliation of such bodies on the ground that the Conference ought to only allow joint Vaid and Hakim Committees to be attached to the Central Committee.

At the provincial and local level these new corporate bodies were also displaying enterprise in independent fund raising with rural affiliates that were aligned to these local committees. The Amritsar District Vaid Tibbia Committee for instance was expanding in and around the district, including to adjacent villages. By 1928, it had founded centres in villages such as Dhand Kasil and appointed a patron and representative in the local Zaildar.

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67 *A.I.V.Y.T.C.*, 16 iijas, pp 54-5.
70 Ibid.
who in turn hosted a local conference.\textsuperscript{71} The Committee leaders meanwhile promised to offer more permanent medical relief to that area by opening a \textit{Shefa Khana}. Later, within ten years of its founding, the same Amritsar Committee was to claim an expansion into as many as 48 centres including to small towns such as Jhang, Dinanagar, Fazilka and Hafizabad.\textsuperscript{72}

The leadership and the scope of these local mandals and committees had also begun to directly answer or address the claims and immediate concerns of local practitioners. The Punjab Provincial Vaid Sammelan at its own level raised concerns such as checking quackery, drug corruption in the local market, the need to support more Shefa Khanas as well as demands regarding the appointment of a Board of Medicine and the opening of a register by the Provincial Government.\textsuperscript{73} Local concerns such as the competition for funds and criticism at the level of district boards were more effectively addressed by such agencies. The Provincial Vaid Sammelan promptly put forward its condemnation and grievances when in a District Board meeting at Hissar a resolution that criticized indigenous practitioners and their employment was considered.\textsuperscript{74}

These corporate bodies and their leadership had their focus and claims directed partly towards the provincial level government, but more importantly towards the district boards and municipalities within which they were beginning to get important concessions in these years. The Amritsar municipality was supporting \textit{Desi Shefa Khanas} and the Lahore municipality had sanctioned a substantial sum towards supporting indigenous medicine.\textsuperscript{75}

\textsuperscript{71} \textit{Ayurved Martand}, August 1928, p. 47.  
\textsuperscript{72} \textit{Hakim Deccan}, Jan. 1942, Vol. 5, No. 12, p. 47 \textsuperscript{73} \textit{Ayurved Martand}, July 1928, pp. 33-6.  
\textsuperscript{74} \textit{Ayurved Martand}, ibid, p. 31  
\textsuperscript{75} Ibid., pp. 33-7.
Many of these concessions were still noted as being paltry. Other provincial governments such as Madras, Bihar and U.P., it was observed had supported far larger institutional projects and criticism and discussions in the Punjab council led by Punjab politicians like Sir Chhotu Ram and Feroze Khan Noon seemed to promise few concessions. However, the Punjab Government’s statements outlining the terms for municipal employment and funding for indigenous practitioners in 1923, and growing attempts to lobby at the level of the local civic administration, had already established a role for mediation by local mandals and their leadership.

By the 1920s, Vaid politics and mobilization had only a remote affiliation to the overarching currents and rhetoric outlined by centralized bodies such as the Ayurved Sammelan or the Conference. These years however, were characterized by a marked growth in politicized networks and alignments as well as publicity at the level of the local arena. Vaid politics was beginning to crystallize in what were often overlapping alignments and ideologies, but had nevertheless begun to demonstrate the slow but steady affiliation of Vaid politics and publicity to the polarities and self-consciousness derived from the rhetoric and politicized collective interests of urban, Punjabi politics.

These changing attitudes were identifiable in the concerns and scope of Vaid writing and publicity in Vaidic, Tibbi journals being published in the 1920s and 1930s. These years were marked by the emergence of a large number of new Vaid journals that were in their content focused specifically on Ayurvedic/Tibbi writing and its publicity. While some older journals carried on despite brief closures, journals like Ayurved Marland, Ghar ka

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76 Ayurved Marland, July 1931, pp. 7-8.
Vaid, Zeena-e-Sehat etc. represented a subsequent generation of Vaid writing and publicity.  

Punjabi journalism in Gurumukhi had also found a new lease of life and readership in the news and issues raised by the Akali movement. Journals that would grow in their engagement with indigenous medicine and its concerns in the following years, such as the Khush Dil, began publication, with content that was distinct from the earlier Punjabi Ayurvedic journals, that had tended to combine Singh Sabha reformism and pharmacy news in their Ayurved prachar.

These new journals were much more focused on reporting and collecting Tibbi Khabar in the form of columns with news tidbits about Tibbi Duniya as well as collecting items of common concern even from outside provinces. Reports regarding the setting up of the Board of Medicine and its problems in the United Provinces were commonly discussed in these writings. New Ayurvedic publications were reviewed and controversies or attacks on Ayurved, such as by Col. Buckley, the Inspector General of Hospitals in the United Provinces, were closely reported, showing a wider reading of and awareness of Vaid publication, particularly of the Hindi vernacular press in north India. Therefore, mutual influences also took the form of more frequent contributions from practitioners outside Punjab unlike the mainly solo, editorial effort that had earlier characterized journals such as Dukh Niwaran.

78 Journals such as Ayurved Marland carried regular reports of conferences and their resolutions such as of the All India Ayurvedic Conference, the Punjab Tibb Conference, The Amritsar Vaid Mandal meet etc. Ayurved Marland, March 1931, pp. 45-9, p. 50, p. 51. Including articles by leading Voids such as Pandit Surendra Mohan, Principal, D.A.V. College, on taxes on drugs, Registration etc., Ayurved Marland, Feb. 1931, pp. 19-21.


80 This controversy prompted articles in the Ayurved Sandesh, such as Is Ayurved Unscientific?, Ayurved Sandesh, 15 Feb. 1935, Vol. 7.
Wider Vaid readership within the province too seemed consolidated amongst practitioners with many Voids writing letters to the editors of these journals as well as themselves entertaining columns.\(^{81}\) The latter were almost certainly not paid for their services, but the public profile and occupational status or authority now provided by these journals even amongst practitioners seems to have made for more eager contributors.

Vaid editors and their readership in these years demonstrated a growing engagement with local mandals, conferences and the extent of mobilization of Punjabi practitioners.\(^{82}\) Journals such as the *Ayurved Martand* gave extensive coverage to the *jalsa* of the All India Vaid Yunani Tibb Conference at Lahore and also devoted a critical editorial to it. The dissent and subsequent walkout of a large group of local Voids as well as the overall poor attendance at this conference was reported.\(^{83}\)

Not only did Vaid editors now regularly report local mandal meetings, they were also under pressure from a more self-conscious readership that fixed responsibility upon journals to inform and mobilize practitioners. In 1928, a Vaid reader for instance typically demanded from a well subscribed journal that it correct its oversight of not reporting sufficiently well the debate on the Hissar District Board controversy. Since the Provincial Vaid Sammelan had expressed strong criticism of the comments made at the Hissar Board, further publicity would encourage a wider awareness and agitation amongst indigenous practitioners.\(^{84}\)

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\(^{81}\) Columns not only by Voids and Hakims but also those that were intended specifically for practitioners such as the Zeena e Sehat's 'Vaidon Hakimon Ke Liye', Jan. 1937, p. 9 or on jadi booties etc. were common in journals such as Ayurved Sanndesh and Ayurved Vigyan.

\(^{82}\) Some, like the Zeena e Sehat mobilized subscription for a Punjab Ayurvedic Tibb Directory, Jan. 1937, p. 25.

\(^{83}\) Ayurved Martand, June 1931, pp. 2-4.

\(^{84}\) This Vaid reader asked for information of this nature to take precedence over the fondness most Vaid journals displayed for muskhabaz. Ayurved Martand, July 1928, pp. 31-5.
Vaid journals and their writing were not always an adjunct of the agenda of mandal or conference leadership. Vaid editors also chose to take an independent, critical stand on the trajectory of professional-political developments. The role and function of Vaid corporate bodies as well as their claims were often uncovered, particularly later in the 1940s, when Vaid politics and the issue of registration for indigenous practitioners would be considered more immediately by the Government.

While reports of Vaid factions were common, a Tibbi journal in the 1930s ran an important expose on the activities of the Provincial Tibb Conference that offered an insight into the problems inherent in the rapid expansion and multiplication of these corporate bodies.

