THE LANGUAGES OF VAID PUBLICITY AND POLITICS
(1930s-1940s)

Introduction
The previous chapter examined the inroads made by Vaid publicists at the level of the locality, in the concessions and patronage that they were beginning to receive in district boards and municipalities. These developments attested to the coming of age of Vaid publicity and mobilization, with a proliferation of vernacular Vaid journals and Vaid corporate bodies such as mandals and sabhas, that were able to establish crucial networks with politicized associations and public men in the urban arena.

The central issue that Vaid publicists and leaders repeatedly put forward, however concerned the need for state initiative to identify the norms of qualified practice amongst indigenous practitioners, as well as to define these standards in terms of the contents of indigenous medical education. For concessions in the realm of employment had only made the need for state regulation increasingly urgent.

The initial section of this chapter, concerns the beginning of state attempts at framing regulations and legislation with the aim of regulating indigenous medical practice. At the core of this enterprise lay the challenge of defining the contents of legitimate indigenous medical practice, and these efforts by the Government’s medical administrators as well as their engagement with the print-based critical response offered by indigenous practitioners, throws
light upon the assumptions and priorities within state attitudes towards indigenous medicine.

The two latter sections, are concerned with the perceived implications of state regulatory enterprise upon indigenous practitioners, as they led to growing concerns regarding representation, and set a trend of competitive enumerative politics, that focused upon the portioning of state patronage and sanction. These concerns were urgently experienced by corporate bodies representing indigenous practitioners and their publicist leaders, who sought to project a function as mediators and spokesmen of collective interests.

These claims needed to be translated into constructing discourses that demarcated the boundaries of composite identities and distinct, particularist interests. Chapter Five traced an emerging polarization along the lines of interest groups and associations amongst Vaid practitioners, as they sought to express their cultural authority through politicized symbols. This process however, had been tempered by a common membership of sabhas and committees, as local level concerns of patronage still allowed ambiguities in Vaid rhetoric and publicist campaigns.

By the 1940s however, in the wake of the regulatory initiatives regarding indigenous medical practice, a new impulse was acting upon these alignments. I examine two sets of debates originating from the Ayurved Sammelan, as it sought with growing urgency to outline its ideological claims as sole spokesman for Hindu Ayurved. The debate around the project to critically edit the Charak Samhita, and the demand for Hindi-based Ayurved education, together brought out the challenges that were inherent in constructing a unified Hindu Ayurvedic tradition, based upon its claims to represent a tradition of Hindu science and expressed in the idiom of Hindi-as-Rashtra Bhasha.
Language, both Hindi as well as Punjabi in the public sphere, became the crucial, overarching symbol to mediate these claims. The politics of the Board of Medicine now also led to the elaboration of linguistic-political identification by Punjabi Vaid ideologues. They faced the challenge of having to evoke an alternate discourse that sought to legitimize a distinct sphere of Punjabi, Dharmik Vaidak practice that was now tied up with the claims of sustaining the interests of an ethnic, Sikh identity and its political aspirations in Punjab.
SECTION I

In October 1945, Pandit Shiv Sharma, President of the Ayurved Sammelan, in his speech to the Punjabi Ayurved Tibb Sabha referred to the expectations generated by state-guided medical registration in the province. To define qualified practice and to penalize quackery, and to introduce in indigenous medical learning all the rational principles of scientific, professional practice were the expectations he argued, in pressing for colonial state intervention:

To eliminate quackery and put science upon a progressive footing, it is imperative that the State should control it. This is why we need registration. The Punjab Government in response to relentless pressure from the progressive elements in the profession has now agreed to take up the issue and has formed a Board of medicine.¹

Even in the 1920s, several enquiry committees had been set up by various provinces, to examine the issues concerning the reform of indigenous medical practice and its associated spheres of education, and research. However, it was only after the enactment of provincial autonomy and the formation of provincial ministries that translating such enquiries into legislative enterprise began to receive consideration.

For instance, it was nearly two decades after an initial enquiry regarding the condition of the Ayurvedic and Yunani systems, that the government of the United Provinces again reviewed the issues relating to the establishment of a Board of Indian Medicine.² In Punjab, the Unionist Ministry that came to power had a limited commitment to the interests of urban pressure groups, but was now pressed to establish an Enquiry Committee on Indigenous

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¹ Tribune, 18 Oct.1945.
² Dhanwantri, Volume 14, No.4, Vijaygarh, pp. 445-61.
Medicine (1938). After some delay, the Punjab Government finally turned to establish a Board of Indian Medicine. This Board was formed to advise on and implement the recommendations of the Enquiry Committee regarding registration and education.

The acceptance of the initiatives to regulate indigenous medical practice was related to the success achieved by Vaid publicists in mounting pressure by mobilizing political patronage networks. Vaid leaders, in their speeches as well as in the contents of Sammelan resolutions had always encouraged the cultivation of political representatives. The profile of the patrons and invitees called to address Vaid Sammelans, for inaugurating pharmacies, or in supporting Vaid journals reflected this trend. In these years, the focus of such appeals had moved from patron-client networks with rulers of native states, and urban Raisers, to the now newly influential urban trading families, locality-based public men and politicians.

Punjab’s Vaids were quick to reap the dividends of lobbying through urban political representatives. They had some success in their cultivation of political patrons who in their career in the provincial Ministries gave concrete form to Vaid representations asking for an enquiry concerning indigenous medicine. Punjab’s Vaid leaders had also maintained a constant pressure by inviting politicians to Vaid Sammelans, as well as by campaigning through the vernacular press where reports of their resolutions and representations to political leaders were publicized. A familiar figure at

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3 Reports of these initiatives covered in a wide range of sources, for e.g, Ayurved Sandesh, ‘Abstract from Civil and Military Gazette of 4.8.1938’, in Ayurved Sandesh, Lahore, 15 August 1938. Title pages attached to the regular pages of journal.
5 See Ch. V, section I.
ese Sammelans for instance, was a Minister of Health who was crucial in
lishing forward the demand to register indigenous medical practice.6

e politics of supporting Vaid publicists and associating with their
stituencies now represented important returns often both in material
ms as well as in support for political leaders. Vaid leaders and their
pharmacies had often achieved success in the medical market, such as
Pandit Thakur Dutt Sharma and his Amritdhara Pharmacy.7 Thakur Dutt
Sharma was an important contributor to the campaign to raise funds for the
Benares Hindu University on Malaviya's tour to Lahore. He also
subsequently gave donations to prominent nationalist leaders on their visits
to his pharmacy.

Amritsar city in particular housed pharmacies that were some of the most
prosperous in North India.8 Their Vaid owners sold raw drugs and
preparations from the city's Majith Mandi, one of the largest drug entrepots
in North India. One of Punjab's earliest pharmaceutical companies was
founded jointly by Amritsar-based Vais, under the enterprising leadership
of Swami Harisharananand, editor of Ayurved Vigyan and who later became
a notable patron of the local Vaid Sabha of the city.9 Due to their control
over pharmacies, Vaid bodies and print publicity, Vaid leaders were useful
allies who supported political patrons in their bid to control local groups
including influencing trader's associations or in campaigning for municipal-

6 Indigenous practitioners had taken a deputation to Sir Sikander Hayat Khan to press for
Registration. Ajit, 25 April, 1945, letter to editor.
In the first provincial ministry, Dr. Gokul Chand Narang, Minister for Local Govt. had been
a regular invitee to Vaid Sammelans. Other municipality level heads, titled public men were
also invitees to the local mandals and committees such as to the inauguration of the
Amritsar Vaid Tibbia College, Khush Dil, Nov 1946, p. 22.
7 Chapter V, Section 1.
8 Interview with Krishna Pharmacy family, Amritsar who still have an influential pharmacy
9 Ayurved Vigyan, Jan. 1927, editorial; interview with Gauri Lal Channana his associate,
Geeta Colony, Delhi, August 1999.
level influence. Leaders from the Ayurved Sammelan therefore, even claimed to having served the Congress campaign during elections.

Commercial success and newer avenues of private employment were also making the call for norms and regulations increasingly urgent. The market in patent medicines and drugs for instance, saw a sudden spurt in its growth in the War years when there were problems in the import of western drugs, aggravating problems such as quackery in drugs adulteration. The 1930s and 1940s also saw an increase in privately funded dispensaries, private colleges and some Government employment through posts in rural dispensaries.

New opportunities in the urban medical market, spelt the need for an agenda of regulation to channelise these successes. Vaid corporate bodies, both the Ayurved Sammelan as well as Provincial Sammelans therefore repeatedly passed resolutions that demanded regulation and attempted at their level to raise funds for creating a central University for regulating Ayurvedic education, its curriculum, and to control the award of degrees.

The need to control the rapid proliferation of private colleges, was a frequent demand in Vaid journals, with local Sammelans being asked to

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10 Through their leadership of the local Sanatan Dharm, Arya, and Brahman Sabhas they lent support, as also through their influence in the trade in raw drugs.
11 Even Vaid families in Punjab such as the Madan Mohan Pathak family of Amritsar were involved in Congress politics. Interview with Kranti Pathak, May 1999.
13 Both dispensaries funded by municipalities as well as often large dispensaries were being established.

In Amritsar and Lahore for e.g. dispensaries established by Pandit Thakur Dutt Sharma, Dhyan Chand dispensary. *Ayurved Sandesh*, 15 Oct 1940, p.4; *ibid*, 15 April 1940, p.31.
14 *Ayurved Marmand*, April 1930, p.40.
15 The United Provinces Govt. made available 300 such posts. *Dhanwantri*, vol. 14, No.5, p. 502.
frame regulatory guidelines. In centres of learning such as Amritsar, the pandit-run *pathshala* and *akhara* based teaching was being replaced, a Vaid writer complained, by private colleges that had emerged in every *Gali-mohalla*. Even a single Vaid family in the city was often engaged in running several such so called ‘registered’ colleges, that merely sold degrees and titles.

To end quackery and to introduce qualified norms of practice had become an urgent objective that Vaid leaders pressed forward through their newly empowered political patrons. Various Vaid Sammelans addressed issues concerning the introduction of standards such as by the establishment of drug research institutes and laboratories and for regulatory boards to control practice. Having made these inroads, Vaid publicists pressed for state patronage based upon the claim that they had already demonstrated the required private initiative and mobilization that had been advocated by various government medical administrators, as a requirement to precede state regulation.

The colonial state’s initiatives were introduced at the level of the various provincial governments and shared a broadly common framework of priorities. The regulatory Boards of Medicine that were formed had a limited brief, that stretched merely to formalize norms so as to address immediate concerns. The single, centralized comprehensive legislative intervention that had been pressed for time and again was absent, and instead, various Provincial level regulations were proposed with little change in the colonial government’s reluctance to legitimize indigenous medical practice.

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17 *Ayurved Sandesh* 15 Sept 1935, pp. 70-1.
18 Criticism of Punjab Vaid Sammelan for not having brought such malpractices to the notice of the Government, in *Ayurved Sandesh*, 15 Sept 1935, pp. 70-1.
19 *Ayurved Sandesh*, 15 July, 1940, pp.2-3; *Arogya Darpan*, Jan 1936, p. 2.
Some years before the introduction of the Boards of medicine, the colonial
government’s responses to the Ayurved Sammelan over the Drugs Enquiry
Committee Report, revealed the priorities and assumptions in legislating in
the area of indigenous medicine. In 1932, the Ayurved Sammelan
approached the Government of India asking it to issue instructions to its
provincial governments, asking them to open their Research Centres to
projects of research in indigenous drugs and towards their application of
indigenous drugs in pharmacological and clinical work.\textsuperscript{20} The request came
to redress the findings of a Drugs Enquiry Committee Report, that had put
forward suggestions for the control of the import and sale of western drugs,
as well as recommended the organization of pharmacological education
through Government Medical Colleges, with all but marginal reference to
indigenous drugs.\textsuperscript{21}

The Government of India’s medical administrators, however immediately
refused to recommend either cooperation with existing centres of western
medical research, or even to satisfy the Sammelan by promising separate
spheres of research on indigenous drugs. They argued that such activities
were likely to come under the British General Medical Council’s
disapproval, on the grounds that this could be interpreted as ‘covering’ or
the association with unqualified practitioners or keeping unqualified
assistants. They also pointed out that western medical practice and
indigenous medical practice were based upon ‘separate methods’ based
upon scientific and empirical premises respectively, and therefore that the
latter’s regulation and standardization in ‘professional’ terms could not
overlap in any manner with western medicine. All such efforts needed to be

\textsuperscript{20} GOI, HEL, 1932, 72/32-H, p. 15.
\textsuperscript{21} Drugs Enquiry Committee Report, in GOI, HEL, 1932, 104-3/32-H, pp. 54, 70.
independent and distinct, based upon the efforts of indigenous practitioners themselves. 22

In the 1930s, the enquiry committees and the subsequently established Boards of Indigenous Medicine that were introduced by several Provincial Governments, therefore aimed to set standards and not necessarily to secure them. The proposals to establish Boards of Medicine implied the attempt to set institutional norms that defined rational, professional medicine, but only as guidelines to existing trends in private education and employment. For instance, the stated aim of the Enquiry Committee on Indigenous medicine in Punjab was to bring indigenous medicine on par with western medical systems, 23 but in real terms the recommendations of the enquiry committee offered limited privileges and legitimized indigenous practice upon equivocal terms.

Apart from the extent of concessions that were offered, even the membership of these committees did little to portend adequate representation for indigenous practitioners. The Enquiry Committee as well as the Board of Medicine in provinces like UP, consisted of medical administrators and doctors who had been nominated by the government with only a minority of members consisting of Vaids and Hakims. 24

After criticism of the constitution of the Boards in other provinces, the representation of indigenous practitioners in Punjab was increased. 25 Yet, the control of the Board's frame of reference as well as the powers that it

22 Ibid, p. 11. For a discussion on 'covering' see the debate on the Medical Registration Act, Ch. IV.
24 Between 1938 and 1941, with minor increases in membership, Vaids and Hakims had 3 and 4 representatives respectively in a 16-member Board. The Enquiry Committee had 2 members each from Vaids and Hakims. Ajit, Lahore, 25 April, 1944; Ayurved Sandesh, 15 August 1938; p. 17, Ayurved Sandesh, 15 Nov 1941, pp.1-3.
25 Ibid., pp. 1-3.
held over resources still remained concentrated in the hands of officials and doctors. Even the President of the Board was an I.M.S nominee who controlled the casting vote and veto of its proceedings.\textsuperscript{26}

Aside from a predominantly political composition of members, that consisted of members of the legislative assembly, municipalities, and district boards, who diluted the voice of indigenous practitioners, more direct competition in interests was also present in the form of doctors who were nominated to its membership.\textsuperscript{27} Vaid leaders in their criticism of this membership composition, remarked that since the Board on Indigenous Medicine also had control over various facets of institutionalized medical education, there was an immediate threat that even the administrative faculty of indigenous medical colleges might have doctors.

Unlike the Medical Registration Act, that cordoned off the areas of legitimate, western medical practice, both the Enquiry Committee that was evaluating the norms of registration for indigenous medicine, as well as the Board of Indigenous Medicine that was instituted in Punjab to implement registration, had only a limited say over the scope of these initiatives. As we shall examine in the following section, attempts by indigenous practitioners to define a distinct and monopolized sphere of authority and sanction, now decisively fell back on the construction of an ideological reference in and amongst the critical engagements in the public sphere.

Meanwhile, the attitude of the government medical administrators was also reflected in the views of independent private practitioners that the administration nominated, who were only willing for the Punjab Enquiry Committee to extend limited concessions to registered, indigenous


\textsuperscript{27} Ibid.
practitioners. Any consideration of the issue of state-accorded privileges to indigenous practitioners, their spokesman asserted, also needed to confront the 'incomplete' nature of indigenous medicine, and therefore recognition or sanction ought to be upon separate terms from those applied to western scientific medicine. In this justification, there was the reiteration of the 'universal' norms of western medicine, held forth to evaluate indigenous medical knowledge. This in turn implied an assumed hierarchy of medical systems in which indigenous medical knowledge was inferior and 'false', thereby rendering any state recognition for indigenous medicine, as being judged as a bid 'to turn science backwards'.

Initial criticism from indigenous practitioners and their representative bodies, regarding the recommendations of the Committee, was voiced against the limited representation offered to indigenous practitioners on the Board of Indigenous Medicine. Petitions to the government, both from individual Vaid leaders as well as from Sammelans pressed for inclusion as representatives. A large section of the Punjab press, also gave coverage to this issue, including the implications of having a nominated membership to the Enquiry Committee on Indigenous Medicine.

The President of the Provincial Tibbia Committee, the largest and oldest of corporate bodies in the province, reflected the views of Punjab's Vaid and Hakim leaders, as he summed up the assumptions that coloured the composition of such representation, and surmised that even the Enquiry Committee's brief held little promise for further proceedings.