The *Shams ul a' Tibba*’s editor while pursuing a reader’s complaint, revealed that office bearers of local Conferences were asking for the appointment of Boards of Medicine only so that Conferences could appoint themselves as the authorities to identify legitimate practitioners and to sell these certificates. They were falsely claiming that bodies such as the Punjab Tibbi Conference, and its associate, the Tibbia College of Lahore, were recognized by the Punjab University. He claimed, that based on this racket they were collecting funds from practitioners and expanding their offices to various new areas merely by fee collection, and not based upon any real commitment to or achievement towards improving institutions of medical education.

Personally addressing the interests of the readership and the reform of indigenous medicine, the editor in an article entitled ‘*Jaali asnad aur Punjab Tibb Conference*’, wrote:

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86 Ibid.
Those gullible folk who are looking for Government certificates are being sold certificates by the Punjab Tibbi Conference and...by recording their names in a funds register they are told that Government procedures are being met...is this not an act of wholesale deception...[since] these are the same people who had announced a jihad against fake certificates? By giving you an account of such details...we intend that you should be careful. 

The increasing importance of Vaid self consciousness and collective politics in these years, as well as in the growth of new journals and local colleges needs to be understood and located also in the growth of private patronage and urban philanthropic networks. Local patrons in cities such as Amritsar were being mobilized successfully for funding journals, Shefa Khanas, and pathshalas. Local sammelans were expensive to conduct, costing as much as between 5,000-10,000 Rupees, leading therefore to their being funded by agencies other than simply local practitioners. Rulers of native states and Raises had funded large sammelans in earlier years; increasingly however big traders, business families and their Trusts were being mobilized at the local level to fund smaller corporate bodies. In Amritsar, Lala Gaggar Mal’s estate and that of Bawa Pardhuman Singh were often the venues of local sammelans and they also received contributions from other businessmen as well as drug traders of the city’s Mandi.

The Bawa Pardhuman Singh family were keen patrons of Ayurvedic practitioners and their textile business extending from Quetta to Amritsar liberally sustained such interests. Vaid journals such as Ayurved Martand were supported by them and local pharmacies and Shefa khanas in the city too received their donations. Such business families often independently

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87 Ibid.
88 Interview with Jagannath Mishra, Amritsar, of the Krishna Pharmacy family whose brother, Dev Raj Shastri had been an important Vaid leader and had organized local Sammelans, including having been an associate of Pandit Thakur Dutt Sharma.
89 Ibid.
90 Interview with Bawa Harbhajan Singh, Amritsar.
91 Ibid. The Trust accounts register for the 1940s mentions funds disbursed towards maintaining dispensaries, as well as towards a generously endowed research project to
funded certain interests of a Vaid Sammelan agenda, such as research in and compilation of Ayurvedic *nuskhas*. The Bawa Trust advertised widely in and outside Punjab for receiving nuskhas and a research Aushadhalaya in their estate headed by a reputed Vaid Raj was established for this purpose.

Several other business families established trusts that funded Ayurvedic education, such as the Kapoor trust, the Seth Madan Lal Arora Trust and the Gaggar Mal family. Their support was important in extending the concerns and interests of Vaid politics horizontally to ties and alignments in the local arena, that were to take a more polarized form in the coming decades.

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92 Interview with Pandit Jagannath Mishra, Amritsar.
SECTION II

The agenda to mobilize a uniform identity for Vaid learning and practice was also addressed in terms of the construction of an ideational discourse that addressed these concerns. Vaid Sammelans as well as Vaid publicists addressed themselves to building a rhetoric and to selecting ideas, and symbols that could represent a tradition of Ayurvedic learning. They wanted to construct a canon that in universalized terms would define a legitimate, Ayurvedic practitioner. Central to this exercise was the process of constructing a historicized tradition that situated and traced the evolution of Ayurvedic learning. Histories of Tibb or medicine were evoked by Vaid publicists, since they were perceived as being crucial to evoke a sense of collective identification as well as to summon further commitment to a commonly identifiable tradition. In an introduction to his piece entitled Tarikh ul a Tibba, a publicist explained:

History is such an influential form of knowledge that it can shape the life of communities, the progress of religion and the trajectory of learning. With its help each individual can make ideas strong and influential. Reading histories of Harvey and Hunter can therefore inspire doctors to surgery just as also Athreya and Dhanvantri can evoke pride in Ayurvedic surgery...

A historical tradition was important for locating Ayurved as a legitimate, and progress based, scientific tradition. Its origins, evolution and complete development could be contrasted and distinguished from the ‘Quackeries’ that the Medical Registration Act had earlier defined and amongst whom indigenous medicine was now being included.

93 To give a few examples: Ghar Ka Vaid, June-July 1929, pp. 17-37, 39-41; Ayurved Martand, May 1928, pp. 6-9; Zeena e Sehat, Jan. 1937, pp 23-25 and in other magazines like Sudhanidhi, Ayurved Sandesh.
Vaid publicists were also aware of the reconstruction of historicized accounts of an indigenous scientific tradition both from Arya writing as well as from the published researches of Orientalists like Jones and Royle. Vaid journals as well as Sammelan speeches eagerly cited chapter and verse from histories of Hindu science written by Indian scientists.\footnote{Successive articles in the journal \textit{Sudhanidhi} in 1921-22, volume 13, Nos. 5, 7, 8; as well as in \textit{Vedic Magazine}, Jan-Feb 1921, Nos. 8-9, pp. 680-1, etc.} Bose’s work tracing Ayurvedic learning back to the origins of Vedic science and Hindu chemistry, in particular found favour since it associated Ayurvedic \textit{shastras} with the origins of an indigenous, scientific tradition.

At the Ayurved Sammelan at Mathura therefore, Gannath Sen and Pandit Thakur Dutt Sharma’s speeches traced the history of the Ayurvedic tradition of learning to the Ancient age of Vedic science.\footnote{\textit{Sudhanidhi}, Volume 8, issue no. 8, pp. 307-12.} Pandit Thakur Dutt Sharma sharply emphasized the difference between Ayurved’s established, age old tradition and the new fangled medical practices such as Naturopathy, Homeopathy etc. In the Ancient period, he argued, the original authorities of Ayurved such as \textit{Sushrut}, \textit{Charak} and \textit{Vagbhhatt} had composed the classical Ayurvedic learning and disseminated it to a lineage of their disciples.\footnote{This ‘history’ was further elaborated by him in his speech to the Provincial Vaid Sammelan, at Rawalpindi, \textit{Ghar Ka Vaid}, June & July 1929, pp. 17-37, 25-39.} In the course of time, this tradition was taken forward by various rishis to be completed through their sutras that were later compiled to form the eight parts of Ayurvedic learning.\footnote{Successive articles in the journal \textit{Sudhanidhi} in 1921-22, volume 13, Nos. 5, 7, 8; as well as in \textit{Vedic Magazine}, Jan-Feb 1921, Nos. 8-9, pp. 680-1, etc.} These eight parts were specialized areas ranging from therapeutics and surgery to midwifery and characterized Ayurvedic learning as a theoretically complete and rationally evolved medical system. Evolving through the entire Ancient period of Indian history each of these parts was associated with a specific \textit{Vidvan} or authority, his writings was located in a particular historical age either of the Vedic times or amongst later political rulers.
In this rhetoric, Ayurvedic learning and the evolution of its practice was a single unbroken tradition through the Ancient period, briefly losing certain skills in surgery in the Buddhist period but also growing in the Buddhist age in its gains in indigenous sciences such as Chemistry. Ayurved was a legitimate, textual tradition that was complete in itself as a system of indigenous, scientific medicine. Its origins had consisted of received knowledge and were based upon religious scriptures, but its evolution had been in a 'scientific manner' since the Vedic rishis had also investigated and researched a materia medica and introduced the use of natural drugs.\textsuperscript{99} Ayurvedic learning was now rationalized as an indigenous, rational-critical science that was 'different' due to the Hindu religious intellectual tradition from which it originated.

These arguments, with minor differences in detail and embellishment were common to all the frequently voiced speeches and histories of Ayurved in Vaid writing on the subject of a ‘historical Ayurvedic tradition’ of learning. Even the Ayurved Vidyapeeth prescribed in its curriculum for Ayurvedic degrees, a brief history in the same format.\textsuperscript{100}

These histories addressed the attacks on Ayurvedic practitioners by I.M.S. administrators and others who attempted to marginalize it outside the boundaries of scientific, rational medicine even as they attempted to construct a singular tradition as a frame of reference and norm for Vaid practitioners.

\textsuperscript{98} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{99} Sudhanidhi, Volume 8, issue no. 8, pp. 307-12.
\textsuperscript{100} Sudhanidhi, 1916-17, p. 60. For ref's to writings on Ayurved itihas of Ayurved, see f.n. 93, other such articles these histories of Ayurved and science include, Ghar ka Vaid, Jan 1929, p. 38, and Vaid Raj, Jan 1912, pp. 26, 27.
Public criticism and polemic concerning indigenous medical learning was more often than not an influential factor in drawing out Vaid rhetoric and reconstruction. These controversies were frequently provoked by comments made by I.M.S. administrators and spurred a flurry of such writing. The projection of this unified discourse and its reconstruction of a historical tradition of learning and practice, as well as its successful reception amongst practitioners was therefore also influenced by the availability of a centralizing polemic or defense, such as during the Medical Registration Bill debates and in response to criticisms in the Councils or press by Senior Medical officers.

For organizations with the unifying aspirations of bodies such as the Ayurved Sammelan, this coming together of mobilization networks through corporate bodies and the press, as well as a unitary ideological projection was both brief and rare. In 1928 however, a long drawn out and widely reported controversy in the press, occasioned responses from diverse Vaid leaders that simultaneously attempted to project various aspects of a common tradition of Ayurvedic learning and practice.

The controversy was prompted by recent grants of Government funds to indigenous medical education and practice. Indigenous practitioners were gradually getting limited concessions from Punjab's Municipalities, particularly employment opportunities after the framing of regulations in 1923 for the employment of indigenous practitioners in District Boards and Municipalities. In 1928, the Punjab Government had sanctioned a sum of Rs. 9000 for Shefa Khanas and the Lahore Municipality had also released funds to support the Ayurvedic section of the D.A.V. College and Yunani in the Tibbia College.

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101 Ghar Ka Vaid, June 1929, pp. 25-6, also GOI, HM, May 1928, 376-A.  
102 Ibid.
Soon after the grants had been announced in the summer of 1928, a series of leading articles and editorials began to appear in the *Civil and Military Gazette*. Various I.M.S. officers, with the attack being led by Prof. Dr. Harper Nelson of the Lahore Medical College, and with the support of the *Civil and Military Gazette* wrote articles that questioned the basis of funds and largesse shown by the Government towards indigenous medicine. Harper Nelson’s writings argued that indigenous medical learning was based on outdated theories that were supported by methods that relied merely upon ‘superstition’ rather than ‘science’. Its practice and authority was merely sustained on the grounds of representing religious/sacred tradition, while it was actually unequal to the tasks of medical treatment and perpetrated a ‘brutal farce’ upon its patients.

Later, supported by articles written by other I.M.S. officers, a well-known doctor was also to argue that Vaids and Hakims were responsible for the rampant quackery that existed in the Indian medical market. The presence of ‘Dr. Dodo’ or the quack who symbolized an extinct and ignorant medical system, was directly linked to a recent report on the poor state of public health and mortality in Bengal where quackery by indigenous practitioners was held responsible for public misery. The doctor rounded off his criticism by arguing, that:

The Vaids and Hakims should put first things first. We believe we shall have the support of all that is best in public opinion by continuing to oppose.....any Government grants of money to indigenous practitioners as long as their system of medicine tolerates the.....presence of vast numbers of sham practitioners who are self styled Vaids and Hakims.

104 Views Expressed by Dr. Bentley on 29 July in *Civil and Military Gazette*, Quoted in *Tribune*, 3 August 1928, p. 5.
105 *Tribune*, 3 August, 1928, p. 5.
This attack on indigenous medicine and its practitioners found a response both from Vaid leaders and from members of the public, that found coverage in the provincial as well as the national press. It was profiled and commented upon in newspapers like Hindu and Patriot, as well as debated in the Tribune and in vernacular newspapers like Inquilaab and the Zamindar over a period of more than two months.106

This controversy and the counter-attack that resulted created an intersection of interests that linked the response of local journals and Vaid mandals with the provincial press and provincial level Vaid leaders; it included even leading Ayurved Sammelan members and spokesmen.

Local journals such as the Ayurved Marland, and Ghar Ka Vaid ran editorials107 and articles carrying rebuttals and counter allegations by Vaid writers. The provincial Vaid Sammelan108 and the Amritsar Vaid Mandal109 passed motions at their conferences that condemned such attacks. These were echoed by Vaid leaders like Thakur Dutt Sharma, Surendra Mohan and Shiv Sharma, who along with Ayurved Sammelan leaders such as Gannath Sen and Jagannath Prasad Shukla wrote letters and articles in newspapers like the Tribune, and the Civil and Military Gazette that expressed their defense of Ayurvedic learning.

Such controversies brought together a public rhetoric that projected a singular tradition of Ayurvedic learning and papered over fractures and heterogeneities that would have divorced practice from these perceptions. Ayurvedic learning was a legitimate and rationalized tradition that was

108 Tribune, 21 July 1928, p. 5.
based upon learned texts that were advanced in areas such as physiology, pathology and anatomy.

Ayurvedic learning they argued, was also based upon theories such as 'Tridosha' that were not outdated humoral theories but, rivaled western germ theory. Ayurvedic knowledge or its medical theories were 'scientific' and equivalent in every way to western medicine.\textsuperscript{110} In Ayurvedic practice itself, derived from this theoretical frame, diagnosis was effective in the case of even rare ailments, and Ayurvedic practitioners were in certain cases able to execute remarkable feats in surgery and to cure epidemic diseases that had challenged other medical treatment.

Much of this support for the effectiveness of indigenous medical practice and its place as a legitimately evolved system originated from newspaper editorials, and from letters written by members of the public. Support from a lay public regarding patronage for indigenous medicine and attesting its popularity was significant.\textsuperscript{111} For so far, evidence of public mobilization and support had largely been claimed by Vaids themselves, through a head count of attendance at Vaid sammelans and Jalsas, or through tests of subscriptions for Ayurvedic journals and publications.

The support of western medicine and its monopoly of a legitimate, scientific status was identified as being rooted in Government patronage, that in turn merely established medical services that were oriented to a minority, or were confined largely to the British garrisons. More centrally, the problems inherent in indigenous medicine and its limitations it was argued, should not be a pre-condition to limit or withdraw support from it.\textsuperscript{112}

\textsuperscript{110} *Tribune*, 21 July 1928, p. 5.
\textsuperscript{111} *Tribune*, issues in 1928 for 8 July, 12 July, 20 July in their Editorial pages carried such letters from the public; also *Tribune*, 27 July 1928, p. 12.
\textsuperscript{112} *Tribune*, 12 July, 1928, Editorial letter.
Lala Lajpat Rai, in a well publicized article, argued that the attempt to link the issue of state patronage for indigenous practitioners to concerns regarding quackery was a deliberate attempt to misunderstand and confuse what were two separate issues. Indigenous medicine needed to be patronized and its problems could not be addressed internally, but needed state support. The issue of the Quack or ‘Dr. Dodo’ was deliberately being identified with indigenous medicine alone, while it related to the state’s problems in medical administration, the need to reform education, and the state’s responsibility to inform and educate the public as well as to provide more accessible medical services. He wrote:

Why is the destruction of Dr. Dodo a domestic question for Vaids and Hakims only? Are there no Dodos among the allopathic practitioners? In my life, I have come across hundreds of them. There are ‘Dodos’ enough even among those who occupy high positions under government. Indian Dodos are called pansaris ( ), European Dodos are called .... Ellipses and emphasis in the original text of this sentence. The former live on their wits, the latter on the Indian tax payer. They are Dodos all the same... Then, let the ‘Dodo’ be eliminated from Indian life, if he can be by legislation or by registration. Encouragement of the indigenous, system of medicine by the government subsidies otherwise has nothing to do with this question.