29 Ayurved Sandesh, 15 Nov. 1941, p. 3.
30 The GOI Proceedings indexes themselves list at least 3 such representations from the Punjab Tibbia Conference, Punjab Vaidic Tibbia Conference at Amritsar, and other such requests through the press. Medical Department Listings, for Jan-June 1938.
He said:

These recommendations are made by a Committee that has already assumed Allopathy to be superior to Ayurved and Tibb. This Committee includes doctors [as its members], who are not only ignorant regarding indigenous medicines but also contemptuous of it...The Government needs to ensure that for the proper regulation of these systems, the Indigenous Medicine Board should not have a nominated President but one who has been elected by Vaid and Hakims...The Government should allow only Vaid and Hakims to be members of this Board and other such institutions. [Therefore] the greatest flaw in this proposed legislation is that while it imposes the same standards and restrictions as for Doctors, it offers however only limited rights.31

Vaid Sammelans or their leaders had substantial grounds for annoyance, as the Government’s medical administrators gave them no role or little function in the agenda of framing and consolidating ‘legitimate’ medical practice. A number of Vaid and Tibbia sabhas and committees were sent questionnaires, and were even summoned by the Committee members, even while certain Vaid leaders were also nominated to the membership of the enquiry as well as to the Board.32 However, as Pandit Shiv Sharma, himself a nominated member on the Punjab Board, was to comment, Vaid corporate bodies or rather their claims to spokesmanship and representative nature had largely been bypassed during these deliberations by the Government.33

Certain provincial Sammelans such as the Punjab Vaidya Mandal therefore put forward an alternative blueprint for the medical registration procedure, by which they would at least partially retain their role as mediators of Vaid interests; they thereby sought to find a legitimized role for themselves in spheres such as Ayurvedic education. They asked for instance, for representatives of the Ayurved Vidyapeeth to be included in the Board of medicine, as well as for the Board to recognize the Vidyapeeth’s

31 Ajit, 21 April 1944.
32 Pandit Surendra Mohan, Pandit Shiv Sharma and Pt. T.D. Sharma were the Vaid who were nominated members. Ajit, 25 April 1944.
33 Khush Di!, Feb 1946, p. 8; Tribune, 18 Oct 1945, editorial page.
curriculum. In this fashion, both the Provincial Vaid Sammelan, as well as the parent body to which it was affiliated, the Ayurved Sammelan, would retain a measure of initiative in the proposals.

In the same vein, these Vaid leaders also voiced a demand for elections to the membership of the Board, so as to find representation for Vaid leaders and indirectly for the corporate constituency that they claimed to represent. The Punjab Vaidya Mandal’s leaders, in the agenda that they suggested to the newly formed Enquiry Committee, therefore made the demand for elected Vaid representatives from corporate bodies. They argued that the only representation that had been allowed so far had been from the institutions or colleges associated with indigenous medical learning, such as the D.A.V. and Tibbia colleges of Lahore respectively, each of whom had been allowed a nominated member in the Board of Medicine.

In the face of so many demands for being considered for inclusion as an Enquiry Committee member, and in later years for membership to the Board of Indigenous Medicine as well, the Punjab government only conceded one demand—to increase a limited number of nominated members—but this too did not include Sammelan representatives. Instead, the Government’s medical administrators in their choice of nominated members specified an acceptable equilibrium of community-based representation on the Board of Medicine.

As leaders of a collective, corporate constituency of indigenous practitioners, the status of sammelans and committees had even in the past lacked recognition from colonial administrators. Even in the case of the success of Hakim Ajmal Khan’s campaign against the provisions of the

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34 Ayurved Sandesh, 15 Nov 1938, pp. 25-8.
35 It was only later in the course of the Enquiry that certain ‘experienced’ practitioners were added.
Medical Registration Act, through the All India Vaid Yunani Tibb Conference, the projection of the Conference and its influence had been subsidiary to the political influence of Rais leadership and its urban networks, including Hakim Ajmal Khan’s own personal equation with Viceroy Hardinge. 36 In the same line of reasoning therefore, in the deliberations over the registration of indigenous medical practice too, individual Vaid leaders were chosen or nominated in consideration of their cultural-political networks; Sammelans were therefore viewed simply as bodies of political interest, that overlapped with other politicized representation in the urban arena.

The Punjab Board of Medicine was therefore made independent of engagements with outside bodies. It centralized and controlled various aspects of education as well as the registration of qualified practitioners. 37 It also decided the rules and implementation of a Register of practitioners that was proposed to be established, and controlled the process of setting a standard curriculum, identifying regulations regarding teaching, admissions and the award of titles and degrees. Along with this, it also had disbursing power over any grants that the Government might allocate to such subjects. 38

The Enquiry Committee’s Report was met with strong criticism from indigenous practitioners due to the norms that it identified to recognize ‘legitimate’ or ‘qualified’ practitioners. Indigenous practitioners argued that these standards restricted the privileges of sanctioned practice to a miniscule segment of practitioners. The Punjab Enquiry Committee’s definition of what consisted ‘legitimate’ practice also disappointed practitioners since it

36 See the discussion on the Medical Registration Act, Ch. IV, Section I.
37 Ayurved Sandesh, 15 Nov. 1941, introductory-title page.
38 Ibid.
maintained the prerequisites of an 'institutional-education' based standard. This was a provision that was familiar since Vaid writing and publicity had already commented upon its inadequacies in provinces where it had been applied earlier.

At the heart of the colonial state's regulatory enterprise, rested the need for colonial medical administrators to define or identify a qualified Vaid or Hakim practitioner. For these definitions to be effective, they either needed as in the case of the Medical Registration Act, to find initiative and support from private bodies that consisted of leaders of representative groups of practitioners from medical societies and associations based in medical colleges. Along with this, the state's medical administrators needed to secure the boundaries of legitimate practice, from unqualified or quack practice. In the criticism encountered from Vaid corporate interests, neither the support of private groups nor safeguarding of norms and practices by governments agency was satisfactorily pursued. The ensuing melee of registration procedures, resulted in the erosion of all traditional differences of functions and status in indigenous medical practice.

The Enquiry Committee on Indigenous Medicine prepared a Report that recommended a gradation of categories that were to determine the privileges of qualified practice. The highest grading consisted of an 'A' category of practitioners, who were diploma holders from recognized institutions, and they were to enjoy privileges at par with qualified practitioners of western medicine, such as the powers to depose in Court, to give medical certificates, etc. The latter, 'B' and 'C' categories consisted of experienced or 'eminent physicians' of ten years standing or those who had been practicing for at least one year before the formation of the Board. The 'B' category physicians were given a limited scope of privileges with powers

restricted to certifying lower grade employees of the Municipality and District Boards. Since the 'A' category of physicians with institutional degrees were a minuscule minority, Vaid leaders argued that nearly 80 per cent of the profession was given limited privileges with more restrictions in practice imposed by the rules of Registration Board, than any real privileges.\textsuperscript{40}

The norm regarding 'experienced' practitioners and its attendant limitations, had already elicited widespread protests after similar Enquiries on Indigenous Medicine in U.P. and Bombay. The Punjab Committee's Report, by granting some minor concessions to upgrade the 'B' category of practitioners, therefore offered little consolation nor did it temper the critical responses voiced by local Vaid leaders in Sammelans and in the press. Indigenous practitioners argued, that these categories, and the so-called privileges offered for the 'B' category practitioners offered little or no incentive to be registered.\textsuperscript{41}

Indigenous practitioners in their articles and later in various newspapers commented that the limited 'privileges' of practice for experienced practitioners served only to lower the status or izzat of these practitioners, for the government's institutional norms had no consideration, for other quotients such as experience and status to define the structure of indigenous medical practice.\textsuperscript{42} These categories only defined and limited the range of their clientele amongst a lower order of Government servants, and restricted their powers of judicial testimony to that of the lowest police officials.\textsuperscript{43} Even the leave to keep poisons was interpreted by critics as being the sanction of what was already in common usage, even amongst the trader-

\textsuperscript{40} Letter from President of Tibbia Committee, Jhelum, in Ajit, 21 April 1944.
\textsuperscript{41} Tribune, 18 Oct. 1945, editorial.
\textsuperscript{42} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{43} Ibid.
In these definitions of legitimate practice and the categories that underpinned them, experienced practitioners were losing out much more merely then Government offered privileges to diploma holding practitioners. The Government’s medical administrators, were also advancing a linear and generalized hierarchy of practice, that was based upon distinct roles or functions that separated qualified, ‘professional’ practitioner from lay practitioner, consultant physician from pharmacist-trader.

Such clear categories and trajectory of professional evolution, could not be applied to indigenous medical practice. The Vaid practitioner’s position for instance, was defined by his networks with urban clients and patrons, his attachment to a hereditary lineage of teaching, as well as newer, established sources of authority such as vernacular print-publicity. This practice had only partially moved towards integrating with features that imitated the forms of western medical practice, as typified by market based consultation fees, institutional degrees from private colleges and other aspects of occupational specialization.

Quackery or illegitimate practice was therefore defined by the absence of various such networks and norms, and not simply by the absence of occupational specialization and an institutionalized canon of learning. In the absence of these norms and certainties in indigenous medical practice, the Provincial Vaid Sammelan’s recommendations to the Enquiry Committee therefore suggested that those practitioners who did not come within any of the three categories prescribed by the Board of Indian Medicine, be simply

\[44\] Ibid.
allowed to continue practice as 'certified' Vaids and not be penalised for practice as quacks.\textsuperscript{45}

The norms outlined by the Enquiry Committee on Indigenous Medicine in Punjab, also attempted to define the qualified practitioner in terms of being restricted to 'clinical' practice. As in the structure of western medical practice, any association with the preparation of medicines or drugs was to be disallowed for 'registered' indigenous practitioners. The attempt to impose from above an institutionalized, medical consultation-based structure of practice affected pharmacies, and therefore indirectly many of the other aspects of Vaid mobilization, namely, print and publicity, and the funding of Sammelans. These limitations were therefore viewed by indigenous practitioners as imposing only further restrictions upon the interests that sustained their practice, and even materially supported their corporate mobilization.

Conceptions of a 'learned' practitioner in his consultancy had always included his control also over the preparation of prescriptions.\textsuperscript{46} Vaid journals therefore routinely exhibited interest in the lack of availability of pure drugs, the neglect of drug inspections in cities like Amritsar, as well as the attempt by quack pansaris, to both prescribe and prepare medicines, much beyond their brief as traders.\textsuperscript{47} The Punjab Provincial Vaid Committee's suggestions to the Enquiry Committee asked for allowing Vaids to prepare their prescriptions as long as they had qualified assistants associated in their work.\textsuperscript{48}

\textsuperscript{45} Ayurved Sandesh, 15 Nov. 1938, pp. 25-8.
\textsuperscript{46} Dhanwantri, Vol. 15, No. 10, p. 15.
\textsuperscript{47} Ayurved Sandesh, 15 July 1940, pp. 2-3. For a discussion on Druggists/Chemists as 'Quacks' in a pre-colonial setting see Ch. I, section I.
\textsuperscript{48} Ayurved Sandesh, 15 Nov. 1938, pp. 26-7.
Despite demands from Provincial Vaid Committees regarding the limitations in ‘registered’ practice, the Enquiry Committee’s Report did not offer any immediate concessions that allowed a greater mobility to the lower category of practitioners, by elevation to the ranks of ‘qualified’ diploma holding practitioners by means of tests or reviews. It also did not secure the boundaries of ‘qualified’ practice as the Medical Registration Act of 1916 had done: qualified ‘professional’ medical practice in western medicine was secured by penalizing ‘covering’ through the checks instituted by the Registering authority and the General Medical Council.\(^{49}\)

In the proposals of the Enquiry Committee however, this crucial constituent governing registered western medical practice was absent. The association with or affiliation with other systems of practice was not prohibited, nor were the separate constituents of Ayurvedic and Yunani systems laid down. Based upon merely identifying ‘qualified’ practice, Ayurved and Yunani were themselves legislated under a single initiative with no standards or differences to distinguish the two systems. Both Ayurved and Yunani were seen as empirical systems of healing and cures, lacking the ‘scientific’ principles that formed the prerequisite for distinguishing legitimate practice.

At the same time, to make incomplete and unevolved forms of indigenous medical practice more comprehensive and orient them towards scientific principles, the Enquiry Committee permitted a basic curriculum in western medicine requiring students to have a basic knowledge of English in the norms laid down for education in Ayurvedic colleges.\(^{50}\)

In the absence of regulatory definitions of the contents of Ayurvedic practice or in securing its boundaries, Vaid publicists continued to demand

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\(^{49}\) See Ch. 4, section 1.

\(^{50}\) Criticism of this English curriculum was voiced in a letter to Ajit, 21 April 1945.
regulation; or, amid rapid new developments, they attempted on their own to define a legitimate Vaid practitioner. Since the turn of the century, Vaid practitioners had already absorbed various aspects of western medical practice, and in recent years this had permeated courses and classes in the newly established private medical colleges. The issue most widely raised by Vaid publicists in their writings therefore related to the challenge of defining a 'Vaid' and the various titles assumed by practitioners of Ayurved.\textsuperscript{51} Vaids, it was urged, could have knowledge of western medicine, but their defining attribute lay in having been taught or imbibed directly of indigenous medical texts.

The terms of the recommendations of the Board of Indian Medicine in Punjab, were also that all classes of practitioners other than those with diplomas needed to register themselves within one year of the formation of the Board.\textsuperscript{52} This also implied that a range of medicine men, healers, and practitioners clamoured to fulfill these registration requirements. The entire regulatory objective of the legislation and the identification of qualified practice were now turned on their head.

Sanction for recognizing practice and competence, Vaid writers had pointed out, stemmed as much from state-regulated norms as from the acceptance of these norms amongst the body of practitioners. Diploma qualified Vaids, lacked this izzat or samman, and their practice was based solely upon institutional training perceived as lacking in any other sanction such as from a public of clients and patrons.

As for the overwhelming majority of practitioners, the proposed registration initiative now set off a trend in mobilization that held the portent of

\textsuperscript{51} These were concerns that were regularly voiced in Vaid Sammelans. For e.g. Ayurved Sandesh 15 Feb. 1940, pp. 10-11.
\textsuperscript{52} Khush Dil, April, 1945, pp. 7-8.
dissolving the various internal hierarchies of status amongst practitioners, and even between learned practitioners and other medicine men. Therefore, an article commenting upon this new upsurge of mobilization observed:

Not only quacks and unskilled practitioners, but even Attars, Jurrahs and Punsaris and various such men are being elevated to the status of Vaids...On the one hand, we the qualified section of practitioners of the indigenous system are clamouring for state regulation over our profession...Yet in our anxiety to secure greater representation for Ayurved, and a larger grant from the Government should we now be turning to embrace those who are not Vaids by any standards. 

The formal framework of the proposed Board of Medicine did not lay down that the process of registration required the participation of the various Sammelans and committees that represented indigenous practitioners. Yet Vaid Sammelans and other corporate sabhas in these years increasingly began to project themselves as mediating bodies to effect this registration for their members.

For the sammelans, registration was an important device to augment their membership. Quantitative representation became particularly significant with the formation of the Board of Medicine, since the size or proclaimed representation of any body, implied a substantial claim to press for nomination to the Board of Indigenous Medicine. The Board of Medicine represented a focus of competition that was voiced in demands for membership, and was viewed as crucial for the extension of patronage in all spheres of indigenous education.

A large number of corporate bodies at the provincial and locality level attempted to swell their ranks by opening membership under the guise of mediating registration. Punjab's Provincial Vaid Sammelan for instance, at its session held at Nawanshahr, so indiscriminately inducted members that it had to face criticism and defend itself in the columns of well-known

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53 Tribune, 9 Nov. 1945, Letters to the editor.
provincial newspapers like the *Tribune*.\(^{54}\) The leadership of a newly formed Sabha was widely accused in the Punjabi press of making a profit by luring new members for registration, so much so it had to publish a public denial and some of its leaders also tendered their resignations.\(^{55}\)

The most notable aspect of Vaid mobilization in these years that was directly linked to and emerged from the contents of the Board's agenda, was the founding of the Punjabi Ayurvedic Tibbi Sabha. The Punjabi Ayurvedic Tibbi Sabha projected itself as a broad front of indigenous practitioners, that invited membership from the public or affiliation from other bodies, to respond to the recommendations of the Enquiry Committee.

The Punjabi Ayurvedic Tibbi Sabha's charter of demands regarding the Board, as well as the mediating role that it projected for itself, dictated its interests in a new constituency that was now being projected in collective terms. Within an year or so of its founding, the Sabha had expanded beyond the conventional city and large town-based membership of the older corporate bodies and committees, whose ranks of leadership were conventionally based in and around Amritsar and Lahore. It had instead penetrated mofussil towns through its branch committees and had representatives even in the various Native States and small towns of the eastern districts of the province.\(^{56}\) The demonstration of this new and growing membership was resoundingly expressed in a meeting that it summoned soon after the establishment of the Board of Medicine, that was attended by nearly 500 delegates.

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\(^{54}\) Letters to editor, *Tribune*, for the following dates: 9 Nov. 1945, 22 Nov. 1945, 30 Nov. 1945.

\(^{55}\) *Khush Dil*, May 1945, p. 5. The Punjabi Ayurvedic Tibb Sabha. Letter of clarification also from Mahant Ganesha Singh.

\(^{56}\) *Khush Dil*, Feb. 1945, pp. 3-17.
In 1945-46, the front organized by the leadership of the Punjabi Ayurvedic Tibbi Sabha mobilized representatives of the Provincial Vaid Sammelan, Tibbia Committees, local Mandals as well as the leaders of the Delhi based All India Ayurvedic Tibb Conference, all of whom largely supported the issues that had been raised regarding the Board of Medicine. In broad terms, the Sabha's leaders were canvassing support to resist the categories framed by the Board, and to ask for adequate recognition for 'experienced' practitioners, including the demand for concessions both in allowing them greater mobility into the elevated 'A' category, as well as asking for a change in the composition of a nomination based Board. They also asked for elected representatives, that would effectively allow greater spokesmanship to corporate bodies.

The rise of the front led by the Punjabi Ayurved Tibb Sabha and the scope of its demands emerged directly from the concerns that had been engendered by the state's regulatory initiatives. The Punjabi Ayurvedic Tibbi Sabha in the process of its mobilization, therefore found legitimacy in evoking an earlier mobilization that had engaged a collective front of practitioners against the colonial administration. Its leadership, therefore constantly evoked the campaign led by the All India Vaid Yunani Tibb Conference and its leader, Hakim Ajmal Khan, against the proposals in the Medical Registration Bill that had proposed to penalize all 'unqualified' practice, including indigenous medical practice.