The *Civil and Military Gazette*-initiated controversy was in this case able to raise broader issues of medical concerns, as well as to allow opinions on the Government’s policy and patronage of indigenous medicine. It also brought out competitive and critical responses from indigenous practitioners, that echoed earlier writing in journals in the fracas over the Medical Registration Bill. In Vaid responses in the press, their histories of Ayurved and its claims to being a rational-critical, scientific tradition were in every way defined in relation to western medicine, and attempted to reinforce the relative advances of the former. The views of both European historians and doctors were cited in arguments regarding the advance of Ayurvedic medicine. The

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113 This article was also reproduced in *The People, Tribune*, 3 Aug. 1928, p. 5.
114 Ellipses and emphasis in the original text of this sentence.
theories of indigenous medical learning and even surgical skills were far in advance of western medicine even in the present, and Vaid leaders invited a direct competition between the practice of both by demanding for the Lahore Municipality to establish and test the work of an Ayurvedic and Western medical Shefa Khana.\textsuperscript{116}

Yet, the rhetoric of this construction of Ayurvedic learning and its distinct indigenous character, did not really mirror the regular exchanges between practitioners of both systems as well as the adaptation of western medical drugs and the influence of western medical knowledge that was already well established in urban, Ayurvedic practice. Most well established Vaid journals carried columns such as Doctori Lekh or writings and reports by Doctors on their treatment and drugs for various diseases.\textsuperscript{117} These Vaid writings were remarkably well informed regarding breakthroughs in research in Europe and America\textsuperscript{118} and often translated writings on health, hygiene and disease written by well known doctors.\textsuperscript{119}

There was no pristine Ayurvedic practice as alluded to by Vaid publicity, due to the wide use of drugs like quinine, as well as other forms of western medical therapeutics by practitioners of Ayurved. Further, news and exchanges were already altering the way Vaids diagnosed and treated disease. Western medical practitioners were known to be invited to sammelans or Vaid Tibb committee meetings. While some exchanges consisted of debates between doctors and Vaids over medical theories and treatment,\textsuperscript{120} professional comments by doctors too were not always critical

\textsuperscript{116} Tribune, 22 July 1928, p. 5.
\textsuperscript{117} Dukh Niwaran, regular column after 1907.
\textsuperscript{118} Ilm e sehat wa ilm e tibb, June 1903, p. 40; ibid., July 1903, p. 71.
\textsuperscript{119} Vaid Raj, March 1912, p. 67.
\textsuperscript{120} Ghar ka Vaid, Jan. 1929, p. 40.
with instances of doctors who even read *nazms* that appreciated indigenous medical systems.\(^{121}\)

The defence and construction of a tradition of Ayurvedic learning and its history, however was not restricted to tracing the evolution of a homogenous medical system and its theories. Both Vaid leaders of Sammelans, as well as Vaid writers on this subject, clearly sought to frame the ideas and concerns of this narrative as a singularly, cultural-political issue and statement. In his speech to the fifth Ayurved Sammelan, Pandit Thakur Dutt Sharma, for instance clearly stated that the issue of advancing state patronage to indigenous medicine was not merely that of supporting a medical system, but a responsibility towards a cultural heritage and tradition just as in the manner, 'the sarkar makes laws to protect ancient buildings and monuments for their enduring value.'\(^{122}\)

Vaid publicists located the support and fostering of any form of medical learning as a political decision, and the evolution and degradation of Ayurved was also constructed as a history of the decline of an indigenous culture and the arrival of new political control.

Bhai Mohan Singh Vaid echoed this view, when he asserted that *Hikmat* or medicine, needed itself to be understood as an important tool or means towards the spread of any ideology or in enhancing the prestige and legitimacy of any authority. In his column, *Vaidic Ratan*, he argued for the patronage and support of indigenous medicine precisely from this perspective, saying:

Wherever the English spread their authority, their success can be traced to that of the Doctors medicine (Doctori) that accompanied them. In the same way the

\(^{121}\) Ibid.
\(^{122}\) Sudhanidhi, 1912-13, p. 190.
prestige of the Muslims that we read and hear about was due to the work of the Muslim hakims! Hikmat Vaidik is a source of strength that cannot fail in any enterprise and it is the means to consolidate one’s authority.¹²³

If the state’s self conscious support of English education and the introduction of English had fostered western medicine, and in turn marginalized all indigenous learning including medicine, then, the very history and tradition of Ayurved as well as its wider relevance was located as being a part of the general history of and political condition of indigenous culture. The retrieval of Ayurved, the recasting of its rational identity therefore was intimately tied up with the politics of projecting the claims of indigenous authority.

Ayurved Sammelan leaders and many Hindu Vaid publicists chose to interpret this history, as well as to frame a wider identity for Ayurvedic learning as being that of a distinct, Hindu Ayurvedic tradition and validating the identity of a Hindu nation-in-the making. This perception, however, was not merely restricted to the frequent references to the origin of Ayurved in the Hindu Shastras, or that of popularly tracing Ayurvedic learning to the revealed tradition of Hindu religion and Vedic Rishis. It also implied an understanding and projection of Ayurved as being linked to the wider political aspirations of a single, Hindu community, as well as identified the construction of these ideas and arguments as forming distinctly a political process.

This politicized rhetoric can be partly located in the conduct and location of Vaid mobilization within the urban arenas. Vaid campaigns and their leaders were a part of the politicized formations and polarities in urban arenas, and naturally borrowed and adapted the ideas and symbols already projected by these currents. Vaid leaders and publicists therefore reflected and elaborated

upon the preoccupations of middle class politics and identity formation, both in the vocabulary and idioms they employed in reformulating Ayurvedic learning.

The founding members of the Ayurved Sammelan such as Shankar Das Pade and Jagannath Prasad Shukla were already engaged in Hindu community politics. In 1911, the revival of the Ayurved Sammelan at Allahabad was being initiated at a time when the city itself had been in the grip of communal tension and hostility. A Hindu-Muslim conference had been summoned by the Lt. Governor to diffuse the tension, but already earlier that year, a large and successful public meeting had been called in the city to set about the task of establishing a Hindu Mahasabha movement.

These tensions were echoed in an editorial by Jagannath Prasad Shukla in his journal, that stressed the need for a common front of Hindu Vaids. It observed:

The Vaids have noticed for some time that the Muslim community is trying to obstruct the Hindus on all fronts; it is trying to expose the Hindus in the most humiliating light so that it can itself make gains....They [the Muslims] are opposing our Hindus in each and every issue be it of a political, religious, social nature or related to our literature and customs. Sometimes they tend to put forward arguments of their historical importance and at other times exploit religious feelings by irresponsible campaigns for cow slaughter...

In Punjab too in urban centres, Hindu mobilization was marked by a greater self consciousness in political representation after the granting of separate electorates. A growing Hindu Sabha movement found support in a meeting in Punjab in 1911, that elaborated its agenda for consolidating a Hindu community. Ayurvedic prachar found its first mention in this movement,

124 Sudhanidhi, volume 19, no. 1, 1928, pp. 8-14.
126 Ibid.
when it promised to address, 'questions of language, true Hindu history, cow protection and encouragement of traditional Hindu medicine.'

More specifically however, it was the search in these years to construct a collective identity for Vaid practitioners that created the urgency to associate with politicized networks, and to search for overarching symbols and concerns. The competitive politics of representation and spokesmanship directed towards the Government and public on the one hand, and the search for the authority to mediate amongst practitioners on the other, made the need to draw distinct boundaries of collective identity more urgent.

Public rhetoric and exchanges articulated by the Ayurved Sammelan mirrored these concerns. The Ayurved Sammelan even in the years of its mobilization claimed to be sole spokesman for 'Hindu' Vaid interests. It claimed that Vaid politics and representation were essentially Hindu in their concerns and politics and therefore needed a separate platform and distinct organization.

Hindu Ayurved, in the rhetoric of the Sammelan, conveniently characterized the Muslim 'other' in the opposition of interests, represented by the leadership of the All India Vaid Yunani Tibb Conference. Any overtures by the Conference, it was warned, needed to be approached with suspicion, as in the case of Vibhishana of the opposing Ravana camp approaching the morally upright group of Hindus or Rama's followers.

The Conference with its membership of Vaids and Hakims was characterized as covertly appeasing the interests only of Hakims, as reported from the discontent amongst Hindu Vaids at its sessions such as at

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This only reinforced the Ayurved Sammelan’s claims, that the All India Vaid Yunani Tibb Conference ought to, ‘abandon their unnatural attempts to woo and include Vaids amongst themselves’131 thereby leaving ‘natural’ alignments such as that of Hindu Vaids and Ayurvedic learning with that of the Hindu leadership of the Sammelan.