The mobilization by the All India Vaid Yunani Tibb Conference was an important reference point, as well as a means of deriving authority from a historic 'campaign' for the Punjabi Ayurvedic Tibb Sabha. Its leaders traced their own campaign as having evolved from and being heir to representing

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an earlier successful agitation. The agitation against the Medical Registration Bill had over the decades become an important frame of reference in Vaid rhetoric and mobilization. The All India Vaid Tibb Conference or its provincial level committee, had an important following amongst urban practitioners in Punjab and the campaign against the Registration Bill was repeatedly counted amongst its achievements during its jalsas in subsequent years.59

References to the achievements of Hakim Ajmal Khan during the Conference’s various annual sessions, focused selectively upon his leadership of the movement to resist the Medical Registration Bill. Even in the 1920s and 1930s, only a decade or so after the Medical Registration Act’s passing, the All India Vaid Tibb Conference leaders were already describing this movement as a metaphor for Hindu-Muslim unity, as represented in the coming together of Vai ds and Hakims.60 This retelling of the All India Vaid Tibb Conference’s movement therefore consciously chose to omit the various differences that had arisen in leadership contests between the conference and the Ayurved Sammelan, and within the Conference itself against leading groups of Delhi-based Hakims.

The Punjabi Ayurvedic Tibbi Sabha’s leadership represented a front that needed to draw support by selecting images from the past to edit public memory so as to paper over the limited and tenuous nature of their emerging front. On the one hand, the Punjabi Ayurvedic Tibbi Sabha, and the meeting that it called at Ramgarh to represent its support on the issue of Medical Registration, represented the influence of mobilization at the provincial level. The Sabha reflected the importance of focusing upon local demands

59 See Ch. IV, Section II.
60 Ibid.
and interests, that in turn enabled it to erode the Ayurved Sammelan’s monolithic claims to representing a unified corporate organization.

On the other hand the Ramgarh Conference, despite its rhetoric, also represented a forum whose membership was tenuously hinged upon a common charter of demands vis a vis the Enquiry Committee’s Report. For the Punjabi Ayurvedic Tibb Sabha front at Ramgarh hid the competing politics of representation that had emerged with the formation of the Board of Medicine. Vaid mobilization in Punjab was now anchored in distinct alignments that were based upon politicized groupings, with political-linguistic identities that were now more explicitly articulated, as well as unambiguous in their ideational content and expression of difference. It was these fault lines that the Ramgarh Conference’s rhetoric attempted to underplay, in its emphasis upon the need for a common front of Vaid and Yunani practitioners over and above particularist Hindu-Muslim politics.

The Conference leaders therefore publicized the common Hindu-Muslim-Sikh langars that had been organized.61 These langars were widely publicized to evoke public memories of Hakim Ajmal Khan’s Hindu-Muslim langars, when the All India Vaid Tibb Conference was campaigning against the Medical Registration Act. This rhetoric aimed to draw upon a unified symbol of mobilization represented by the Ramgarh Conference, that could intersect the all-India level, nationalist concerns of bodies such as the Ayurved Sammelan, the All India Vaid Tibb Conference, along with provincial and local interest.

However, the consolidation of polarized community-based alignments had already begun to decisively widen existing faultlines in Vaid-Hakim

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mobilization. The recommendations of the Enquiry Committee in Punjab had clearly articulated the assumption that indigenous medicine, namely, Ayurved and Yunani, were to be represented separately and exclusively by Hindu Vaids and Muslim Hakims. The Board had specified that for entrance to higher institutions of Ayurvedic and Yunani learning, as well as in the contents of the degree curriculum, Sanskrit and Arabic/Persian qualifications would be necessary. This was to be followed by courses taught respectively in Hindi and Urdu.  

The assumption of homogeneous traditions of medical practice, characterized by Sanskrit and Hindi on the one hand, and by Arabic/Persian and Urdu on the other, was an often reiterated generalization in colonial thinking and categorization. It was also now being expressed through politicized symbols representing specific community-based interests. These assumptions were now tied up with the potential of state patronage in the form of registration, institutionalized education and opportunities for employment.

As the formation of the Board of Indian Medicine approached and registration seemed imminent, the logic of politicized representation on the Board led to shifts in membership between corporate bodies, in a movement that synchronized politicized Hindu and Muslim identification with the collective representation respectively of Vaid and Yunani practice. It therefore guided a tendency for Vaid and Tibbia sabhas and mandals to be representing their interests of Hindu and Muslim members over and above that of Vaids and Hakims. Thus membership such as in Vaid Sabhas, now

62 Ibid., p. 3.
63 A similar configuration of courses had been briefly introduced at the Oriental College. Ch. II, Section II.
reflected a component of prominent Hindu Hakims, and Hindus and Sikhs in turn were moving out of Tibbia Committees.

In a widely publicized case concerning a meeting of the Provincial Tibbia Committee, its Hindu and Sikh Hakims pressed for the Committee to criticize certain recommendations of the Enquiry Committee’s Report. They asked in particular, for a campaign against the community-based choice of nominated representatives to the Board of Medicine, as well as against the language-based specifications in its curriculum and its medium of teaching. In the face of resistance from a section of the leadership of the Tibbia Committee, the annual Conference witnessed the resignation and exodus of these members.

The recommendations of the Enquiry Committee and the formation of the Board, however also brought about another set of alignments, that took shape in the mobilization of ‘Punjabi’ Sikh practitioners. The representation of the Board of Medicine had been divided between a nominated membership that consisted of Hindu Vaids and Muslim Hakims. Further, in the categories of registration that were put forward, the principle for selecting representatives to the Board was also likely to be restricted only to the diploma holding ‘A’ category of practitioners. This category was also to be completely monopolized by Hindu Vaids and Muslim Hakims, for the Sikh practitioners were almost completely educated in the traditional system of private tuitions and hereditary practice.

64 Already a membership of Hindu and Sikh Hakims of Vaid Sabhas such as at Rawalpindi were reported, in Ayurved Sandesh, 15 Sept 1938, p. 15. A clear exodus from the Tibbia Committee is easier to document e.g. growing complaints in Sukhchain, March 1938, p. 2 as also the final split mentioned below.
65 Khush Dil, Oct. 1945 p. 6 Sikh Hakims had often held office bearing posts in Tibbia Committees such as Hakim Gulab Singh who headed the Jhelum Tibbia Committee, Ajit, 21 April 1945, or Hakim Harinam Singh, one of the moving forces behind the Tibbia Vaid Committee, Amritsar.
66 Ibid.
Despite the campaigns of Sikh Vaid publicists like Bhai Mohan Singh Vaid, standardized degree-based courses of Ayurved and Yunani had not been introduced in the Khalsa College. Since the teaching of Ayurved and Yunani at institutions like the D.A.V. College and Tibbia College were identified as being shaded by the politics of their patrons and management, they had attracted only a few Sikh students. This left Sikh practitioners and their students a choice of education either through private tuitions, in akhara/dharamshala based classes in the case of larger cities like Amritsar.\(^67\)

Sikh practitioners found themselves, therefore, excluded from the immediate membership of the Board; their prospects of representation on it, even if elected representatives were included in its membership, were also remote. As a result, a group of Sikh practitioners, mostly Sikh Vaid publicists mobilized around the demand for Quam-based representation, and asked also for a Sikh practitioner to be nominated to the Board of Indigenous Medicine.\(^68\)

The group of leaders who began to articulate this demand, projected their separate corporate representation in the form of the Punjabi Ayurvedic Tibbi Sabha. The leadership of the Sabha was drawn from an earlier Amritsar-based association called the Punjabi Vaid Mandal, consisting of Sikh Vaids, mahants, gyanis and publicists who practiced or taught Ayurved, in and around the city.

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\(^67\) Student lists for e.g. published in the D.A.V. College magazine. *Ayurved Sandesh* 14 July 1942, pp. 20-3, interviews with Amritsar-based Udasin, Mahant Tarun Parshad of Akhara Balanand near Mai Sewa Bazaar, Amritsar, April, 1999.

\(^68\) *Khush Dil*, Oct 1945, p. 22-3.
The Punjabi Ayurvedic Tibbi Sabha's membership consisted overwhelmingly of Sikh Vaids and Hakims.\textsuperscript{69} This representative membership in turn reinforced its claims to press for support from Sikh political groups and bodies, consisting of the Shiromani Gurudwara Prabhanhak Committee (S.G.P.C.), Akali leaders and other prominent Sikh public men including rulers of native states.\textsuperscript{70} The Sabha's leadership successfully articulated its claims by publicizing its wide-ranging membership that consisted of Sikh practitioners from urban as well as mofussil areas in the province.\textsuperscript{71}

In 1946, the success of the Sabha's mobilization of Sikh Vaids and Hakims made itself manifest in the induction of a Sikh representative on the Board of Indian Medicine.\textsuperscript{72} The importance of such province based bodies, that represented a sectional, minority interest was demonstrated at the Ramgarh Conference that was summoned by the Punjabi Ayurved Tibbi Sabha and that attracted the attendance of leaders of the Ayurved Sammelan and All India Vaid Tibb Conference, as well as leaders of other provincial level bodies.\textsuperscript{73}

The Punjabi Ayurved Tibb Sabha's campaign and its charter of demands also pressed for and obtained concessions from the Provincial Government.\textsuperscript{74} The claims to include the representation of a Punjabi or Sikh practitioner had as its corollary, the demand for also including Punjabi as a medium of teaching Ayurved and Yunani. The identification of Sanskrit and Arabic/Persian alone for higher education in Ayurved and Yunani had also

\textsuperscript{69} List of Working Committee members at its meeting on 14.4.1945, reported in \textit{Khush Dil}, May 1945, p. 1.
\textsuperscript{70} Circular of five demands of the Sabha, Ibid.
\textsuperscript{71} Practitioners drawn mostly from rural hinterland in and around Amritsar district but also from Gujrat, Jhang, Karnal, Multan and more distant districts. \textit{Khush Dil}, Oct 1945, p. 25.
\textsuperscript{72} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{73} Attendance and participation in committees mentioned, \textit{Khush Dil}, Oct 1945; \textit{Khush Dil}, Feb 1946 issues.
\textsuperscript{74} Concession included the nomination of a Sikh member to the Board. \textit{Khush Dil}, Oct 1945, p. 21.
been resisted in favour of a more broadbased qualification and general norms suitable for Sikh students.\textsuperscript{75}

The Punjab Government’s amendments to the initial constitution of the Board of Indian Medicine, as well as to its norms concerning education partly attested to the successful resistance advanced by the Punjabi Ayurvedic Tibb Sabha. Yet, it was not the broader charter of demands voiced at Ramgarh in the cobbled up front of Vaid Sammelans and Tibbia committees that obtained any substantial concessions. The demands relating to the grades of ‘qualified’ practitioners, or concerning the introduction of electoral representatives, all of which related to affirming an independent ‘professional’ status for indigenous medical practice had only been addressed partially, and did not result in any extension in the scope of the Board of Medicine.

However, Sikh practitioners through the Punjabi Ayurvedic Tibb Sabha’s campaign amongst political representatives, obtained changes in the original formulation of the Board of Medicine. It was through the political networks cultivated by the Sabha leaders, on the grounds of linguistic-cultural identification with the wider issue of Sikh Khalsa politics, that the alterations in the composition of the Board as well as the provisions for indigenous medical education were now obtained.

The recommendations of the Enquiry Committee, as well as the formation of the Board of Medicine in Punjab, had demonstrated that the cutting edge of Vaid mobilization was at the provincial level. Vaid mobilization was able to obtained concessions in the format of the Government’s regulatory provisions, in its manifestation primarily through the claims of politicized, particularist representation.

\textsuperscript{75} Khush Dil, Oct 1945, p. 22.
The Punjabi Ayurvedic Tibb Sabha’s importance as a provincial level ally, to be coopted even if not assimilated in the designs of representing Hindu Ayurvedic politics, was now to find acknowledgement in the statements of the Ayurved Sammelan leadership. The local Vaid mandal leaders as well as provincial Vaid Sammelan leaders were important representatives at the Sabha’s Ramgarh Conference. As the overarching spokesman of Hindu Vaid interests, the Ayurved Sammelan’s leader, Pandit Shiv Sharma voiced a rhetoric that accommodated without apparent contradiction the pursuit of both the centralizing all India level agenda of the Sammelan, along with the provincial, sectional interests of the Punjabi Ayurvedic Tibb Sabha. In his response to the Punjabi Sabha’s demands, Pandit Shiv Sharma not only agreed to the principle of having a Sikh representative on the Board of Medicine, but also agreed to support the Punjabi Ayurved Tibbi Sabha’s demand to include Punjabi in Gurmukhi as a medium of education and simultaneously, not lay down the compulsion to learn Sanskrit or Hindi for further Ayurvedic education.76

SECTION II

The beginning of state initiatives to regulate indigenous medical practice, as well as the opening up of patronage and the promise of support from newly formed provincial governments put growing pressure upon corporate bodies, such as the Ayurved Sammelan. In the last decade of colonial administration, Vaid publicist leaders were to turn with increasing urgency to identifying legitimizing devices that would consolidate the authority of Ayurvedic learning, and their own spokesmanship and function within this discourse.

The initial efforts at registering indigenous medical learning, and the early dividends and expectations from the provincial ministries, posed certain common challenges. These demands and the critical debate that they generated in the vernacular press, led to a revaluation of the role and function both of the Ayurvedic Sammelan, as well as the Provincial Vaid sammelans. The need to frame an agenda for education, constituted by a standardized curriculum, the establishment of select, monopolized spheres of sanctioned learning such as in research institutions, and hospitals as well as drug inspections and standards, were identified as spheres of activity that Sammelan leaderships had so far failed to address.

Underlying all these suggested initiatives, lay the broader concern to construct a discourse that was distinct and overarching, sanctioning and legitimizing efforts to consolidate these measures. Even in the early decades of Vaid mobilization through Sammelans and the print medium, Ayurved prachar at these forums as well as in journals and tracts, had identified with Hindu politicized symbols in the public sphere, such as with Hindi and Hindu reformist politics. In this rhetoric, the support and regeneration of
Ayurvedic learning was tied up with symbols and ideas that legitimized the Hindu-nation-in-the-making.

In the following years, with the formation of the provincial ministries imminent and with an emerging new political dispensation in mind, there was a more intensive elaboration of this rhetoric. Ayurved prachar in both direct claims, as well as indirect allusions, began to be associated with nationalist aspirations. The Congress as the political epicentre of this nationalism was a natural reference point, and the cultural authority represented by Hindu Ayurved was identified as an inalienable part of any nationalist representation.

Often, Vaid publicists in a direct symbolic correlation, identified the Ayurved Sammelan with the Congress. If the latter represented the body politic of the nation, a Vaid editor argued, the Hindi Sahit Sammelan represented the cementing linguistic-cultural medium as Rashtrabhasha, and the Ayurvedic Sammelan represented the safeguarding of the physical, bodily interests of Indians. In this sense, he concluded, Ayurved was a far more potent and genuinely swadeshi symbol than even khadi that fulfilled merely the material needs to clothe the nation.

Vaid leaders and writers frequently wrote urging their readers and Vaid colleagues to adopt activities in the Congress nationalist agenda such as village work. Service to village communities that were pre-eminently being treated by desi medicines, was seen as a crucial argument to demonstrate the work done by indigenous practitioners. Further, work through provincial

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77 Ayurved Sandesh, 15 March 1938, p. 21
78 Resolutions for instance both at the level of the Ayurved Sammelan that supported the Congress's commitment to village work, and the Punjab Vaid Mandal leaders asked for rural service by Vaids to support village reform and swarajya. Arogya Darpan, vol. 6 No. 2, p. 7; Sukh Chain, Amritsar, Oct.-Nov. 1934, p. 28.
government-sponsored dispensaries in rural areas, was also urged so as to unite the aims of *swadeshi* and village work.

In the War years particularly, with the shortage of western drugs, the growing demand for indigenous medicines was projected as a manifestation of Ayurved’s service to Congress-supported *swadeshi*.

Vaids were urged to take advantage of the demand for their medicines and to project it as a part of the wider nationalist agenda.

The Ayurved Sammelan even in its form and functions was increasingly trying to imitate the nationalist Congress, underlining for itself a relationship with the latter while also implying a similar sphere of activities. The project for an Ayurvedic flag for greater publicity of Ayurved and its Sammelan centres was persuasively argued: hosting the flag over Ayurved-related institutions would provide public identification or a symbol like the flag of the Indian National Congress.

Similarly, the role of the Ayurved Sammelan leader was defined by employing a vocabulary that delineated work and activities for the former on the lines of the responsibilities of a leader of a national level political organization.

In a discussion regarding the forthcoming elections to the Ayurved Sammelan, the qualities and the functions of the Sammelan’s ‘President’ were described as needing now to encompass a broader spectrum of functions. The Ayurved Sammelan’s leader, it was urged, would be required to tour all over India, campaign to mobilize membership and funds and to become the unifying focus of a national community of Vaids.

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80 *Ayurved Sandesh*, 15 Sept. 1938, p. 15.

The election of Pandit Shiv Sharma, as President of the Ayurved Sammelan following that of his father was recalled by a Vaid as reminiscent of the Moti Lal-Jawaharlal succession of another ‘national’ party. Interview with Bhai Sukhbir Vaid, Tarn Taran, 1997.
Yet the rhetoric of being a part of nationalist discourse yielded less than convincing reciprocation in terms of patronage, as well as in commitments from Congress leaders. This made it increasingly urgent to identify a unifying discourse that would find greater conviction and legitimacy. Vaid leaders in these years were beginning to comment about the disappointing lack of commitment from Congress leaders, alleging that their lukewarm and halfhearted patronage exposed the hollowness of the nationalist party’s commitment to *swadeshi*.82

In a well-publicized speech to the Sammelan at Jodhpur, its leader, Pandit Shiv Sharma, voiced this growing discontent that had been fuelled in recent years by the statements and views on Ayurved expressed by various nationalist leaders.83 Gandhi’s speech at the inauguration of the Benares Hindu University was reported in Vaid circles, yet his lack of open commitment to indigenous medicine as a part of *swadeshi* was viewed as being disappointing.84 Leaders like Jawaharlal Nehru and his comments regarding the ‘incomplete’ nature of Ayurvedic medicine were widely criticized,85 later eliciting the comment that while the public in its support had expressed confidence in Ayurved, it was the Congress leaders that had yielded limited concessions.86 This in turn implied that provincial governments, such as in Punjab, which did not have a nationalist ideological plank, were even more likely to turn a blind eye to such claims.

The Congress leadership and its taking over from the colonial medical administrators, in its support of English educated doctors was seen as a

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82 'Congress Raj aur Ayurved', in *Ayurved Sandesh*, 25 March 1938, p. 26 Others referred to the Congress ministries as ‘Doctor’ ministries presumably with reference to western educated Congress leaders and their inclination towards western knowledge including medicine. *Khush Dil*, Dec 1934, p. 28.
84 Ibid.
86 Ibid.
response that was not only disappointing but also one that pointed at discrepancies in Ayurved prachar and its need to project a more convincing agenda of Ayurvedic reform.\textsuperscript{87}

To identify scientific, rational principles in Ayurvedic learning, implied addressing the need to define a unified and identifiable textual tradition. The need to research and identify the original Ayurvedic texts, and to standardize and make them uniform was therefore now an increasingly urgent project amongst Ayurved Samellan leaders.\textsuperscript{88} In the course of Sammelans in these years, resolutions were passed and groups of Vaids were nominated to head such research groups.\textsuperscript{89} Even at the provincial level, Vaid leaders who had initiated such research regarding Ayurvedic texts were given a special mention, such as those associated with the Sanatan Dharm Premgiri College at Lahore.\textsuperscript{90}

Finally, between 1935 and 1936, the leadership of the Ayurved Sammelan itself turned to initiate a project to edit certain portions of the emblematic Ayurvedic text, the \textit{Charak Samhita}.\textsuperscript{91} The initial editing of certain verses that was proposed, was minor and its relevance was to be for specialized scholars, since the editing was based upon a comparative study of several later commentaries such as by Vaghbhatt. Based on this, certain verses with disputed meanings mostly on the subject of toxicology were to be corrected so as to offer a ‘uniform’ version in the texts to be edited and published as a part of this project.

\textsuperscript{87} \textit{Khush Dil}, Dec. 1934, p. 28.
\textsuperscript{88} An editorial in the \textit{Sudhanidhi} outlined the work by various Vaid leaders towards printing Ayurvedic texts in a readable form and as text books. In this movement towards \textit{Granth Prakashan}, the journal too was undertaking to print a \textit{Granthavli} series.
\textsuperscript{89} In 1936, a sub-committee headed by Pandit Yadav Ji, was set up by the Ayurved Sammelan to publish Ayurvedic texts. Pandit Hari Dutt from Punjab headed the committee on Ayurved Research, \textit{Arogya Darpan}, Vol. 6, No. 2, p. 2.
\textsuperscript{90} Report on Ayurved Sammelan Progs \textit{Arogya Darpan}, Vol. 6, No. 2, p. 5
\textsuperscript{91} \textit{Ayurved Sandesh}, 15 Sept. 1935, pp. 20-3.
The editorial team concerned with editing sections of the *Charak* consisted of well known scholars and Ayurved Mahamandal leaders such as Yadavji Trikhamji, Vaid scholars and Mahamandal office bearers from Punjab such as Pandit Mast Ram, and Pandit Haridutt. The project of ‘critical editing’ directly concerned only academic-minded Sanskrit scholars and senior Vaidya Acharyas, but its projection as a self-conscious, collective project that assumed editorial authority, had wider implications. The debate over its methods and sanction therefore became a public and political affair with widespread coverage in Vaid journals and writings in North India. In Punjab in particular, it divided local Vaids into opposing factions that either supported the editorial team or opposed it. Leading voices opposing the critical-editing project belonged to the province.

The *Charak* editing debate, in the most immediate and obvious sense, represented a bid by Ayurved Sammelan leaders to centralize authority by trying to identify the constituents of a unified textual canon for Ayurvedic learning. By claiming the role of editors, they were trying to assert a leadership that also sought to control the meanings and interpretations of Ayurvedic texts. In a letter to the Mahamandal leaders, a Vaid Acharya was to aptly sum up the project of the editors, commenting that while they might still succeed in pressing a single interpretation and dogma in the matter of the *Charak* verses, would that in anyway be able to still dissent and differences between various Vaid practitioners?

The Ayurved Sammelan’s *Charak* editing project reflected new roles and forms of leadership that were emerging in this decade. The fact that the

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92 It primarily involved the Hindi Vaid journals published in the United Provinces, Punjab, and Bombay.
In Punjab, opposition to the editing project was led by Pandit Surendra Mohan, Principal of D.A.V College and Editor of *Ayurved Sandesh*.
project was pursued to completion despite a vigorous and often bitter opposition in print, even if from largely a provincial level caucus of Vaid publicists, also partly reflected the successful forging of certain vital networks that were to constitute a centralized corporate identity. It reflected, even if temporarily, alignments with the Ayurved Mahamandal leadership, and their construction of a Hindu Ayurvedic canon over and above local politics and sectional interests.

The Ayurved Sammelan leaders and their associates in the Provincial Vaid leadership, were increasingly forging networks and exerting forms of control that implied that a cartel comprising of Vaid leaders controlled both various forums of Vaid representation such as Sammelans, Vaid journals, as well as the agenda that was identified in these arenas. For instance, a reader complained that Vaid journals tended to be self-censoring as they were owned and edited by pharmacy-owning Vaid leaders. They had been unsuccessful in finding less vested, private patronage that would have addressed various urgent issues in a more independent fashion.94

Vaid Sammelans too reflected these networks. The Lahore Vaid Sabha had Vaid leaders led by Pandit Shiv Sharma who were ascending stars in the various Committees of the Ayurved Sammelan.95 Prior notice of resolutions,96 stage management during Sammelans, and mobilizing Vaid

95 Punjab’s Lahore-based Vaid leaders not only controlled the Lahore Vaid Sabha, they were also important office bearers in the Ayurved Sammelan and Mahamandal, with Pandit Shiv Sharma even having been Editor of the Mahasammelan Patrika. After succeeding his father Pandit Ram Prasad Sharma to head the Ayurved Sammelan (1939-40), in subsequent years he inducted many Punjab-based Vaids to the Sammelan executive. Arogya Darpan, Vol.10, No. 1, pp. 13-20. For an outline of Pandit Shiv Sharma’s career, C. Leslie “Interpretations of illness: Syncretism in Modern Ayurveda,” Leslie and Young, Paths to Asian Medical knowledge, California, 1992, pp. 177-208.
96 Control of Sammelans at the provincial level sanctioned through a Disputes Committee Arogya Darpan, Vol. 6, No. 2 p. 7 and rules regarding advance approval of proposed resolutions were prevalent, Ayurved Sandesh, 15 Oct. 1940, pp. 5-6.
members during elections all ensured the hold of these groups. They ensured their control over Sabhas such as in Amritsar and marginalized many Vaid leaders through their connections with senior Ayurved Mahamandal and Provincial Vaid Sammelan members, such as Pandit Ram Prasad Sharma.

Summing up the networks that buttressed Vaid Sammelan politics, one of its critics was to comment:

The Punjab Vaid Sammelan today mirrors the general condition of the institution of Ayurved. It consists of those who sing the tune of parental devotion, or filial devotion, some others sing to the bhakti of their students and others to their Gurus...each one stands for his own interest...and attempts to forward this in the Sammelan.

The opposition to critical editing was most vociferously voiced under the leadership of the Principal of the D.A.V. College at Lahore. The editors of this project, Pandit Mast Ram and his student, Pandit Hari Dutt were able to successfully deflect this criticism through their influence over the Provincial Vaid Sammelan membership, as well as by mobilizing an effective print based campaign to counter critics amongst the Ayurved Sammelan leadership. The ties and affiliations that had been cultivated through the posting of office bearers in Sammelans, the constitution of research groups as well as by the award of titles and shields could by itself be a crucial and public withdrawal of sanction.

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97 Criticism for instance, of intimidation by Lahore Sabha leaders who arrived to control the elections to the Amritsar Vaid Mandal, Ayurved Sandesh 15 Jan. 1936, pp. 4-8. Swami Harisharanand in his Amritsar-based journal Ayurved Vigyan ran a long standing campaign in later years against the politics of patronage in Vaid Sammelans. Interview with Gauri Lal Channana Vaid, Krishna Nagar, Delhi.
100 Pandit Hari Dutt was the student of Pandit Mast Ram.
101 Criticism of the system of Upadhi or titles that prevailed in the Ayurved Sammelan that was awarded to each other amongst a small coterie. This new hierarchy of awards the editor
The supporters and critics of the critical editing project often generated unusual allies, who were aligned across sectarian ideologies such as those of the Arya Samaj and Sanatan Dharm groups, to align and contest on the basis of alternative hierarchies of politicized Vaid interests as well as based upon differing perceptions in representing the scientific authority of Hindu Ayurved.

The Vaid leaders who supported the editing of the *Charak*, were those who also pursued Sanatan Dharm related *prachar* in Vaid Sammelans, including exhibitions of Sanatan Dharm-related literature; they had even established a Sanatan Vaidya Mandal. Those like Pandit Surendra Mohan of the Dayanand Ayurvedic College and his supporters who supported Arya reformism, on the other hand cited the support of Puranic authority and sanctity, as polemicised by Sanatan Dharam ideologues. Their understanding of the implications of *Charak* editing was based upon differing perceptions of Ayurvedic learning, that briefly set aside the ideological givens of local sectarian political positions. Contemporary Vaid colleagues, who commented on this debate were quick to hint at the unlikely bedfellows thrown up by Vaid politics and its agenda. It was observed, that

In the texts representing Sanatan Dharam we find that the doctrine of Sanatan Dharam is being violated, and those who should be preserving are bent upon destroying. The followers of Sanatan Dharam should remember that unless they prevent the Editor of *Ashwini Kumar*... a day may also come when errors in the Puranas might be identified in the same fashion as the shortcomings in *Charak*...

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102 *Ayurved Sandesh*, 18 Sept 1935, p. 73.

103 *Ashwini Kumar* was a journal published by the Sanatan Dharm Sabha of Lahore, it had Pandit Hari Dutt on its editorial board. Pandit Hari Dutt and Pandit Mast Ram were associated with the Sabha’s activities. Italics added.

At the centre of the effort to edit the *Charak* *shlokas* lay a definite understanding of who was a Vaid practitioner, and what the constituents of the Ayurvedic tradition were. The Voids who supported the editing of the *Charak* verses argued that they were simply identifying the errors or inconsistencies that had accumulated in the text and thereby restoring the ‘original’. Rational, scientific method could restore the ‘original’ and make these texts recoverable. Therefore, by a process of comparison along with an analysis of the text’s structure and composition, the *Charak* could be restored to its original, pristine form.

The restoration of the ‘original’ *Charak* stanzas was a means by which the ‘incomplete’ nature of Ayurvedic learning was addressed. The Ayurvedic text, while being a part of Hindu religious literature, did not represent the stagnation and dogma typically identified with indigenous learning. Critical editing as a project, reversed the advance-degeneration trajectory identified with indigenous learning, since it reconciled the application of critical, scientific reasoning in securing the authority of these texts.

Implicit in the justification of editing *Charak* therefore, were arguments that cited and compared manuscripts and commentaries, with the assumption that this rational and scientific method made the text ‘knowable’ and also created an independent and unmediated text. Gannath Sen,\(^{105}\) the guiding beacon and benevolent authority lending sanction to the editing, therefore chose to intervene in a rapidly degenerating debate.\(^{106}\) He summoned the authority of comparing manuscripts of *Vagbhhatt* and dismissed Pandit

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\(^{105}\) Vaid Acharya Gannath Sen, remained long time President of the Ayurved Sammelan and as a leading Ayurvedic scholar had already been associated with having authored widely acclaimed Ayurvedic texts books based on the *Charak* and *Sushrut*.

\(^{106}\) Nearly the entire *Ayurved Sandesh* issue for Sept 1935, consisted of an attack upon the career of one of the *Charak* editors, Pandit Mast Ram.
Surendra Mohan’s criticism on the grounds of the latter’s ignorance of basic physiology, thereby faulting his method and deduction.\(^{107}\)

The Ayurved Mahamandal scholars, as they initiated the programme of critical editing, were trying to retrieve and redefine a discursive space for indigenous medical learning. They were at once imitating the efforts of Orientalist scholarship in editing ancient Hindu texts, and by adapting the norms and criticism that they advanced, were also trying to resume the authority of editing and generalizing to Indian scholarship.

A Vaid writer summing up the debate on critical editing, wrote, that the superiority of European Orientalist scholarship lay in the fact, that it assumed or declared its own authority, and did not pass off contemporary commentary as the original.\(^{108}\) It adopted the relevant method and edited the texts in such a manner that it made them authoritative. Indian scholars on the other hand seldom obtained recognition because they rarely exerted the right approach and their work was therefore taken only as being an added commentary.\(^{109}\)

The Charak editing project therefore aimed to introduce rational, scientific method and to assume editorial authority. It aimed to control the meanings and offer interpretations of the Charak verses that did not in the ‘traditional’ sense constantly derive their authority from the past and by ‘mythologising’ it, blur the lines between ‘ancient’ knowledge and contemporary learning.\(^{110}\) This editorial venture, therefore resulted in a series of works published under the name of the Editor-in-Chief, Yadavji Trikhamji, with this

\(^{109}\) Ibid.
'method’ seemingly finding sanction in the success it enjoyed in print re-runs for may decades.\textsuperscript{111}

The critics of the editorial project located the authority of the \textit{Charak Samhita} in the ‘ancient’ and ‘original’ text itself. Any changes, it was argued, ought to be restricted to comments or the footnotes and not interfere in the exact reproduction of the text.\textsuperscript{112} Any act of editing, it was argued, presumed that a complete, uniform and final text could be \textit{produced} while ancient texts were not constructed upon this basis.\textsuperscript{113}

The various Ayurvedic texts contained contradictions, many of which were acknowledged by their learned authors themselves. On the subject of poisoning, or on the treatment of various diseases or even in the understanding of bodily physiology as well as in therapeutics, there were widely differing remedies in \textit{Charak}, \textit{Sushrut}, and \textit{Vagbhhatt Samhitas} with their writers at various points contradicting each other.\textsuperscript{114} If there was to be a single, definitive text for reference, one writer wondered, would not the ancient sages themselves have compiled a single composite work?\textsuperscript{115}

The editing of the \textit{Charak} texts was therefore resisted on the grounds that it represented a break from the understanding of ancient texts as being ever evolving. Like \textit{Sastric} literature, these texts merely represented an incomplete transmission of the original, sacred learning. The creation of this knowledge was itself a revealed, divine activity and a search for this

\textsuperscript{111} Trikhamji, \textit{The Charaka Samhita}, Jamnagar, 1949. The \textit{Charak} was edited in 6 volumes and published in Hindi, Gujarati and later in English.
\textsuperscript{112} \textit{Ayurved Sandesh}, 15 Dec. 1935, pp. 73-4.
\textsuperscript{113} \textit{Ayurved Sandesh}, 15 Dec. 1935, pp. 63-4, 82.
\textsuperscript{114} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{115} Ibid, pp. 73-4.
original, 'extraordinary' knowledge was continuous.\textsuperscript{116} It rested crucially upon the authority of an ancient and authoritative past and it was this basis of Ayurved's sanction that would be eroded by editing. Critical editing in its interference or, even in its bid to restore the 'original' was creating a new text,\textsuperscript{117} thus undermining the basis of Vedic, Sastric texts such as the \textit{Charak}.

The defence of Ayurvedic texts against the criticism of their being stagnant and unscientific had often been responded to earlier. An important critical response had been voiced by Capt. Srinivas Murti\textsuperscript{118} in his Minute in the Usman Committee Report where he had argued that scriptural authority in indigenous knowledge was distinct from that in the West. Indigenous medical learning, he argued was 'scientific' since it had evolved universal scientific principles, and its derivation from a sacred, scriptural tradition in no way subtracted from the attributes of scientific authority characteristic of this learning. He commented:

two persons paying the profoundest possible veneration to the same scriptural texts can yet interpret them in ways as diverse as the poles; a classic example...is how our schools of Vedanta—from uncompromising duality (\textit{Dwaita}) to absolute non duality (\textit{Adwaita})—purport to be based on the same scriptural text.\textsuperscript{119}

Vaid leaders like Pandit Surendra Mohan and his supporters in their arguments defending the importance of preserving scriptural sanctity, were not merely arguing that critical enquiry and difference was already

\textsuperscript{116} This analysis is used by M. Aktor in the context of understanding concepts of the past in the \textit{Dharma Smritis}. Aktor, 'Smrities and Jatis: The Ritualisation of Time and the Continuity of the Past', in Daud Ali, ed. \textit{Invoking the Past: The Uses of History in South Asia}, Delhi, 1999.
\textsuperscript{117} 'The status enjoyed by Ayurvedic learning as originating in the ancient age will be lost', \textit{Ayurved Sandesh}, 15 Dec. 1935, pp. 73-4.
\textsuperscript{119} Viswanathan, \textit{A Carnival for Science}, p. 137.
accommodated within the traditional boundaries of the ancient and original texts. In fact, they shared the perspective of the Ayurved Sammelan’s editorial body in that there was a need to identify and offer a monolithic textual corpus and also that texts such as Charak and other such sacred literature formed the undisputed axis of this canon. They too therefore aimed at identifying a centralized canon and orthodoxy, with only a difference in its method and agency.