Even in the construction of an Ayurvedic History and a tradition of Ayurvedic learning, this agenda coloured the interpretations and ideas selected by Sammelan leaders and the writings of Vaid publicists. The Ayurvedic tradition was emphasized as being sacred, as in derived from Hindu Vedic Gods and scriptures. Its advance and originality, were rooted in golden age of ancient Hindu science and culture.132 Hindu, Ayurvedic science was not only associated with diverse elements of Hindu mythology including even the Ramayana, but its classical authorities, including Hindu sages and their sacred writings133 were projected as representing a unitary, unbroken tradition of Hindu learning and cultural heritage that had been carried down to the present. This ancient, intellectual past, its sacred and scientific tradition of Ayurved-as-Hindu science therefore offered the possibly, in its revival, of addressing the claims of a Hindu identity.

In this history of Ayurved, Hindu Ayurvedic learning was not only distinct but it was also original and indigenous. Its indigenous nature, lay in its origins in Hindu tradition. This positioned the emerging discourse on Hindu Ayurved in opposition to the foreign, Islamic, Yunani tradition of medicine. Elaborating on this claim a Vaid publicist argued:

131 Ibid.
132 Ayurved Marand, May 1928, pp. 6-7.
133 Ibid.
Many people make the mistake of believing Yunani to be an indigenous medical system. No doubt Yunani medicine borrowed from Ayurvedic texts and made up its foundation. But Yunani Tibb is still not a complete system. Only Ayurved can be truly termed an indigenous system of healing because its founders are of local origin who were learned and accomplished Rishis who took forward this pure learning to its heights.\textsuperscript{134}

Most histories of Ayurvedic learning made a reference to the political-cultural marginalization of Ayurved with the arrival of Islamic medicine in the medieval period, supported by Muslim rulers.\textsuperscript{135} However, some took this further and identified Yunani medicine as representing the hostile and mutually competitive interests between Hindu and Islamic cultures, as represented in the Hindu-Ayurvedic epoch of Ancient history and the Islamic-Yunani age of Medieval history.

Islamic rule, wrote Bhai Mohan Singh Vaid, consisted of foreign rulers who actively opposed Ayurved or indigenous learning supporting instead their own culture and promoting Muslim Hakims whose practice and status accordingly saw a meteoric rise in this period. Ayurvedic learning, except for a brief revival under the Marathas who refused to have Muslim medicines, he argued, was eclipsed until recently when Ayurved \textit{prachar} had again become an important campaign amongst Vaid leaders.\textsuperscript{136}

Other writers argued more strongly that the support of Ayurved and its revival had a wider relevance, for Ayurved represented all that needed to be safeguarded and defended to make a strong Hindu community. Ayurved and Yunani represented not merely systems of medicine, but distinct and opposing cultures, and the defence of Ayurved therefore implied the preservation of a Hindu heritage and a glorious culture of advance in Hindu

\textsuperscript{134} Hikmat Sanyas, Jan. 1915, pp. 27-28.
\textsuperscript{135} For e.g., \textit{Ghar Ka Vaid}, Jan. 1929, p. 38; \textit{Zeena e Sehat}, Jan. 1937, pp. 22-4.
\textsuperscript{136} \textit{Dukh Niwaran}, Feb. 1911, pp. 48-60.
science and learning. The preservation of a community's culture, and the defence of its interest were therefore the broader aims that Ayurvedic prachar would achieve.

In a forcefully worded article in the D.A.V. college magazine, a faculty member of the college's Ayurvedic section elaborated upon these rival cultural interests. He wrote:

....the social atmosphere in which one finds oneself in a Hakeem's matab...is different from that which one breathes in a vaidyas's aushadalya. The very sound of the names makes a difference. Then the language in which prescriptions are written, the directions about food, the authority referred to and the appearance of the physician himself tell us whether we are in the midst of Hindu or Islamic social life....Hence it is our duty to keep alive Ayurveda, the Hindu medical science, if we do not desire our social life to be disorganised and distorted beyond recognition. It is not a question of mere drugs and prescriptions. It is not a matter of names only...Ayurveda is primarily for the alleviation of human misery. But its secondary use is very important, it is part of our social life [and] ... the Vaidya is a member of our society, he is one of our permanent institutions. So the question is not one of syrups and oils. The contest is not between emulsions and ghritas. It is between rival social systems.

This Hindu Ayurvedic tradition that was being defined and distinguished in its linguistic-cultural bearings, and with its separate politicized identity, also contained certain features that in turn defined the present day 'Hindu' Vaid. Histories of the Ayurvedic tradition by Sammelan leaders and Hindu Vaid publicists deliberately emphasised the Sanskrit-based textual learning that formed Ayurved's canon, and the classical Sanskrit treatises that anchored the basis of its intellectual tradition.

For, it was this Sanskrit-based learning that was employed to define and characterize the Hindu Vaid practitioner. Ayurvedic texts and anthologies in the vernacular had also been edited and written in the eighteenth and

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nineteenth centuries and formed the basis for Ayurvedic learning and reference in its contemporary practice. They were guides to Ayurvedic learning or its various aspects like Nidaan and Chikitsa, and most practitioners continued to be only taught these texts.

Sanskrit-based texts and knowledge of Sanskrit were therefore made a prerequisite for the Ayurved Vidyapeeth’s exams, that required qualifications such as or equal to the Visharadh or Acharya level in Sanskrit. Deliberate efforts to associate with Sanskrit learning were made by the Ayurved Sammelan. For instance, Sanskrit Boards in Banaras, Calcutta and Lahore were pressed to include the teaching of Ayurvedic shastras. Further, the Ayurved Sammelan also compiled a curriculum that insisted on familiarity with classical, Sanskrit texts such as Charak, Sushrut and Vagbhatt, even in its preliminary courses. The intellectual make up of the Hindu Vaid practitioner had to be anchored in its identification with a Sanskrit-based, textual tradition.

Gannath Sen, President of the Ayurved Sammelan, reiterated this understanding when he argued against the use of popular tikkas and medical anthologies. These works he claimed, were popular with Vaids but they were also incomplete and threatened to distort knowledge of Ayurvedic learning. Only a return to Ayurved’s original frame of reference in its classical, Sanskrit treatises could revive authentic and legitimate Ayurvedic learning. Vernacular tikkas, he demanded, needed to be set aside for Sanskrit based learning. He claimed,

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139 Sudhanidhi, Vol. 2, No. 4, p. 11.
140 Sudhanidhi, Vol. 4, No. 9, p. 371.
...that those who want to become Vaids simply by reading Lollambraj or Amritsagar needed to be warned against [such measures]....[for] if one Amritsagar and Illajulgurba could make people into Vaids then what was the need to take pains over Susruta and Vagabhatt?\(^\text{143}\)

For the upper caste, Hindu Vaid leadership that constructed a Sanskrit-based canon as the only legitimate one, Sanskrit treatises and Sanskrit-educated practitioners were also the only 'legitimate' practitioners of Hindu Ayurved. This in turn distinguished and attempted to marginalize forms of Ayurvedic learning and practice that were in vernacular tongues or were part of an oral, folk tradition.

Gannath Sen as well as certain other Vaid publicists attempted to rehabilitate branches of Ayurvedic learning such as Mantar Chikitsa by advising that it should be practised on the basis of the original Sanskrit texts and mantras. The use of chants in rustic, vernacular tongues by lower caste groups like the Ojhas\(^\text{144}\) or its practice in the form of jhaad, phook or taawiz by Chuhras were perceived as having corrupted what was otherwise a legitimate and rational part of traditional learning.\(^\text{145}\)

*Mantar Chikitsa* it was argued, was specialized and scientific in its construction, and only legitimate practitioners qualified with a Sanskrit-based Ayurvedic education could practice it, as distinguished from lay, unqualified groups like the Chamars\(^\text{146}\) who learnt it without method and practiced it ignorantly. The arguments regarding Sanskrit-based *Mantar Chikitsa* revealed the Hindu Vaid practitioner as also being the bearer of an elite, upper caste tradition, that was marginalising and denying various local

\(^{143}\) Ibid, p. 193.
\(^{144}\) Ibid, pp. 192-3.
\(^{146}\) Ibid.
forms of indigenous medical practice. Once a Sanskrit-based tradition of desi indigenous medical learning began to be constructed and monopolized by Vaid leaders, not only Yunani but other local, folk traditions were being evaluated by and set aside by invoking the authority of a Vedic shastric tradition and its scientific/rational attributes, and was Sanskrit was nominated as its mediating vehicle.