Criticism and editing, they believed, would simply weaken Ayurvedic knowledge in the way that such movements had already undermined the Hindu community. The tendency for Ayurved to suffer from the same weaknesses as Hindus only reinforced Ayurved’s place and function within the wider Hindu religious-political tradition; Vaid leaders were accordingly to guard themselves. Voids had not to only believe in the sacred authority of the Ayurvedic scriptures but they also had to treat these writings as representing a single, unified dogma. Arguing against the editing therefore, a Vaid Acharya wrote:

If Ayurved until now has been preserved, the reason is that all Medical practitioners have unanimously accepted Ayurvedic texts as sacred. [But] now we see a situation where even those who view the Ayurvedic texts as adulterated and are still considered...as its practitioners.

Despite the differences on the issue of critical editing, the controversy ironically also brought out the common assumptions and ideological givens that underlay the perspectives of both the Ayurved Mahamandal editors and their opponents. Their priorities and interests struck a Vaid reader as being so similar he commented that they ought to unite to frame a common project

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120 Hindus had lost out their identity in their tendency towards religious polemic while Muslims did not tolerate any such dissent regarding the Quran Sharif and had been able to project a solidarity beyond their real numbers. Ayurved Sandesh, 15 Dec. 1935, p. 99.
121 Ibid.
122 Ibid.
of Ayurved prachar or publicity rather than to allow personalities in the Mahamandal to come in the way of their politics. 123

The Charak editing debate exposed a common reference point based upon the choice of the emblematic Ayurvedic texts such as Charak. These Sanskrit-based texts were chosen and projected so as to lay down a textual canon and reference, that in turn eclipsed vernacular based Ayurvedic anthologies and commentaries. Both parties argued from within the boundaries of a discursive space that was identified with a Hindu community. The Charak, it was reiterated, formed a part of the Hindu religious scriptures and in turn the issue of its preservation whether by editing or otherwise, only further located Ayurved’s authority in the singularity of a Hindu tradition. The reference repeatedly to Charak as being located in a composite Hindu past and the Ayurvedic texts as a single authorized tradition was projected forward to legitimize the agenda of a Hindu nation-in-the-making.

Both Charak editors, as well as those challenging the project shared an understanding regarding the Ayurvedic canon based upon a mutually shared conception of Ayurvedic past and its mythology. The elevated, sacred status of Hindu Ayurvedic learning, and in turn of Vaid practitioners, was repeatedly asserted in the course of this debate. Both Ayurvedic Vigyan, whose editor founded it with the aim of recovering scientific method in Ayurvedic knowledge, 124 as well as Pandit Surendra Mohan’s writings spoke of the sacred status of Ayurvedic texts, the Brahminical orthodoxy that they represented in the Vedic period, 125 all of which lent authority to the position of Vaid practitioners.

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124 Ayurved Vigyan, Vol 1, No. 1, editorial.
Hindu Vaid publicists now referred to a common constellation of mythological symbols that constructed a Hindu Ayurvedic past, that demonstrated also a consensus regarding the ends or political aims that such ideological strategies represented. They frequently cited myths such as the act of uniting a sacrificed head by the Ashwini twins, and identified it as the divine, Vedic origins of ‘Salya Sastra’ or surgery. Journals such as the Sanatan Dham Premgiri College’s Ashwini Kumar referred to the same myth, and explained that it was meant to symbolize Ayurved’s Hindu past and sacred derivation while also emphasizing its march over contemporary ‘scientific’ advances such as in surgery. Journals now took titles such as ‘Charak’, with the intention of claiming through its title an immediate association with the divine sage and Ayurved’s canonical text, the Charak Samhita.

Recent research reveals some of the crucial contradictions in such assumptions. Ayurved’s status and association with the Atharva Veda made its position amongst Vedic shastras equivocal, with Ayurvedic learning enjoying a lower status in the divine Vedic canon that also implied only a limited integration within the Brahminical orthodoxy. If anything, the frequently told Ashwini Kumar myth in contemporary Vaid prachar also had an alternative retelling. Namely, that the Ashwini twins were excluded from Vedic divinity and not allowed to drink Soma, and therefore bargained for elevation to divine status in return for joining a sacrificial head. Their place in a divine pantheon had so far been denied to them due to the impure nature of their craft.127

Also, Charak perhaps with his own future editorial role in mind was also the name of Pandit Mast Ram’s pharmacy. Ayurved Sandesh, 15 Sept 1935, p. 38.
Further, the *Charak Samhita* has been associated in its authorship not only with the sage-redactor of divine Ayurvedic learning, but also with a succession of compilations, associated with the *Charakas* or wandering bands of heterodox sects whose ascetics shaped an emerging empirico-rational Ayurvedic tradition, and who were marginalized from the brahminical orthodoxy.  

In the *Charak* editing debate, the common concerns between leaderships at various levels also related to their interests in an emerging market for Ayurvedic texts. The works of Yadavji Trikhamji and Pandit Ram Prasad Sharma of the Ayurved Mahamandal were intended by their authors, for being prescribed as a part of the curriculum of a growing number of private colleges and even in the proposed scheme of centralized Ayurvedic education. The Ayurved Mahamandal, in trying to control and regulate the literary canon through critical editing, was also advancing its stake on these emerging new markets of text publication and standardized curricula.

The Ayurved Mahamandal’s agenda and its concerns to monopolize the mechanisms of Hindu Vaid mobilization in the public sphere, was in the coming years to address other aspects of Ayurvedic education, this time in and around the control of and uses of language. By 1940, its leadership was engaged in another extended debate, that concerned the medium of instruction for the degrees offered by the Ayurved Vidyapeeth, a body controlled by the Mahamandal’s executive.

In the 1940s, a growing number Vaid publicists began to voice a demand for allowing a Hindi medium curriculum and tests for higher level exams conducted by the Ayurved Vidyapeeth. The latter, they argued was after all already conducting a novice level ‘*Bhishak*’ test in Hindi. The Mahamandal

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leaders who insisted upon preserving higher level degrees such as the Visharadh and Acharya in Sanskrit medium resisted this claim for an entirely Hindi-based qualification in Ayurvedic education.

The demand for Hindi-based Ayurvedic education had been voiced in the past. It had been briefly debated, in the wake of Gandhi's statements regarding the extension of Hindi as national language, and more recently, had been raised and set aside in Hyderabad by the Nizam's government. The Nizam's administration had been unable to find a complete curriculum based upon Hindi textbooks and the issue had again been set aside.

By the time the issue of Hindi-based Ayurvedic education reemerged in subsequent years, the public status and political profile of Hindi had begun to undergo important changes. The doubts raised by Mahamandal leaders regarding its ability to communicate a 'non-literary' curriculum, had already been voiced earlier and overcome; Hindi was now included in University departments including in Central Provinces, Bihar and Punjab. The Hindi Sahit Sammelan's Madhyama exams were being held all over India and it was being eloquently presented as being the national lingua franca.

Vaid leaders who championed the inclusion of Hindi-based Ayurved degrees, did so increasingly with the dividends of institutionalized Ayurvedic education in mind. Already, the Ayurved Vidyapeeth's Hindi examinations were being taken in a growing number of new centres, including even in small towns in what were traditionally areas of limited influence of Hindi medium education, such as in Punjab.

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129 Dhanwantri, Vol. 15, No. 4, p. 698.
130 Ibid.
132 Ibid.
The control of the Vidyapeeth's curriculum from the point of view of the growing demand for vernacular educated Vaid practitioners particularly for 'lesser' jobs such as in Municipalities, and in rural dispensaries also created a growing pressure for extending Hindi medium education. The question of language, a Hindi supporting Vaid pointed out, was also therefore allied to that of standards that were determined by the needs of Ayurvedic education. 133

The Mahamandal's critics were trying to argue for a lower level of Vaid qualification for 'practising' Vaids that was to be based in Hindi, and for a parallel academic, and learned qualification for Vaids who aimed to be teachers and researchers. The latter category of practitioners would need to know not only Hindi but also Sanskrit. Therefore, even the Sanskrit based qualifications in degrees such as Acharya needed to have a higher standard so that they could produce a distinct category of Vaids. Gopinath Gupta, the Vaid editor at the centre of the controversy therefore summed up his stance in the face of growing criticism from Sanskrit Pandits. He commented, that he was offering a parallel line of mobility for Hindi medium instructed Vaid practitioners that demanded the choice of 'Sanskrit and Hindi' and not that of 'Sanskrit or Hindi'. 134

In the 1930s, the Charak editing controversy began to increasingly engage responses from Vaid publicists and Vaid corporate bodies at the provincial level. It had been elaborated from Punjab's Hindi based vernacular press, to engage a response from Vaid leaders and publicists in other provinces such as in the United Provinces and the Bombay Presidency where the Ayurved Sammelan had significant networks. A decade later, the debate over 'Hindi-Sanskrit' as a medium of Ayurvedic education reemerged from the

133 Arogya Darpan, Vol. 10, No. 12, p. 25.
organizational epicentre of the Ayurved Sammelan, in the United Provinces. Its scope and trajectory was now more directly shaped by the vernacular press, as Vaid leaders supporting the cause of Hindi were able to mobilize substantial support amongst the general public and Voids through the vernacular press.

The Hindi Ayurved supporters took their polemic into the terrain of print publicity, and their success throughout the campaign lay in publicizing the debate and articulating their point of view to an urban, largely North Indian readership. Even in the last lap of the debate in the years between 1940 and 1942, their publicity in journals in the United Provinces and in Punjab led to the arrival of a large group of supporters at an annual Ayurved Sammelan held in Lucknow, where they pressed forward for concessions in the Sammelan’s Resolutions.

These Vaid leaders articulated a legitimizing argument and attracted support due to their origins in the medium of public sphere engagements. Some of the central ideologues supporting Hindi based education, were owners or editors of prominent Ayurved journals such as Arogya Darpan and Sudhanidhi135. Other publishers of Vaid journals and Pharmacy owners who were prominent Ayurved Sammelan office bearers, such as Pandit Thakur Dutt Sharma were also active and experienced publicists in the vernacular press. Pandit Thakur Dutt Sharma for instance had the support of an important group that consisted of the Ayurved Vedapeeth’s members for Punjab Province.136 Such leaders also enjoyed control over other networks

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135 The former was owned by Gopinath Gupta, and the latter was edited by another Vaid Sammelan and Hindi Sahit Sammelan leader, Jagannath Prasad Shukla.
136 Leading members of the Punjab Provincial Vaid Sammelan such as Thakur Dutt Sharma, Pandit Mast Ram etc. were founding members of the Ayurved Vidyapeeth in the province. Pandit T.D. Sharma was also President of the Hindi Sahit Sammelan in Punjab, whose leaders included U.P. based Vaid publicists like Jagannath Shukla and Gopi Nath Gupta. Ayurved Sandesh, June 1930, pp. 23-4.
in urban politics, such as over the Hindi Sahit Sammelan, and this in turn brought leaders like Thakur Dutt Sharma and other Hindi supporters much closer to interests that linked them outside the Ayurved Sammelan.

The use of the vernacular press and the usage of politicized symbols and alignments drawn from the urban public sphere, now intersected and engaged with the priorities of the Ayurved Mahamandal. Leaders like Pandit Ram Prasad Sharma, Pandit Hari Dutt from Punjab, who had earlier been able to limit the Charak debate, were now open to growing pressure from leaders who were not merely their rivals within the Ayurved Sammelan, but who were also now projecting their concerns through the intervention of Vaid journals and the general press.

In April 1940, the Hindi-Sanskrit controversy was put to a Vaid readership and a Hindi reading public by Gopinath Gupta, editor of Arogya Darpan. He opened his argument, in a widely reproduced and eloquently titled piece, asking ‘Ayurved Vigyan ke pairon me Bhasha ki Bedhi’. This was followed by a series of articles, that were written following a reply by a leading Mahamandal member, Pandit Gaya Prasad who responded in support of Ayurvedic education in the Sanskrit medium.

Gupta accused the Mahamandal’s Sanskrit Pandits of acting in their personal self-interest and bias, and thereby harming the wider, public interests of Ayurvedic knowledge. Their resistance to the Hindi medium and teaching of Ayurved, he argued, also reflected their ignorance of the virtues of Hindi and its achievements in the past decades. Their deliberate

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137 Both were senior members of the Ayurved Mahamandal and had also held leading positions in the Punjab Provincial Vaid Sammelan.
138 These were published in journals like Dhanwantri and Arogya Darpan, and in Punjab-based journals like Ayurved Sandesh, Dhanwantri, Vol. 15, No. 4, p. 448.
140 Dhanwantri, Vol. 15, No. 11, p. 936.
restriction of Ayurved or its identification with Sanskrit alone was to imprison it within the ‘four walls of a language’, and only served to suppress the ‘scientific’ nature of Ayurved.\textsuperscript{141}

The assumption underlying Gupta’s argument was that Ayurvedic knowledge had a ‘scientific’ nature that was also its intrinsic, defining nature, and that this ‘science’ was recoverable by the mediation of language. Science needed a transparent medium, and language could provide the necessary medium to recover this pure and essential scientific nature by making ‘its expression easy and clear’.\textsuperscript{142}

The belief that science could only advance upon the correct linguistic foundations was not itself novel, it was commonly held in debates regarding the nature of science and its method in Europe in the early nineteenth century.\textsuperscript{143} Language itself, it was argued, could assume ‘scientific’ functions by means of codifications of informal language practices, standardization and thereby exclude the ‘uncertainty’ and ‘ambiguity’ of language.\textsuperscript{144}

Sanskrit in this case, or the commentaries that it produced to elaborate upon the \textit{sutra} based Samhitas or emblematic Ayurvedic texts, was seen as being an inappropriate and unfit medium for transmitting \textit{Ayurved Vigyan}.\textsuperscript{145} Sanskrit was described as being flawed, due to its being based upon a knowledge of form or words, that is \textit{shabd shastra} while Ayurved’s \textit{sutras}

\textsuperscript{141} Dhamvantri, Vol. 15, No. 10, pp. 883-4.
\textsuperscript{142} Dhamvantri, Vol. 15, No. 10, pp. 883-4.
\textsuperscript{144} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{145} Arogya Darpan, Vol. 10, No. 7, pp. 9-11.
needed to be interpreted based upon the drawing upon of 'essence' or concepts.\textsuperscript{146}

Typically therefore, a Vaid writer supporting Hindi argued, Sanskrit based commentaries were characterized by an overwhelming focus upon sahityak or literary form.\textsuperscript{147} Sanskrit tikkas on the Charak, Sushrut etc. did not attempt to pose questions regarding the causality of disease, or display an enquiry into the mechanics of the working of physiology and bodily humors.\textsuperscript{148} They focused upon distracting and irrelevant comparisons, that enumerated disease typologies in various works, and attempted to locate homogeneities in style in Sutra literature. In some cases these Sanskrit commentaries merely devoted efforts towards analysing lexicographical origins or grammatical structures in this literature.\textsuperscript{149}

Sanskrit as a language, was therefore restricting Ayurvedic learning to a ‘literary’ emphasis that was distinct and separate from the medium required for retrieving the ‘scientific’ nature of Ayurved. Gopinath Gupta summed up this perspective saying:

In fact, very little attempt has been made to regard Ayurved as a science, and therefore to understand that like in Sanskrit, it can be explained in other well developed languages too.....the Vaidas who take pride in Sanskrit believe that Ayurved can be explained only through the means of the knowledge of Sanskrit, but they forget that it is one thing to understand the language but quite another to comprehend the essence of any science.\textsuperscript{150}

In the Colonial context, the relationship between scientific attributes and language had already been expressed through the crucial medium of

\textsuperscript{146} Aragya Darpan, Vol. 10, No. 7, pp. 9-11.
\textsuperscript{147} Dhanwantri, Vol. 15, No. 10, p. 443.
\textsuperscript{148} Tikkas on Madhav Midan, Charak, Sushrut seemed to merely enumerate disease types and list symptoms.
\textsuperscript{149} Dhanwantri Vol. 10, No. 4, pp. 444-5.
\textsuperscript{150} Ibid. Emphasis added.
'translation'. Translation was a means of consolidating an unequal power balance and served Orientalist researchers in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century as a means to evaluate indigenous knowledge, and to legitimize and shape a distinct, discursive space for western knowledge.

In the 'scientific' methodology of comparative philology, as employed by Orientalist scholars, translation projects served to generalize certain features that were representative of indigenous learning, which were assumed by indigenous languages like Sanskrit. Based upon the norms of scientific method, Sanskrit was characterized as an insular and obfuscating medium, and it's learning typified as being repetitive, with little concern to grasp scientific 'concepts'.

In being assigned a subordinate position in the hierarchy of 'scientific' languages, Sanskrit represented the limitations of indigenous languages and their inability to be able to translate, western scientific learning. In sum, Sanskrit also stood for western assumptions regarding the irrational and false nature of indigenous knowledge. The limitations of translation in the work of Orientalist scholars such as Tytler explained the false and unscientific nature of indigenous medical knowledge as well. Tytler, as Chief translator and spokesman of medical education in Bengal, argued that the original scientific contents of Galen had been robbed in the process of 'translation', making Yunani medicine only an unscientific reproduction of Greek medicine, also thereby keeping intact the scientific origins of western

151 This is not to imply that Orientalist scholarship was a single, monolithic project, nor that its constructions were themselves unmediated by native informants.
153 Ishita Pande. John Tytler, Translator of Medicine for Colonial Bengal, 1822-1833. M.Phil Seminar paper, I.N.U., 2000. It is interesting that Hakims in the course of constructing a legitimizing 'history' for their learning, claimed that Yunani medicine under Islamic rule had renewed itself so completely that it represented an emphatic break from the Galenic tradition, and in fact had advanced and been rationalized under the inspiration of Arab scholars. Masihul Atibba, Lahore, Jan. 1929, pp. 2-9.
medicine. It had been distorted by the repetitive copying of texts employed by indigenous scholars, and the absence of scientific method in indigenous languages. 154

In the case of the agenda of the Hindi supporting Vaids, ‘translation’ was projected as a means to recover ‘scientific’ constituents to Ayurvedic knowledge. Translation represented, in the summing up of a recent study, a ‘renegotiation of power’. 155 In a crucial sense, by means of Hindi medium translations of Ayurvedic knowledge, Vaid publicists aimed precisely to claim that the original, scientific core of Ayurvedic learning could be resumed thereby allowing Ayurved to derive authority as an indigenous scientific system of knowledge.

However, the relationship that was evoked to pursue this agenda was not between Western and Indian languages, but between an esoterised, indigenous language, namely Sanskrit, and a print publicity based vernacular, Hindi. Yet, under the guise of promoting the interests of Hindi over Sanskrit, the parameters or concerns of power redressal remained the same. They acted out the criticism that had been mounted regarding indigenous learning, but identified and isolated it with the weaknesses of Sanskrit. By this device, there remained the possibility of restoring the original and core nature of Ayurvedic learning, through the traditions of comparative philology, that is by asserting the scientific nature of certain languages. 156 Hindi, in assuming this scientific mediation by means of translation could unshackle Ayurved Vigyan.

154 Ibid.
Since Ayurved was monopolized by Sanskrit and treated as a part of Sanskrit literature, and displayed all the failings of irrational and dogmatic learning. Both its preceptors as well as its students learnt it by rote, without comprehending its ‘concepts’. This ‘repetition’ was characteristic of the retention and transmission of learning that Hindi Vaids identified with Sanskrit, characterized by oral shloka teaching and memory based preservation of knowledge. Both of these tools or methods in Sanskrit learning, the former being open to distortion and imprecision and the latter, inferior to print rendered authority and lacking in any understanding of concepts, made Ayurvedic learning in Sanskrit unscientific and irrational.

Hindi supporting Vaid leaders therefore argued that Ayurved’s real nature, that of being a science concerned with, ‘life and death’ needed to be freed from the limitations of a form oriented or ‘literary’ Sanskrit medium. For, Hindi based translation to recover Ayurved’s scientific constituents so as to be able to convincingly claim a mediating role and function, Hindi-as-science or its scientific nature needed to be elaborated upon.

When Gopinath Gupta and other like minded Hindi supporting Vaids alluded to the developments in Hindi in the past few decades which they alleged Sanskrit Pandits had remained ignorant of, they were describing the changes in Hindi vocabulary and new resources added to the language including ‘modern’, complex new metres and its standardized khari boli canon. In these changes rested also Hindi’s claims not only to being a self sufficient and evolved language that was well up to the task of translation of

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complex Sanskrit sutras, but also its claims to possessing the scientific characteristics to enable translation and to mediate Ayurved Vigyan.

The ideas of influential Hindi publicists, like Mahavir Prasad Dwivedi had already shaped these claims regarding Hindi. They attributed qualities of rationality and 'scienticity' to Hindi. Dwivedi for instance, in projecting the standard form of Hindi had argued that Hindi had a comparatively superior script characterized by scientific method. It was a commonly voiced claim amongst the Hindi literati, that Hindi could effectively mediate scientific knowledge, with even the Nagri Pracharni Sabha's project deriving sanction from these claims.

Many Hindi supporting Vaids were already well known in their work as a Hindi literati, engaged variously in projects of the Nagri Sabha and as members of the Hindi Sahit Sammelan. Their awareness of and participation in projecting the function of a rational and scientific Hindi, was easily transferred to the cause of reframing Ayurvedic knowledge.

Many Hindi based Ayurvedic works, including ironically, a highly esteemed Hindi translation of the Charak Samhita by an Ayurved Mahamandal Pandit were therefore cited to support these claims. Other Vaid leaders like Pandit Thakur Dutt Sharma claimed that Hindi based translations would be scientific as they would preserve Sanskrit terms with which Hindi shared similar origins or roots, while also being able to translate the mool or essence of the sutras.

161 Ibid, pp. 106-09.
162 Prakash, Another Reason, p. 63.
163 Pandit Jagannath Prasad Shukla, Vaid Gopinath Gupta and in Punjab, Pandit Thakur Dutt Sharma were all Hindi Sahit Sammelan leaders, and also associated with Nagri Sabhas.
165 Ayurved Sandesh, 15 Nov. 1940, pp. 26-7.
Hindi based translations, possessed features that were distinct from the ‘imitation’ and word based reproductions that were characteristic of the Sanskrit *tikkas* and were likely to shape a scientific bent to Ayurvedic education. The Hindi educated student of Ayurved it was argued, was more likely to understand the learning taught to him, unlike students taught in Sanskrit. For Hindi based teaching would not encourage Ayurved to be learnt by rote, but require the use of *buddhi* or the application of rational intellect, thereby allowing a scientific or concept based understanding of Ayurvedic knowledge.\(^{166}\)

While Sanskrit based Ayurvedic learning was only open to a limited audience, the translation of Ayurvedic texts into Hindi promised to fulfill an important constituent of scientific knowledge, namely that of having a wide and open ended access. Hindi supporting Vaids, therefore constantly referred to the widespread influence of the Hindi vernacular press, and its cultivation of a critical public of readers and clients\(^ {167}\). Through its medium therefore, *Ayurved Vigyan* would find its own level. Even further, Ayurved’s universal, scientific features promised to attract and contribute to learned communities abroad. In turn, through the medium of Hindi, *Ayurved Vigyan* would also be able to adapt to scientific progress and absorb learning from ‘related subjects’.\(^ {168}\)

Print based authority, by its nature sanctioned a public status to languages like Hindi that enabled them to challenge the position of ‘sacred’ languages like Sanskrit. It was this legitimization by a critical public, that translation into Hindi promised, so as to sustain an exchange that would recover *Ayurved Vigyan*. Jagannath Prasad Shukla, prominent leader of the Hindi


\(^{168}\) Ibid, p.10.
Sahit Sammelan, and many times office bearer of Vaid Sammelans elaborated upon this, saying:

It needs to be asserted that science should not be limited by its links to any language, [in fact] the spread of science is easier and more extensive if it is expressed in the common man’s language....The study of medicine should not be fettered by language. [since] science needs an open arena and it is unwelcome to preserve it within such confines...

The quality of open ended ness that Hindi medium based Ayurvedic education promised, including its reference to the attribute of being able to ‘absorb’ other scientific subjects, referred to an already prevailing trend in private colleges, in teaching western physiology, anatomy and other areas through Hindi books.

However, Hindi itself was not really a channel for lay access to learning as it was hemmed both by its linguistic limitations as well as the politicized competition that was drawing out these concerns regarding reforms in Ayurvedic education. For instance, Hindi in its unified, standardized form with complex new metres and a sanskritised vocabulary was characterized by many of the limitations that its Vaid supporters associated with Sanskrit. It faced the continuing challenge of bridging the popular/literary chasm in the public sphere, with khari boli continuing to be associated with an upper caste literati.

The Ayurved Mahamandal, as well as the Hindi Vaid leaders shared a common concern in that they were both interested in the demarcation of specialized spheres of institutionalized education. Their agenda though coloured by competing interests, had a common, paternalist end that was expressed through the issues relating to Ayurved Vigyan, while their more

170 Orsini, *The Hindi Public Sphere*, pp. 76-86.
pressing motive was to hold the reins of sanctioned practice, and to control
the public meanings of Ayurvedic learning.

Hindi translations were a means at once of recovering and identifying in
_Ayurved Vigyan_, not only the scientific method and content typified by
western medical knowledge, but also of representing the distinct and
particular features that constituted an indigenous, Hindu science. Hindu
religious devotionalism or the symbols and rhetoric that were associated
with it, as well as identification with a wider, politicized Hindu religious
community were therefore naturally assimilated in the construction of an
authoritative discourse for _Ayurved Vigyan_, and located it in a religious
idiom.

Some of the instances, that were cited in support of Hindi based Ayurved for
instance, illustrated this understanding. Many Vaid leaders in trying to find
support for their Hindi related stance cited the example of a Sanskrit based
religious text, the _Valmik Ramayan_, that had been translated with great
public benefit into the vernacular form by the Tulsidas authored
_Ramayan_. The latter, as a metaphor for both lucid and popular translation
also simultaneously evoked enduring images of popular Hindu
devotionalism in North India. Further, the scientific characteristics of Hindi,
that enabled translation were also rhetoricised as the work of the ‘sons of
Saraswati’ in an attempt to weave together indigenous, Hindu learning and
_Ayurved Vigyan_ in to the fabric of a common sacred, Hindu devotional
pantheon.

This however tends to overlook the crucial role played by the overarching
agenda of a Hindu nation-in-the-making, that gave authority to and fused

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171 Arogya Darpan, Vol. 10, No. 8, p. 11.
scientific rhetoric with Hindu religious—cultural, politicized symbols. In the case of the present study, Hindu nationalist alignments or projections provided the overarching popular and political symbol that enabled widespread acceptance amongst an urban, critical public, and collapsed the rhetoric of Hindu/indigenous science and the political interests of the Ayurved Sammelan.

Hindi, through the medium of translation represented a vital link or association for Ayurved Vigyan. It represented an association with the concerns of a Hindu nation. It projected backwards, the image of a unified, culturally monochromatic Hindu nation, which gave Hindi, and therefore Hindi based, Ayurvedic knowledge, a monolithic and homogenous identity. It was with this political image that the publicity of Hindi by its Vaid supporters constantly referred to its ‘future’. 173

Vaid writers, urged the Sanskrit supporting Pandit leadership to turn their faces away from their weakness for ‘antiquated things’, to feel the ‘pulse’ or nabz of the times. 174 Hindi as Rashtrabasha, they argued, was the future of the Hindu nation and promised to catapult Ayurved forward as well.

The conception of Hindi as Rashtrabasha was itself not a single and unambiguously articulated discourse. Recent studies have shown that Hindi—as—Rashtrabasha was projected by various ideologues with often distinct views on its scope and standing. For Malaviya, for instance, Hindi as Rashtra Bhasha was a given, because of its position as the cultural language of the Hindu nation. 175 On the other hand, Gandhi believed that for

175 Orsini, The Hindi Public Sphere, p. 110.
Hindi to assume its functions as Rashtra Bhasha, it needed to overcome its own fractures.\textsuperscript{176}

In an effort to distract from these schisms, Hindi Vaid supporters, tended only to dwell upon the already well known facts regarding the Congress support for Hindi and selectively ignored the challenges in framing a uniform Hindi curriculum. Instead, they identified Hindi’s ‘ancient’ lineage by locating it side by side with Sanskrit, as the political medium of an ancient, Hindu nation.\textsuperscript{177} Vaid leaders were already being assailed by growing demands from Provincial Vaid Sammelans, to be allowed to promote provincial vernaculars as a medium of education. This tendency was only further fuelled by the newly formed Boards of Medicine in various provinces, that were conceding to the demands of including teaching in vernacular languages. Ayurved Sammelan leaders, observing this trend, self-consciously affirmed their choice of Hindi as a nationalist symbol.\textsuperscript{178}

Finally, though linguistic difficulties or challenges were constantly a focus in the Hindi Sanskrit debate, the importance of the possibilities of political patronage was the crucial factor that constructed this discourse. The direct alignment of Ayurvedic learning in the Hindi medium along with nationalist aspirations suggested an immediate interest in the political patronage that could accrue from projecting Ayurvedic learning as a Hindu cultural

\textsuperscript{176} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{177} Ayurved Sandesh, 15 July 1942, p.19. Sanskrit in the context of the representation of the historical evolution of Hindi, was seen by some authors as the original, ‘national’ language and others located Hindi and Sanskrit together in ‘ancient’ India. Dhanwantri, Vol.15, No.12, pp. 1006-7.
\textsuperscript{178} Both Jagannath Prasad Shukla and Thakur Dutt Sharma who were Hindi supporting leaders, were also the moving forces behind initiating a commitment at the Sammelan’s Jodhpur session, for establishing a Central University for Ayurvedic education. They were to lead the fundraising that would aim to mobilize support from various provinces. Arogya Darpan, Vol. 10, No.1, pp. 13-17.
nationalist symbol. In a leading article in a Vaid journal, therefore, the correlations that were being made by Hindi Vaid leaders alluded to the new ‘patrons’ of Vaid politics. It linked at once the politics of Ayurved, Hindi and Hindu nationalism, saying:

The national language of our country is now Hindi, the work of [even] the All India Congress Committee is now compulsorily conducted in Hindi. Hindi is used in the transactions of the Hindu Mahasabha and our Vaid Sammelan. It is understood and studied in all the provinces of India...particularly due to the efforts and propaganda of the Hindi Sahit Sammelan...It is our duty to send qualified Vaidas to all parts of the country. The number of Vaidas in the District Boards and Municipalities is expected to increase day by day...Under the circumstances, it would not be out of place to employ the national language, Hindi more widely in our Ayurved examinations.

Ayurved Vigyan or indigenous science, in its association with Hindi could not only claim an authority, derived as a linguistic-political symbol. Further, through the same alignment and logic it could also assume an independent status and authority that would allow it to address English based Western scientific knowledge upon equal terms, by constructing the claims of an indigenous, Hindu science that legitimized a ‘different’ modernity, that of the representation of a Hindu nation.

Ayurvedic knowledge, could now be liberated from Orientalist assumptions that typified its contents, vis a vis English based western scientific learning. Vaid publicists speaking in support of Hindi argued, that its authority to

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179 Even individual Vaid leaders or their authority (in this case Hindi supporting Gopinath Gupta), was drawn from their association with nationalist activities. An important portion of his life sketch, was devoted to descriptions of his association with swarajya and having employed his skills as a Hindi publicist in publishing and translating nationalist writing, such as his Swaraj ki kunji or his journal, Gandhi Lekhmala, that translated Gandhi’s Gujarati and English writings in Nav Jeewan and Young India into Hindi. Arogya Darpan, Vol. 11, No. 1, pp. 10-11.


181 Ibid.
represent indigenous learning lay in its claim as a national language, just as all nations preserved their learning in their own national tongues.\textsuperscript{182}

The translation of Ayurvedic/indigenous knowledge in a scientific and indigenous medium, Hindi, therefore also gave it a claim to control the interpretations in authoritative terms of Ayurvedic knowledge. The interpretation of indigenous learning by Hindi also centred and resumed power in the hands of Vaid ideologues, on equal terms to Orientalist scholarship and its interpretations of indigenous knowledge.

In an article published at the peak of the Hindi-Sanskrit debate, a Hindi supporter was to sum up this view, citing the work of the ‘Pandit’ of Orientalist translation projects, Max Mueller.\textsuperscript{183} His argument took for granted, the authority of English and Hindi based translation as being equal, and asked that if Max Mueller could be an acknowledged scholar translating ancient, indigenous knowledge as represented by the Vedas, into English, then surely Hindi and by extension its scholars could claim the same authority?

\textsuperscript{183} Arogya Darpan, Vol. 10, No. 7, pp. 9-10.
SECTION III

The relationship of Ayurvedic knowledge with a vernacular, the mediating uses of translation, and the decline-regeneration trajectory of Ayurvedic learning formed the grammar of an ideational discourse that was also redeployed and reinterpreted by Sikh practitioners. Identical devices and ideological correlates however, were summoned to produce distinct and often competing political imaginings. They acted to empower and legitimize networks of Vaid mobilization and corporate interests that resisted and even subverted one another.

In 1918, a well known Sikh Vaid ideologue, Bhai Mohan Singh Vaid, while writing in a Punjabi tract, voiced an argument that was often reiterated and remained a frame of reference for contemporary Sikh Vaid publicists. The currents of the vernacular based claims made in 1940's, can be better contextualised by a brief diversion to review the implications of his rhetoric. The authority of Ayurved as a form of indigenous knowledge, he argued was inextricably linked with the fate of Swadesh Bhasha or indigenous language, in this case ‘Punjabi’. The task of reviving Ayurvedic knowledge was therefore directly linked to projecting it in the medium of Punjabi, by translating the ancient, Sanskrit based Ayurvedic texts into an indigenous language.

Ayurvedic knowledge, it was argued, needed to redefine its authority by means of projecting its learning in Punjabi. Bhai Mohan Singh’s project to publicize Punjabi based translations of Ayurvedic texts, was put forward by

publishing under the imprint of the *Swadesh Bhasha* publications, through essays and columns in his home journal as well as in several contemporary Gurmukhi journals. Ayurvedic writing in Punjabi was to be the means to reach a critical, reading public and more specifically, would share both the concerns and political constituency being associated with Punjabi in the public sphere.

Punjabi, as invoked in the project of Ayurved *prachar* by Mohan Singh Vaid, served as a means to translate and interpret the emblematic Ayurvedic texts such as *Charak, Sushruta* and *Vaghbhatt*. Extracts from them or interpretations of certain Sanskrit *sutras*, were discussed in columns such as the *Ayurved Rathnavli*. In this work of translation undertaken by Sikh Vaid publicists, several such projects were often collaborative efforts between them at translation, as well as in lending publicity to these new vernacular publications.