Hindu Ayurved, its identification with a Hindu cultural political tradition and its legitimacy derived from a Sanskrit-based textual tradition was not only characterised in Ayurved Sammelan rhetoric. In Punjab too, echoes of this rhetoric were frequently reiterated in Vaid writing in journals and tracts.

Yet the interpretation of the same broad symbols and rhetoric could be refracted considerably by the priorities of local Vaid publicist writing. Hindu Ayurved and its cultural tradition was more specifically, an Arya heritage in the writings of leaders like Pandit Thakur Dutt Sharma. To Sharma, Ayurved was the ancient learning of the Aryas and the Hindu cultural consciousness that it was located in, was a reformist, Arya heritage.

Thakur Dutt Sharma argued that the revival of Ayurved needed to be traced primarily to leaders like Swami Dayanand to whom Ayurved was as an inherent part of the Arya, Hindu tradition. It was Swami Dayanand’s initial campaigns for the prachar of Ayurved he claimed, that mobilized wider support including writings and publication by the Arya Pratinidhi Sabha on the subject.

He wrote:

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147 Ghar Ka Vaid, June, 1929, p. 17.
'If you allow me to go more deeply into the roots of the development of Ayurved [and] its prachar I would trace it to Swami Dayanand. He took people's westward attention eastwards. In his books he wrote Sushrut and others and restored the old dignity of Ayurved by reaching out to the whole country and changing peoples attitudes.'

The D.A.V. College Lahore under the leadership of Mahatma Hans Raj had therefore chosen to revive this Arya heritage. The College had an Ayurvedic section and subsequent Arya patrons such as Dr. Beli Ram had allowed for the growing institutional support accorded to Ayurvedic learning and the encouragement of its practice.

At a local level, Arya-Sanatan rivalry in cities like Lahore took the form of factions of Sanatan Hindu Vaidis who in the 1930s would begin to represent their superior claims to represent the 'original' Ayurvedic tradition. Sparked mostly by the local competition amongst Hindu Vaid publicists, in the form of the institutional rivalry between the D.A.V. College and the newly opened Sanatan Premgiri College for Ayurvedic teaching. Sanatan Vaid leaders of the latter institution, in their home journal *Ashwini Kumar*, emphasized a Hindu Ayurvedic tradition that needed to be recovered and preserved in its 'original' tradition. They underlined the derivation of the Hindu Ayurvedic tradition from divine sanction and as being sacred, received learning, contradicting the Arya emphasis on the evolution or progress of Hindu science and their agenda for its reform and recovery.

*Ashwini Kumar*’s patrons did not elaborate upon this rhetoric at length and the focus of their local rivalries, as I explore later in this thesis, was a more pressing topic in their writings. However, the Sanatan Dharam Sabhas did

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148 Ibid.
149 Ibid. These themes linking Arya and Ayurved were also brought up in D.A.V. College Annual Addresses by Pandit Sain Das and others. Reports of the D.A.V. College, 1920-21, p. 22, and for 1923-24, p. 46. D.A.V. Management Committee Papers.
150 *Ashwini Kumar*, March 1930, Editorial.
fund Sanskrit *pathshalas* in other cities, such as in Amritsar\(^{151}\) or through the patronage of the Durgiana Mandir Committee. Their own viewpoint offered an important counterpoint to the seemingly unified, and homogenous Hindu Ayurvedic tradition that were being put forward to frame a wider, collective identity.

Yet in the late 1920s and 1930s, in the emergence of new local patrons and smaller Hindu Vaid Mandals there was also a greater willingness or tendency to politicize and publicly align Vaid interests with Hindu cultural-political claims. In their individual political networks and in the waxing and waning of their professional campaigns for *Shefa Khanas* and funds, the claims of Hindu Vaids and their representation of a distinct, Hindu Ayurvedic tradition were now gaining ground.

Bawa Pardhuman Singh, an important Arya Pratinidhi Sabha member and leader, led campaigns in Amritsar such as relating to the patronage of Gaurakshini Sabhas or cow protection committees and to establish a local, *Gau Pinjrapole*.\(^{152}\) Many of the Vaids associated with this Trust were engaged in their patron’s campaigns.\(^{153}\) Others reported that the interest amongst Amritsar’s Hindu Vaids to associate with the Durgiana Mandir and to seek out local Sanskrit *pathshalas* for the training of young students in the Sanskrit medium studies showed an increase in the 1930s.\(^{154}\)

\(^{151}\) In Amritsar, a Sanskrit Pathshala was supported by the Durgiana Mandir Committee which was headed by Mayadhari Shastri for some years. Interview with his son, Pandit Kishan Kant, and copy of his father’s obituary published in an unspecified Hindi publication was obtained from him. n.p., n.d. Interestingly, Vaids seem to have kept up some of these associations lifelong, as the Krishna Pharmacy family revealed that it had donated their father’s Ayurvedic *Granths* and writings to the Durgiana Mandir’s library. Communication during interview with Pandit Jagannath Mishra, Vaid, Amritsar.

\(^{152}\) Interview with his son, Bawa Harbhajan Singh, scrutiny of the family Trust papers and publications.

\(^{153}\) Bawa’s account of his family’s patronage of Vaids as a part of their wider political engagements.

\(^{154}\) Interview with Pandit Vishnu Dutt Shastri, Amritsar.
Vishnu Dutt Shastri, himself a young, Sanatan Dharam Sabha member in Amritsar, reported that small groups of Vaids went together to attend Sabha meetings in these years.\textsuperscript{155} There was a growing perception that these local patrons and sabhas were now an important agency to patronize local, Hindu Vaids.

The allocation of funds and support was a competitive issue that sharpened polarization amongst practitioners. There was for instance, a vigorous protest by Hindu Vaids against the Amritsar municipality due to its perceived partiality in opening more Yunani than Ayurvedic Shefa Khanas. Hindu Ayurved and the protection of the Hindu Vaid interests was then put forward as an argument to secure further concessions.\textsuperscript{156}

The construction of the discourse on Hindu Ayurved also rested upon its identification of Yunani/Muslim learning as its oppositional, binary. This did not find sufficient support in the conditions and interests defining indigenous medical practice in Punjab. While Ayurved was a minority tradition that was now claiming patronage and status equal to Yunani practice in Municipalities and Boards, it was Yunani medicine that was the more widespread in terms of learning and practice, including amongst both Hindu and Sikh Hakims.

Hindu Ayurved, while being put forward as a symbol of mobilization, had also to contend with the persistence of strong, local interest and networks that tied together indigenous practitioners. Practitioners like Hakim Abu Tarab and Vaid Kishan Dayal led a group of Amritsar Vaid-Hakims whose local issues and interest brought them together in the District Vaid Tibbia Committee. Together, they lobbied with Municipal Councilors in the city.

\textsuperscript{155} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{156} Ayurved Mariand, Jan. 1931, p. 52.
Their own concerns such as their pharmacy businesses and the need to regulate the city’s drug inspectors and poison licensing were more effective in mobilising them in common forums.157 These were the motions that were frequently passed in Vaid and Hakim meetings and therefore gave little cause to evoke more distinct political ideologies.

The construction of a Hindu Ayurvedic tradition and its attempt to be identified with Hindu political interests was also addressed by Sikh Vaid publicists such as Bhai Mohan Singh Vaid. In his writings, and his outlines of the history of Ayurved, Hindu Ayurved was given a different distinct ideational vocabulary and interpretation.

Bhai Mohan Singh Vaid wrote on these subjects both in tracts such as *Gauravta Ayurved*,158 that became the text of his speech to the Bharat Hindu Vaid Hakim Sabha, as well as traced an Ayurvedic tradition for the readers of his journal in columns such as *Vaidic Ratan* and *Ayurved Ratnavli*.159

His writings shared a common outline in tracing the ancient, classical age of Hindu Ayurved and its subsequent loss of state patronage and marginalization. In *Ayurved Ratnavli*, he also chose to elaborate upon an interpretation of Hindu Ayurved and its historical, rational-critical tradition. Citing from his writings in a Singh Sabha pamphlet called *Manmat Prahar*, he argued that the ‘Hindu’ or desi nature of Ayurvedic learning had no reference whatsoever to the Hindu religious community or ‘firka’ of the present. The ‘Hindus’ in the sense of the perceived religious community as in the present were yet to be conceptualized in the Ancient period. Ayurved

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and its roots in a desi, 'Hindu' civilization implied an indigenous, ethnic identity that encompassed all those native originally to Hindustan.\footnote{Dukh Niwaran, Feb 1911, p. 48.}

The Hindu Ayurved or Hindu Vaidak that was being developed in Mohan Singh Vaid’s writings therefore was distinct from the identity attributed to it by the Ayurved Sammelan or other Vaid publicists. It sought to accommodate and authorize Sikh practitioners within its discourse, while preserving Ayurved’s claims as being the only distinct indigenous or desi medicine when projecting its collective identity vis a vis foreign/western medicine.