The aim of translation, was to give Ayurvedic learning the status of *Desi Chikitsa* or indigenous medical knowledge, that derived its status primarily from its prefix that was defined both by a vernacular language, Punjabi, and also the quality of popular access and lay usage provided by this medium. Ayurvedic knowledge in Punjabi, argued Mohan Singh Vaid, made Ayurvedic learning complete or *sampuran* and fully intelligible, and both of these attributes were derived from the nature of that vernacular language itself. The process of rationalizing Ayurvedic learning therefore consisted of preserving as well as communicating its ‘true’, original content, a role that was to be assumed by Punjabi based Ayurved.

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The rationale of associating Punjabi and Ayurvedic knowledge, lay in that they jointly served the function also of social renewal. The prachar of Ayurved in Punjabi or the spread of desi chikitsa, was therefore inserted into the discourse of reformist politics, more particularly the concerns of Khalsa-Singh Sabha initiated social reform. Desi chikitsa by means of Punjabi print publicity was projected by Sikh Vaid publicists, as addressing the health of the community, viewing both moral regeneration and physical health as complementary to one another. The condition of being informed and rational, as well as physically free of disease, was summed up in Mohan Singh Vaid’s writings in his understanding of arogta and Ayurved in the medium of Punjabi legitimized this project of reform.¹⁸⁷

By the latter half of the 1930s, the function of Ayurved prachar in Punjabi seemed increasingly limited by its lack of a distinct idiom. Bhai Mohan Singh Vaid’s Swadesh Bhasha prachar agenda had obtained only limited institutional support from institutions such as the Chief Khalsa Diwan and its patrons, such as through the Khalsa Tract Society.

Part of the problem, lay literally in the language of Ayurvedic prachar. The language of Ayurved prachar in its ‘practical’ content, popular style and mixed vocabulary did not suit the norms and idiom associated with Punjabi writings, as patronized by the Singh Sabha ideologues. Khalsa leaders cum Punjabi ideologues were evolving styles of writing in Punjabi journals, and were also laying down the codes of usage of Punjabi in the public sphere governed by the concerns of Tat Khalsa reform, and therefore composing a Punjabi vocabulary that was divorced from Sanskrit and Braj roots.

The sacred/religious and elevating moral content that was expected of Khalsa sanctioned Punjabi writing was laid down by leading Punjabi literary

¹⁸⁷ See Ch. IV, section II.
icons and Singh Sabha reformers like Bhai Vir Singh, and did not completely sanction and accommodate the practical themes in vernacular prachar, that were associated with the writings of Punjabi Vaid publicists.

The contents of trend setting, literary flagships of Khalsa writing, such as Dr. Charan Singh’s Nirguniara or his son, Bhai Vir Singh’s Khalsa Samachar were distinct from the ‘spoken’ Punjabi style of writing assumed by Vaid publicists. The latter, also made liberal use of Hindi, Sanskrit based terms in their translations of Hindi tracts on Ayurved or of Sanskrit based Ayurvedic texts all of which evoked a Hindu idiom. The refusal by the editor of Khalsa Samachar, a leading symbol of Tat Khalsa journalism, to review and publicize Bhai Mohan Singh Vaid’s Punjabi Ayurvedic journal, was therefore an important public expression, of the reservations of Singh Sabha ideologues, regarding the place of Vaid prachar in Punjabi.

Aside from the problems in adopting the form and content that was now being associated with Punjabi, Ayurved prachar in Punjabi also had to confront the need to introduce more ideological detailing, so as to construct a discourse concerning Punjabi based desi chikitsa that gave it distinct, legitimizing symbols. For, part of the limitations in accommodating desi chikitsa or desi vaidak within the Punjabi based politics of Singh Sabha reform, were also that ideologues like Bhai Mohan Singh Vaid employed a frame of reference as well as images that were already coloured in their appropriation as Hindu linguistic-political symbols and formed a part of a unified, Hindu nationalist identification.

Desi Ayurved as elaborated by Mohan Singh Vaid was entrenched in the ‘ancient’ locale of a Hindu cultural past. It traced the trajectory of Hindu

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189 Ibid, p. 384. Also confirmed in an interview with the late Sukhbir Singh Vaid, (S/o B.M.S. Vaid), at Tarn Taran.
scientific progress, as well as its decay and dissolution with the onslaught of rival, Islamic rule that brought Yunani medicine, and subsequently the impact of British conquest and western medicine.\textsuperscript{190}

Mohan Singh Vaid's reconstruction of an Ayurvedic past, and its association with Punjabi or Swadesh Bhasha aimed only to recover and appropriate Ayurved's Sanskrit based literature. He therefore attempted a reconstruction of a history of Ayurvedic knowledge, by evading the construction of an alternative set of images and symbols, or by outlining a more elaborate role for Punjabi translation.

In his outlines of the history of Ayurved, Bhai Mohan Singh Vaid simply resorted to the device of inserting a separate definition of Hindu Ayurved or desi chikitsa. By the 'Hindu' prefix to Ayurved, he explained, there was only a reference to the 'original' meaning of Hindu, namely in the sense of an indigenous race, and a derivation based upon the physical origins of Ayurvedic knowledge from 'Hindu' soil, water and other elements, that formed also its materia medica.\textsuperscript{191} Hindu as in the politicized reference to a phirka or religious community he clarified, did not form a part of the early historical origins of Desi Ayurved.\textsuperscript{192}

Desi Ayurved, and its publicity in the writings of Sikh Vaid publicists still remained tentative and equivocal in its engagement with Khalsa publicity and mobilization in the public sphere, until the lifetime of its most articulate ideologue, Bhai Mohan Singh Vaid. In the latter half of 1930s and 1940s however, there was further elaboration of the ideas that anchored desi chikitsa or Ayurvedic knowledge in Punjabi, within the boundaries of Khalsa cultural-political consolidation in the public sphere.

\textsuperscript{190} Report in Dukh Niwaran, Feb. 1911, pp. 11-15.
\textsuperscript{191} Dukh Niwaran, Feb. 1911, pp. 47-9.
\textsuperscript{192} Report in, Dukh Niwaran, Feb. 1911, p. 11.
The key to this ideological integration, lies in the changing scope of Sikh-Khalsa politics in the 1940's, in the years contemporary to changes in strategies of Sikh Vaid publicity as well as in the emergence of the Punjabi Ayurvedic Tibb Sabha and its concerns. The place of Punjabi in Khalsa mobilization now had a distinct status and fixity as a public symbol whose concerns and public meanings were controlled by the aspirations of Khalsa politics.\textsuperscript{193}

The Akalis were facing the challenge of ongoing constitutional negotiations, and the need to define their position vis a vis Congress Nationalist politics. Already, the threat of a Hindu-Muslim split of the province was challenging Sikh interests, and an uneasy relationship with the Congress such as the Akali party's rejection of the boycott of the War effort had shown widening schisms of political interest.\textsuperscript{194} The Rajaji Formula had only heightened Sikh insecurities in Punjab,\textsuperscript{195} culminating in significant declarations by Akali leaders in the following years, that attempted to trace their separate political trajectory and interest.

The Akali party and its leadership, as the organizational representatives of the Sikhs, now monopolized the role of being sole spokesman for the Khalsa Panth.\textsuperscript{196} By August 1944 therefore, Master Tara Singh had declared the Sikhs to be a nation and their interests to lie separately from that of Punjabi Muslims and Hindus.\textsuperscript{197} Within two years, in a declaration to the Cabinet Mission the Akali Dal had affirmed this interest, by putting forward a resolution that asserted the demand of a separate Sikh State.\textsuperscript{198}

\textsuperscript{193} Or its political form as represented by the Akali party.
\textsuperscript{195} Ibid., p. 206.
\textsuperscript{196} Ibid., pp. 206-7.
\textsuperscript{197} Ibid., p. 206.
\textsuperscript{198} Ibid.
Punjabi, was now the prominent symbol of these political demands. Akali leaders had a definite political agenda that was attached to the representation of Punjabi, and they had narrowed the scope of its public meanings to project it as being the subak boli or provincial language of Punjab, based on its claims as the indigenous, matra bhasha or spoken mother tongue of the province. Its claims they argued, were therefore superior to Urdu, the language introduced by the State, or Hindi, the provincial language of another province now being transplanted in Punjab.

The cutting edge to claiming provincial level representation for Punjabi, therefore came from proving its status in terms of its ‘historical’ importance, its literature and ‘evolved’ structure, all of which were concerns shared by other language based, cultural-political claims in other provinces. However, in the case of the Khalsa separatist claims, the specific challenge also lay in demonstrating that Punjabi in Gurumukhi had a provincial or secular rather than merely sacred status. Its usage and origins needed to be established beyond transmission of Sikh religious literature alone, so as to entitle it to wider claims in Punjabi politics.

In March 1944, an article in the Akali, an emerging combative spokesman of Sikh linguistic-political claims, voiced these concerns by urging its readers to identify and project a literature other than the sacred in Punjabi, since ‘the language of the Punjabis is being made out to be the dharmik language of the Sikhs’.\(^{199}\)

Vaid publicists were able to secure wider support and more substantial political will from Akali leaders, Chief Khalsa Diwan members. They projected the issue of Ayurvedic knowledge in Punjabi medium to be part of the cause of Punjabi based education, that was occupying the forefront of

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\(^{199}\) *Tribune*, 14 Oct. 1945.
Akali attempts to secure a provincial level status for Punjabi-Gurumukhi in higher education.\textsuperscript{200}

The Akali’s were already putting forward claims for the inclusion of Punjabi in University departments and the activities of the Punjabi Sahit Samellan stimulated comment and coverage in the Punjab press.\textsuperscript{201} The adoption of Punjabi as his court language by the Maharaja of Patiala, was an occasion for pressing Punjabi’s claims for representation more strongly by arguing that its claims were based upon its status as \textit{subak boli}, and therefore presented no threat whatsoever, to Urdu or Hindi.\textsuperscript{202}

Sikh Vaid publicists in these years, began to widen the scope of their activities in the sphere of Punjabi print publicity, both in the wide range of journals, translated texts that were edited and published, as well as, in their use of the various symbols and forums that were now associated with Punjabi \textit{prachar}.

As mentioned in the previous chapter, the 1930’s had seen the birth of a number of new Vaid journals in Punjabi. This produced Vaid publicists who were now also able to obtain greater sanction, amongst both the institutions that were defining the political representation of Punjabi, as well as in cultivating networks amongst the Punjabi press, and its newer clients and constituents.

Vaid editors of Punjabi based journals, formed a small but locally reputed literati, that was largely based in Amritsar, with many of these Vaid Editors

\textsuperscript{200} Inauguration of the All India Punjabi Conference by Sardar Baldev Singh. \textit{Tribune}, 14 Oct 1945. Claims regarding the provincial level status of Punjabi and the demand for Punjabi in University education was discussed at various Punjabi conferences. In this case, "Report on Punjabi Conference at Gujranwali", in \textit{Rocana Akali}, 13\textsuperscript{th} Feb 1942, p. 3.

\textsuperscript{201} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{202} Ibid.
having a reputation as poets, and writers such as Vaid Mahant Bishan Singh Kreet and Vaidraj Pratap Singh. They borrowed in style and vocabulary, from ongoing trends in Punjabi writing in these years, such as in employing an Urdu, Persian, English based vocabulary. These Vaid Editors imitated the form and style that characterized the ‘Sahityak’ or literary based Punjabi journals in these years.

Despite such attempts to integrate with contemporary Punjabi writing by means of reviews as well as in republishing popular literary features, Ayurvedic journals and Vaid tracts still remained self consciously popular and political, with a focus that was aimed more at addressing themes and ideas that were a part of contemporary Akali politics, in their efforts to fuse desi chikitsa with the idiom of Punjabi prachar.

An innovation in the content of Punjabi based Ayurvedic writing, was therefore to turn the relevance of Ayurved to the issues of rural reform. For instance, a growing number of Punjabi journals were addressing issues concerning rural problems and the task of rural upliftment in these years, with publications such as Dukhi Duniya, Preet Sainik, Saccha Sajjan expressing regular interest in these issues, with the last being produced by a rural reform committee in Amritsar.

Vaid journals and Ayurvedic prachar in Punjabi, had a sphere of readers that were still largely a small town based network of a middle class clientele. Their interests in ‘rural’ concerns as a means of publicizing Ayurvedic learning was also distinct from the aspirations of Hindu Vaid publicists who were also stating their commitment to the nationalist agenda

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204 Ibid.
205 Khush Dil, April 1935, pp. 16-17.
of rural village upliftment, and sought to seek patronage through state
sponsored rural dispensaries.

Punjabi based Ayurvedic journals or Sikh Vaid-Hakim edited journals, were
‘translating’ Ayurvedic learning, for a potential rather than a real and
existing constituency of readers. Ayurved in Punjabi or desi chikitsa was
addressing the rural public, or the symbolic, catchment area of Akali-Sikh
politics and attempting to move away from the liberal, middle class
reformist frame of reference that had been so far closely identified with
erlier Vaid publicists.

Vaid publicists and ideologues of the Punjabi Ayurvedic Tibb Sabha for
instance, who were regular contributors to the journal Khush Dīl attempted
to root Ayurvedic learning in a ‘popular’ medical culture by offering
Ayurvedic ‘nuskhas’ and guidelines to rural health. In this commitment to
rural health, desi chikitsa was distancing itself from the image of a scholarly
and urban learned practice in a Sanskritised Hindu idiom, to speak instead,
to immediate Punjabi or local concerns such as through columns like Pind
Sudhar or in articles that addressed the concerns of daily farm life.²⁰⁷

The changing form and content in Punjabi based writing on desi chikitsa,
were also evident in changes in the focus of the translation projects. Bhai
Mohan Singh Vaid in his translations had made the Sanskrit based Ayurved
texts the object of his Punjabi prachar. In later years, when for instance a
series called the Sasta Pustak Mandal was founded for Punjabi Vaidak
translations,²⁰⁸ its frame of reference only included the Gurumukhi-Braj
based Ayurved tikkas that were to be translated into a ‘readable’ Punjabi.²⁰⁹

²⁰⁷ The ‘Pind Sudhar’ column in Sukh Chain, Oct.-Nov. 1934.
²⁰⁸ Interview with Mahant Mohan Das regarding Punjabi-Ayurvedic publishing. He himself
was the current president of the Punjabi Vaid Mandal and his father, was the founder of the
journal Vaid Visharad, and of the Sasta Sahit Mandal. He revealed that such efforts found
The representation of the issue of desi chikitsa, with the wider cause of the linguistic-cultural interests of Punjabi was shaped by Sikh publicist editors, who also formed the leadership of the Punjabi Ayurvedic Tibb Sabha. Their writings were able to mobilize widespread publicity in the Punjabi Gurumukhi press. Not only was there a coverage of the proposed formation of a Board of Medicine, but also statements and coverage of the demands that had been voiced by the Punjabi Ayurved Tibb Sabha. All of this demonstrated the networks that these practitioners editors were able to mobilize in the Punjabi press, including in Newspapers like the Rozana Ajit and the Akali Patrika.

Vaid Editors and leaders of the Punjabi Ayurvedic Tibb Sabha also found considerable support from the organized interests that represented Khalsa Sikh politics. While much of this support was not translated into larger projects, such as the construction of a Punjabi medium Vaid Tibb College nor even in the sanction of a separate course and institutional wing, for desi chikitsa in the Khalsa college at Amritsar. Yet, there were often other instances of political patronage.

In the 1940’s, the Chief Khalsa Diwan chose a well known Punjabi Ayurved Tibbi Sabha leader, as the Editor of its journal, Doctor. The Editor in turn, firmly charted a political content in the periodical, putting forward the distinct stance of the Sikh political leadership, on issues such as the Khalsa

support from market oriented publishers such as Buta Singh Pratap Singh in Mai Sewa Bazaar, Amritsar. May 1999, Batala, Vaid Visharad, August 1953, p. 20.

209 Ibid.

210 The Ajit, Akali, Daler Khalsa, Khalsa Advocate, Khalsa Sewak, Panth Prerak, for instance reported the controversy in the Sabha’s leadership in Oct. 1945 and also the Lahore Conference. Copies of the Charter of demands and Press note were sent. Khush Dil, May 1945, p. 5. Note from Akhara Antaryamian (headed by Mahant Ganesha Singh who was also a leader of the Punjabi Ayurvedic Tibb Sabha) regarding the Lahore Conference, cited reports in various newspapers including the Ajit and Khalsa Samachar, Khush Dil, Oct. 1945, p. 9.
Defence League. 211 After nearly a decade of such editorial inputs, the Chief Khalsa Diwan strongly represented his case as the Sikh nominee, on the Punjab Board of Indigenous Medicine. 212

The Punjabi Ayurvedic Tibbi Sabha leaders, were also able to obtain public statements in support of their campaign from Master Tara Singh. 213 Their demands regarding Punjabi education found support also from the Shiromani Gurudwara Prabandhak Committee and other leaders who endorsed their claims for Sikh representation. These leaders publicly acknowledged their acceptance of a Charter presented by the Punjabi Ayurvedic Tibbi Sabha leaders that demanded the distribution of desi medicine in Gurudwaras, and for a curriculum for desi medical training in various Sikh institutions. 214

The support by Khalsa patrons of Ayurvedic knowledge in Punjabi, lay not merely in shared concerns regarding Punjabi medium education. Punjabi supporting desi Vaidas, had in these years also began to cultivate a distinct set of ideas that projected the authority or sanction of their learning, by means of addressing the challenges that faced Sikh linguistic-cultural politics. Sikh Vaid publicists were beginning to provide in their outline of Punjabi based desi chikitsa, an authoritative frame of reference for Punjabi and, therefore, Sikh interests, that supported Punjabi’s quest for asserting its ‘evolved’ status and its historical importance both of which were validated in the assertion of a rational-critical, scientific tradition of desi Ayurved.