The construction of a wider collective identity to represent Ayurvedic learning and its practice was closely associated with the self-conscious choice of vernacular languages as the medium. The Ayurved Sammelan and Vaid publicists sought to identify a unifying medium and symbol to publicize and mobilize a public position for Ayurvedic practice. Hindi due to its representation of a Hindu particularist identity, was therefore the vehicle that Vaid publicists identified as a part of their agenda and understanding of Hindu Vaid politics, and its wider claims.

Many founding leaders of the Ayurved Sammelan, even as they were seeking to revive the Sammelan, had been simultaneously engaged in their work in Nagri Pracharni Sabhas in the United Provinces. The founder of the Ayurved Sammelan, Shankar Das Pade had been an important spokesman of Nagri prachar in his writings.\footnote{Sudhanidhi, 1928, No.1, pp. 8-14.} Pandit Jagannath Prasad Shukla however, was the most influential advocate of Hindi in the Sammelan arguing that Ayurved prachar should complement the agenda of Hindi Nagri prachar.
Shukla himself was honoured with the title of ‘Hindi Kesari’ for his contribution to the cause of promoting Hindi literature, and he used the pages of his journal to press for Ayurved to be publicized through Hindi tracts and writings.

Vaid leaders viewed Hindi as a national ally in the battle to broaden the basis of Ayurvedic education. Interestingly, both the symbols evoked in building Hindu Ayurvedic learning, Sanskrit as well as Hindi, had supporters who often competed for the precedence of one language over the other, in the educational agenda of the Ayurvedic Sammelan. The place and priority of various cultural symbols evoked in the construction of Hindu Ayurved were also not unanimously accepted, often seeming to have overlapped and even competed amongst themselves.

In 1928 an important faction in the Sammelan pressed forward and revised the curriculum of the Ayurved Vidyapeeth. It was argued that Ayurvedic learning needed to be more closely integrated with Sanskrit, and therefore the compulsory teaching of Sanskrit treatises even in preliminary Ayurvedic degrees was enforced. A debate in the Hindi press resulted, with supporters like Shukla arguing for the need to introduce Hindi texts in Ayurvedic teaching and to ally Ayurved more closely with Hindi-based education.

The Ayurved Sammelan leadership also made an effort to associate with the agenda of and networks of the Hindi Sahit Sammelan. In the initial year of its revival, the Ayurved Sammelan was still unsure of its public reception, timed the date and venue of its meeting along with that of the Hindi Sahit.

162 Ibid.  
163 Ibid.  
164 Ibid.  
165 Ibid.
Ayurved Sammelan meetings regularly mentioned the work of the Nagri prachar campaigns and Vaid writers reported news and events concerning the Sahit Sammelan in their journals. In turn, the Sahit Sammelan’s campaigns, such as its essay writing themes including those that related to ‘Ayurvedic literature in Hindi’ and were publicized and promoted amongst Vaid practitioners.

Anchoring the Hindu Vaid identity and Ayurved prachar in the medium of Hindi did make some limited inroads in Punjab in the 1920s and early 1930s. Important Vaid leaders like Pandit Thakur Dutt Sharma were already making efforts to publish their writings in Hindi. Both Thakur Dutt’s tracts as well as his journal, Desh Upkarak, were translated and distributed in Hindi, though the latter had a relatively brief life.

The interest of private, Hindu Arya patrons led to the founding of what was probably the first Hindi Ayurved journal, called Vaidya Bhushan by an Amritsar Vaidic Tibbia Committee member Vaid Raj Dharam Dev, as well as encouraged the editor of the popular Ayurved Martand, to venture and publish an edition of his journal in Hindi.

Even the Urdu journals that were published by Vaids in these years contained a Hindi vocabulary, with the deliberate use of a purified or shuddh Hindi with a minimal vocabulary of Urdu, Persianised words. Even if not publishing in the Devnagari script, there was an active exchange in

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168 Ibid., 1922, No. 2-3, p. 89.
169 His efforts were also reviewed in an article on Vaid writers and their Ayurvedic publications in various provinces in the Ghar ka Vaid, June 1929, p. 17.
170 The Ayurved Martand editor found support for a Hindi edition of the journal from the Bawa Pardhuman Singh Trust, that later supported Hindu Arya newspaper publishers such as Partap. Interview with Vaid Sardari Lal, son of the late editor of this journal as well as with Bawa Harbhajan Singh, Amritsar.
contributions for instance, amongst these Punjab-based Ayurvedic journals with Hindi Vaid journals and writers from the United Provinces. Journals such as *Zeena-e-Sehat* as well as the *Ghar ka Vaid* and *Ayurved Martand* carried writings that were frequently in spoken Hindi written in the Urdu script or carried pieces that had lengthy Hindi translations of Sanskrit quotations from Ayurvedic treatises.\(^{171}\)

Urdu journals of Yunani Tibb edited by Muslim Hakims revealed a similar tendency. There was, in journals such as the *Mashir ul a’ Tibba* published from the Tibbia College at Lahore,\(^ {172}\) or the *Al Ilaj*,\(^ {173}\) a growing use of an Arabic vocabulary and Persian quotations, that sought to distinguish themselves from writing in Punjabi or Hindi. The ‘Islamic’ nature of Yunani Tibb was grounded in the deliberate usage of Urdu vocabulary and Arabic medical terms, as well as was brought out by emphasizing the Arabic-Islamic history of the Yunani Tibb tradition.\(^ {174}\) Yunani Tibb, it was therefore argued was distinct from the western, Greek tradition or from Ayurved from whom it had borrowed at a certain point in its evolution. It was Arab science and civilization, from the time of the Caliphates that had given birth to the principles and original discoveries of the Yunani Tibb tradition.

Still, the emerging new journals that were edited or published by Vaid practitioners continued to be in Urdu and not in the Devnagari Hindi script. No doubt journals in Urdu, both of Ayurved and Yunani learning in Punjab, were to some extent beginning to cultivate a separate Hindu and Muslim

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\(^{171}\) *Ilm e Sehat wa Ilm e Tibb*, Sept. 1902, p. 91 (containing Hindi nuskhas), in the same journal April-May 1903, p.15; *Ghar ka Vaid*, Jan.1929, pp. 9-12 (series on Gangvati Nidan in Hindi and Sanskrit); *Zeena e Sehat*, Jan.1937, pp. 23-5.

\(^{172}\) *Mashir ul a’ Tibba*, editor, Hakim Mohammed Hassan Qureshi, Principal Tibbia College, Lahore, Jan.- Aug. 1929.

\(^{173}\) *Al Ilaj*, editor, Khalifa Mohammed Hussain, Baghbanpura, March-Sept. 1942.

\(^{174}\) *Mashir ul a’ Tibba*, Jan. 1929, pp. 10-11.
readership amongst Vaids and Hakims through their writings and vocabulary. Yet, the alignment of their readership based upon Hindu Ayurved and Islamic Yunani was still tentative and incomplete as an idea and concern amongst indigenous practitioners, in turn reflecting the lack of distinct ideological polarities on linguistic-political terms in Vaid politics.

Urdu Tibb journals shared a common, urban Urdu reading Punjabi audience unlike Hindi or Gurumukhi publications. Even the Ayurved Mariland contained columns and nuskhas that were sent by Muslim Hakims, it also reported Tibb Conferences and continued to advertise one of its aims as being to bring together milaap\(^{175}\) amongst Punjab’s Vaids and Tabibs. Journals with a Muslim Hakim Editorial Board such as the Hikmat\(^{176}\) for instance, were careful not to ignore letters and protests from Hindu Vaid readers that asked for coverage of Ayurved.

For instance, in response to a reader who demanded to know if a previous article that had outlined the progress of Yunani Tibb did not imply the journal’s lack of sympathy for Ayurved, and therefore its bias towards Muslims and Hakims, the editor of Hikmat promised coverage from an informed writer. He also clarified that his editorial board strongly discouraged this tendency to interpret all writing in competitive, communal terms. He wrote:

We want to ask, that if a Hindu praises Hindu Dharam should then a Muslim draw the conclusion that he thinks lowly of Islam and if we persist with this attitude...each man can find the grounds for his belief and religion to be under attack...this is an attitude that saddens us...a Muslim who praises a medical system (that has now come close to Hindu medicine) because he is ignorant of another learning...should one not look at him with forgiveness instead of prejudice?\(^{177}\)

\(^{175}\) Ayurved Mariland, No. 3, June 1928, editorial page.

\(^{176}\) Hikmat, April-May 1920, pp. 15-16

\(^{177}\) Ibid, p. 15. Emphasis in text.
Some writings and new journals in Hindi did appear in the vernacular press in these years. Two journals, the *Ayurved Sandesh*, and the *Ashwini Kumar* were no doubt Hindi journals that were founded in the late 1920s early 1930s, by the D.A.V. authorities and the Sanatan Dharam Sabhas respectively. These journals however, were specifically supported by groups with their own ideological commitments to Hindi, while most individual Vaid practitioners still continued to write and publish in Urdu. Even those like Pandit Ram Prasad Sharma, Raj Vaidya of Patiala who deliberately wrote and published Hindi and Sanskrit works on Ayurved, aimed at an audience and circulation beyond Punjab for their treatises and sometimes also ventured to write for a mass vernacular reading audience of practitioners and public.

The crucial counterpoint to Hindi that gave its agenda an edge however was Urdu, that allowed the characterization of the Hindu-Muslim communal identities in linguistic-political terms. The Hindi-Urdu rivalry in Punjab had found considerable support in Arya rhetoric, yet even by the 1930s, campaigns such as Hindi prachar or wider support for Hindi in the vernacular press were still very limited as means of publicity, and were to gain momentum only in subsequent decades along with the growing projection of Punjabi.

Amongst Punjab’s Hindu Vaids, Hindi was raised at certain points as a political symbol and as an issue that reflected Ayurvedic-Hindu interests. For instance, the protest by Vaid groups attending the All India Vaidic Yunani Tibb Conference at Lahore (1931), cited the lack of support within the Conference for ‘Hindi’, and the partiality towards Urdu as being an important grievance amongst Punjabi Hindu Vaid practitioners and therefore reflecting the broader issue of their marginalisation. Hindi, in their
claims was therefore congruent with the constituency of Hindu Vaid interests.

These perceptions were coloured by rivalries within and amongst leaders of the Conference, dominated by leaders from Delhi, rather than a longer standing commitment to Hindi as a linguistic cultural symbol for mobilization. For neither discontented Vaid leaders nor local Vaid mandals or sabhas seem to have passed resolutions or commitments to carry forward their prachar in Hindi. Tibbi mushairas were held in most local level Conferences and Hindu Vaid participants saw no contradictions in giving Urdu speeches, with Urdu nazms being a popular and mandatory feature of the program. Local Vaid bodies too in their conferences made little mention of their links with Nagri Prachar or the Hindi Sahit Sammelan.

Confirming this lack of wider support for Hindi even amongst the general public, the Hindi Sahit Sammelan in an assessment of the public reach of Hindi prachar and its popularity as a public symbol amongst Punjabi Hindus published a series of articles that made a disappointing evaluation of local perceptions as well as their practice. Hindus and their commitment to Hindi was noted as being weak, and even the powerful Hindu press barons who patronized Urdu newspapers seemed to show little interest or commitment to a Hindu, religious cultural heritage, and instead seemed to show a partiality towards the Urdu press. Summing up this study, the Sahit Sammelan report, noted:

If the Punjabis continue to support Urdu the way they have so far then the prachar of Hindi is not only difficult but also impossible. There are many Hindus in Punjab

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178 Ayurved Mariand, June 1931, p. 2, editorial on 17 ijlas of AIVYTC.
180 Ibid.
who are publishers of Urdu newspapers. They show a lot of outward affection to Hindi; but Urdu has already secured an unrivalled place in their hearts...we also do not say that Punjab's ordinary public is not at fault...that only Hindu Punjabi writers in Urdu are the culprits. [While] the Muslims [say of Urdu] that this is our paternal legacy and the Hindus say that this is our bread and butter [but we ask]...should not our patriotism and our society also be our concern...after all from the point of your religion alone should you not be committed Hindi?\(^{181}\)

Hindi as a linguistic-cultural symbol to define a Hindu Vaid identity had only found partial support amongst local Vaid publicists in Punjab. This underlined partly the world view and scope of the Punjabi Vaid's perceptions that were still preeminently restricted to addressing and communicating at a local and provincial scale and within the sphere of an immediate public audience. In the 1940s, we shall see, that as certain Punjab Vaid leaders sought to represent and lead the Ayurved Sammelan as well as to guide its politics their communication and writings were to shift to Hindi as *Rashtra Bhasha* as well as to English. As Punjab's provincial Vaid politics moved on to require a wider representation, with more intervention from the Ayurved Sammelan, Hindi and the Hindu Vaid practitioner in Punjab were to find common cause.

Certain other, alternative linguistic-cultural symbols at the local and provincial level were however gaining influence in defining the bearings of indigenous practitioners. Punjabi was already being put forward by Sikh Vaid publicists to draw together to define an ethnic, Punjabi identity for their tradition of indigenous learning and practice. Until the 1920s however, this agenda and its ideological foundations were being developed by publicists like Bhai Mohan Singh Vaid. Bhai Mohan Singh publicized the support of *Swadesh Bhasha* in this case Punjabi, as the natural ally of and medium to sustain indigenous learning, and therefore indigenous medicine.

Ayurved prachar therefore was closely linked with the elaboration of and success of Punjabi prachar. Punjabi in the Gurumukhi script was for Mohan Singh Vaid the only natural language of the local people, for Urdu and Hindi he argued, were later introductions in the province that had been brought in for administrative and political considerations. While making a case for Punjabi in Gurumukhi as a provincial tongue, Mohan Singh Vaid’s Ayurved prachar and his politics were also grounded in Sikh reformist politics. The readership for his Punjabi/Gurumukhi-based writings was predominantly Sikh.

Bhai Mohan Singh Vaid also took his commitment for linking Ayurved and Punjabi outwards, to represent to a general public during his speeches at conferences and Vaid Sammelans. At the All India Vaid Yunani Tibb Conference (1913) and the District Vaidic Tibbia Committee meeting (1929) Mohan Singh Vaid as well as his close associates from Tarn Taran and Amritsar made a self-conscious effort to make their speeches in Punjabi, and to publicize new Ayurvedic tracts and writings in Punjabi though other speeches were predominantly in Urdu. Yet, in the very specific cultural interests of Singh Sabha reform that Punjabi in Gurumukhi was already beginning to represent, Mohan Singh Vaid’s linking of Ayurved and Punjabi prachar was to lead to defining a distinct Punjabi Vaid identity.

In encouraging the translation of Ayurvedic treatises in Punjabi as well as in promoting popular Ayurvedic tracts, Bhai Mohan Singh along with associates like Mahant Ganesha Singh, and with local patronage from the Chief Khalsa Dewan, was attempting precisely for Punjabi at a local level,

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183 *Report, All India Vaid Yunani Tibb Conference*, held between 1-3 March 1914, Delhi, n.d. p. 5.
the role and symbolic influence that the Ayurved Sammelan had projected for Hindi on a national level.

In the volume of his tract writings that spanned nearly 100-150 tracts in his professional career including his efforts in pioneering columns on Ayurved in the Punjabi-Gurumukhi press such as the Khalsa Young Men's Magazine, and Punjabi newspapers, Mohan Singh Vaid was beginning to construct an ideological campaign that was to sharper its ideational focus and address a distinct agenda in Vaid politics in Punjabi during the coming decades.

185 M.S. 'Dukhi', Jeewan Bhai Sahib Bhai Mohan Singh Ji Vaid, Delhi, 1931, pp. 83-5. Mention of his associates, and writing for the Khalsa, Khalsa Samachar, and other publications. (For earlier references to 'Dukhi' on M.S. Vaid see Chap III, Section II).