211 Doctor, Amritsar, 30 Sept. 1946.
212 *A Petition to the Governor and Education Minister*. Reported in Khush Dil, Oct. 1945, p. 21.
Earlier, in Bhai Mohan Singh Vaid's writings, desi chikitsa in Punjabi had addressed an agenda of translating Sanskrit texts and towards making Punjabi a wide ranging and accessible medium that spanned the Tat Khalsa community. During the 1940's, a group of Punjabi Vaid ideologues were to turn the focus towards establishing an authoritative Punjabi literature as represented by Ayurvedic texts, so as to secure political representation for Sikh interests, and thereby to consolidate Sikh Quam based claims now at the level of provincial politics.

These priorities were in evidence in the oft voiced programme of the Punjabi Ayurvedic Tibb Sabha, both as it instructed its branch committees as well as in the discussions and agenda that it set forth during the large Conference that it hosted at Ramgarh. It urged newly formed Committees, to collect indigenous medical literature in Punjabi, as well as to forward relevant titles and works so that it could collect them to form a library.215 The Punjabi Ayurvedic Tibb Sabha leaders at their Conference, also chose titles for essays and written contributions that were intended for publicity and discussion with subjects that ranged from the histories of Ayurvedic and Tibbi literature in Punjabi, to the importance of Punjabi medium learning of desi chikitsa.216

In later years, a collection of writings in a prominent Vaid journal carried a piece by a well known Punjabi literary figure, Dhani Ram Chhatrik, who reviewed the function and place that Ayurvedic knowledge in Punjabi texts had so far played. Punjabi Vaids, he wrote, possessed a literature that supported the contention that the Punjabi language had its own sahit or literature and was an independent language.217 Vaidic Vidya and its Punjabi

216 Khush Dil, Oct. 1945, p. 23.
texts needed therefore to be encouraged, with Vaid authors being urged to produce even a larger body of Ayurvedic writing in Punjabi.\textsuperscript{218}

The writings in Punjabi based Vaid journals, as well as the rhetoric of Punjabi Ayurvedic Tibb Sabha leaders were therefore moving towards identifying the distinct status of Ayurvedic literature in Punjabi. They were trying to reconstruct its historical lineage, and to outline an emblematic corpus of Ayurvedic texts that sanctioned this contemporary agenda. Punjabi, or its vernacular based translations and edited works were identified so as to empower a linguistic-political discourse that would validate the modernity of ethnic, Sikh politics-in-the making.

Punjabi/Gurumukhi based Ayurvedic texts and writings, were identified as representing a composite \textit{Dharmik Vaidak} canon of learning that in turn defined the nature of the \textit{Punjabi Vaid}. Ayurvedic learning in Punjabi underlined the relationship between medicine and religion and therefore the crucial link between Punjabi Ayurved and Khalsa Sikh interest. Its distinct role lay in that it represented both Punjabi as in Sikh religious interests, and a rational-scientific intellectual learning.

Therefore, in a barely disguised parallel with the claims of contemporary Akali ideologues, \textit{Dharmik Vaidak} learning also stood for Sikh claims to linking in their Khalsa based politics the command of spiritual and temporal authority.\textsuperscript{219} The common ground for the spiritual and the material, in this case political interests, was therefore also the claim of Punjabi Vaid practice and the public status of \textit{Dharmik Vaidak} learning.

\textsuperscript{218} Ibid. \textit{'Vaidic Vidya'} was frequently the term used for ‘Ayurvedic learning’ by Vaid authors writing in the medium of Punjabi.

\textsuperscript{219} Kapur, Sikh Separatism, p. 207.
The challenge of defining the relationship between Punjabi and deshi chikitsa depended upon identifying therefore the contents of a Dharmik Vaidak tradition. The construction of this Dharmik Vaidak discourse to secure the authority of the ‘Punjabi Vaid’ was initiated by a core group of leaders from ascetic Sampradays and Vaid publicists from Amritsar. A group of leaders from ascetic sects had, under the leadership of Mahant Ganesha Singh, founded a Punjabi Vaid Mandal. In the 1930’s, the Mandal’s activities remained limited and scarcely find mention in contemporary records. However, its leadership soon gained prominence in founding the Punjabi Ayurvedic Tibb Sabha, and Mahant Ganesha Singh and his Sant confreres dominated the office bearing posts of the Sabha.

The assumption of the role as ideologues and organizing leaders of Punjabi Vaids by these Amritsar based Mahant leaders needs to be understood and located in their skills in navigating the print medium. The majority of these ideologues were important leaders from the Nirmala sect and its Deras in Amritsar. The Nirmala leaders were particularly suited to assume the leadership to found a corporate body for Sikh Vaid practitioners, as they had, since the founding of their order, been traditionally associated with overcoming the brahminical hold over Sanskrit based learning. They had assumed a role as composers of vernacular tikkas and translations and were engaged with Punjabi-Gurumukhi based teaching, that included the dissemination of Ayurvedic knowledge. They therefore formed a traditional corporate body that had an association with Ayurvedic learning.

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220 Interviews with Mahant Mohan Das, President Punjabi Vaid Mandal, Amritsar. May, 1999 at Amritsar and Batala. Exact date of founding not known even to present day office bearers of the Punjabi Vaid Mandal.
221 Khush Dil, Feb. 1946, pp. 1-2, Mahant Ganesha Singh was also President of the Sabha (1945-1946). Khush Dil, Feb. 1946, p. 6.
222 Interview with Mahant Mohan Das, President Punjabi Vaid Mandal and Dr. Soch, well known Punjabi author and associated with Mahant Hakam Singh of Dera Baba Mishra Singh, a well known Nirmala establishment in Amritsar. The latter had also been President of the Punjabi Vaid Mandal.
223 Pritam Singh, Nirmal Sampraday, p. 234.
and possessed an institutional network of akharas, including ties with other sectarian akharas and pathsalas in Amritsar.

The Nirmalas combined this intellectual association with the resources to mobilize and host the organization of Punjabi Vaid practitioners. The Dera Antaryamian and Dera Baba Mishra Singh, to which two of the founding leaders of the Punjabi Vaid Mandal belonged, were the sites for the Mandal’s meetings and were also associated with organizing medical-aid Aushadalyas in and around the city.

Their role as Punjabi-Vaid leaders and ideologues in these years, also emerged from their success in relocating their traditional skills in a written, learned tradition, into acquiring print based authority as Punjabi publicists. Even at the turn of the century, Nirmala Mahants had begun to publish Gurumukhi based journals and to orient their translation and tikkas towards a print created urban audience. Nirmala authored Ayurvedic texts in Punjabi began to take a printed form at the turn of the century.

Mahant Gurditt Singh, initiated one of the earliest efforts to publish Ayurvedic texts in Punjabi, and was also the founder Editor of the Nirmal Pattar, the earliest Nirmala Journal in Gurumukhi. These Nirmala publications had an enduring popularity, that was attested by numerous reprints of these well known tikkas. Many Nirmala authors were contributors to Vaid journals and adopted an increasingly Punjabi based vocabulary over the usage of Hindi/Braj or Sanskrit according to the

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224 Interview with Mahant Bhupinder Singh, Dera Baba Mishra Singh, Amritsar, 1999.
225 Mahant Gurditt Singh published works like the Chikitsa Kosh (1888), Lollam Chandrodhay Tikka (1888) and ran the Nirmal Pattar (1909-1915). The journal was revived by Mahant Bishan Singh Kreeth between 1937-1948, and carried news regarding the Punjabi Ayurved Tibb Sabha’s activities and Punjabi Vaid demands of the Board of Medicine. Pritam Singh, Nirmal Sampraday, p. 259 and Index.
226 Such as, Megh Binod Prakash, Tibb Kalanidhi, Gangyati Nidan and Ras Manjari. The Megh Binod and Nidan texts are still available in reprints at Partap Singh Buta Singh book shop, Mai Sewa Bazaar. Interview with owner, April 1999.
requirements of the market for printed Punjabi Vaidak books.\textsuperscript{227} By the 1940's, Nirmala ideologues and publicists were known figures in the Punjabi press and their journals gave them a useful lever of print based authority in publicizing the concerns of 'Punjabi Vaids', including for instance, the coverage by a Nirmala journal of the concerns amongst Sikh practitioners vis a vis the formation of the Board of Medicine.\textsuperscript{228}

The central, unifying focus of the Punjabi, \textit{Dharmik Vaidak} tradition was outlined by Nirmala Vaid ideologues such as Mahant Hakam Singh, who located the city of Amritsar as the converging center of this discourse.\textsuperscript{229} A genealogy of 'Punjabi Vaid' writing was reconstructed and pieced together by the device of identifying \textit{Punjabi Pracharak Vaid Vidvans}, and their works, all of whom composed Punjabi based Ayurvedic literature that formed a tradition that he called, \textit{Amritsar Vidya}.

This Ayurvedic literature was termed as the work of \textit{Vidvans} or scholars, so that it gave Punjabi Vaid writing a literary, 'high culture' based sanction. Further, by this device, the tailend of the '\textit{Punjabi Pracharak Vaid Vidvans}' that consisting of publicists such as Bhai Mohan Singh Vaid, also drew authority for their print publicity from this intellectual projection.

The intellectual lineage of the various \textit{Vidvans} named as a part of this tradition, included Vais who had little direct association with Amritsar based learning or even lacked any intellectual continuities between

\textsuperscript{227} Mahant Hari Singh of Dera Gali Bagh Waali was a popular Nirmala publicist. He was Editor of \textit{Punjabi Vaid}. Interview with Dr. Soch, Amritsar. Vaid Mahant Gurditt Singh was a regular contributor to \textit{Sukh Jeewan}, along with well known Vaids like Mohan Singh and Thakur Dutt Sharma. \textit{Sukh Jeewan}, Amritsar, Sept.-Oct. 1917, pp. 30-1; in the same journal, Nov. 1917, pp. 18-22.
\textsuperscript{228} \textit{Nirmal Pattar}, 6 Oct. 1945.
\textsuperscript{229} Interview with Mahant Tarun Parshad, head of Akhara Balanand regarding the content of traditional Ayurvedic classes at his own Akhara, as well as regarding other Udasin Akharas such as Brahmbutta.
themselves in the corpus of their work. Bhai Mohan Singh Vaid’s association with Amritsar Vidya was largely limited to his engagements with the Amritsar based Wazir Hind Press, that published some of his Punjabi translations of Ayurvedic texts and his works and tracts had no substantial reference to the writings of Punjabi tikkakars. The various tikkakars, and the authors of commentaries and anthologies in Punjabi, such as Muni Meghraj and Muni Gangyati, or Baba Amir Das and Sheetal Das, as well as Sant Pratap Singh and Pandit Tara Singh, belonged to various distinct sectarian traditions that included Dhundia Jain groups, Udasins and Nirmalas, with very little evidence of any wider language based linkages to their writings.

Yet these Sant-Vaid were important and familiar symbols, for those educated even in the preliminaries of vernacular based Ayurvedic learning. Nirmala enterprise in printing as well as other private publishers in the city, had played an important role in making these works more readily available. Even in the 1940’s-50’s, Gangyati’s work on Nidaan, Amir Das’s Vaid Kalpatru and Meghraj’s Megh Binod. were reprinted and taught in local schools or pathshalas that produced vernacular educated Vaid, with only a more restricted stream of students venturing for tuitions in the Sanskrit based Ayurvedic texts.230

Amritsar, was the crucial integrating symbol that underpinned the Dharmik Vaidak tradition of Punjabi based Ayurved. Amritsar and its historical association with Punjabi Vidvans, formed a ‘recent’ past that consisted of locating Punjabi Ayurvedic learning amongst intellectuals of the eighteenth and nineteenth century. This served to marginalize the ancient, ‘Hindu’ past that had so far been a central focus in all attempts to invoke the authority of

230 Interview with Mahant Tarun Parshad, head of Akhara Balanand regarding the content of traditional Ayurvedic classes at his own Akhara, as well as regarding other Udasin Akharas such as Brahmbutta.
a unified, rational-critical Ayurvedic tradition. Amritsar’s recent *Dharmik Vaidak* past consisted of its association in Sikh literature as *Guru Nagri*, and its association particularly, with Guru Ram Das and Guru Arjan Dev in Sikh religious history.

Amritsar as the centre of ‘Punjabi Vaid’ learning combined at once, the challenges of representing an indigenous tradition that claimed in symbolic terms to fuse Sikh religious history on the one hand, as well as scholarly learning and medical knowledge on the other. Amritsar as a center of traditional education, with its akharas and taksals already had an important association with indigenous education, even being hailed as a second Kashi. In its Deras and akharas, it also represented Punjabi-Gurumukhi teaching that had now metamorphosed as the center of institutionalized Sikh education, as well as in a growing Punjabi press. This allusion to its reputation as a center of scholarship, was therefore tied up with the heart of the city’s sacred geography, that was vested in its *Amrit Sarovar* or tank with its sacred, healing properties, to represent indigenous, medical learning.

The Mahant ideologues of the Punjabi Vaid Mandal also needed to address and reorient within the Punjabi *Dharmik-Vaidak* tradition, the challenge

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231 Amritsar as *Guru Nagri* and also its importance in the Nirmala Rahit Maryada that prescribes their gatherings for Diwali and Baisakhi in Amritsar. Pritam Singh, *Nirmal Sampraday*, p. 493.


233 Punjabi Vaidak and its construction of a mythology around Amritsar, shares broad similarities with the Tamil Siddha medical tradition and its mythological focus upon *Palani*, the town identified as the ‘centre’ of siddha medicine. Palani, was associated with the Siddha yogi Pokar, and both the hill associated with his life as well as the deity in the temple are known to have healing powers. Siddha medicine disassociated itself from the brahminical, Sanskrit based Ayurvedic tradition and based itself upon Tamil literature and projected a Saivite-based Tamil ethnic distinctness. Margaret Trawick, ‘Death and Nurturance in Indian Systems of Healing’, in Charles Leslie ed. *Paths to Asian Medical Knowledge*, pp. 143-55.
posed by interpretations of Ayurvedic mythology as consolidated by a Hindu Vaid leadership, including representatives of the Ayurved Sammelan. Punjabi or Desi Vaidak, claimed to be defined by an indigenous, Punjabi based tradition that referred to the physical contours or geography of Punjab, that consisted of projecting back the composite, political-physical contours of the province. Punjabi Ayurvedic learning was derived from and defined by this geographical-historical entity that also simultaneously represented the linguistic boundaries of the ‘Punjabi’ Sikh identity.

For instance, Dhanwantri Utsav was being widely observed by Vaid practitioners as a celebration of a collective, corporate identity largely due to its projection by Hindi Vaid publicists and Ayurved Sammelan leaders since the 1920’s. It evoked the Hindu mythology of the Vishnu avtaar and his birth as Divodasa, King of Kashi. Its widespread celebration in various Vaid Mandal and even Ayurvedic Tibbia Committees also prompted the attempts by Punjabi Vaid ideologues to integrate it within their discourse.

The mythology of Dhanwantri’s birth was now retold by employing the symbols associated with Punjabi Vaidak learning, namely, by claiming his association with desi or Punjabi soil and its physical elements. Since the Punjabi Vaid’s Dharmik Vaidak identity, was anchored in a Punjabi/Sikh historical cultural milieu that was distinct from Hindu symbols. Dhanwantri Utsav was further ‘indigenized’ in the Punjabi context, by reframing even its association with ‘Vishnu’. Dhanwantri’s birth, it was argued, was also authoritatively documented in Guru Gobind Singh’s work on the 24 Vishnu Avtaars. Mahant Hari Singh, a Nirmala Vaid from Amritsar therefore described the Dhanwantri Utsav as follows:

234 Dhanwantri was taught the knowledge of healing by Indra, and as King Divodasa in Kashi, he taught it to Susruta who wrote the Susruta Samhita. Earlier discussion on Dhanwantri Utsav in Ch. 5, Section II.
Punjab's Vaids and Hakims need to celebrate Dhanwantri Diwas with joy and fervour, as Dhanwantri chose Punjab for his abode and it was from here that he bestowed his knowledge upon the rest of the world. Punjab's land has thus been made sacred, and Punjab and Punjabi Vaids therefore share a deep bond with Dhanwantriji that cannot lessen even with the passage of time.236

In the construction of a linguistic-cultural tradition to anchor the claims of the Punjabi based identity for Sikh Vaids, its ideologues faced their most important challenge in needing to define it in terms that were distinct from the overarching claims of Hindi. Hindi was not only a rival provincial language but also threatened to assume a subsuming role as Rashtrabhasha or in its representation of Hindu nationhood. In more general terms, in provincial politics in the 1940's, this was reflected in a growing Hindi-Punjabi rivalry in the public sphere. Public confrontations for instance in the course of holding rival Hindi and Punjabi Sammelans were now aggravated by a hardline vernacular press that represented these interests in various rival newspapers.237

Punjabi Vaid leaders therefore urgently faced the challenge of consolidating the legitimacy of their politics and Dharmik Vaidak rhetoric, in the face of critics who alleged that Sant Vaid scholarship was merely Hindi-Braj in the Gurumukhi script. Ayurvedic literature in Gurumukhi some Akali scholars argued, was in every way a part of Hindi literature in its praanali or literary tradition, its linguistic structure, as well as in its vocabulary and therefore could not be considered as representing a lineage of Punjabi writing at all.

This criticism was directed not merely at Ayurvedic literature in Gurumukhi, but more keenly at the role and beliefs of the ascetic leaders

237 The Akali's writings particularly caused tensions, such as over the issue of Sikh's eating cow's flesh, prompting the mobilization of Hindu Sabha Dharm Rakshak Mandals in Amritsar. Baba Khadak Singh's Hindu-Sikh Samellan at Delhi, the Hindu Sikh Milap Congress at Lyallpur were efforts to diffuse this confrontation in the public arena. Reports in Hindu Milap, 15 Sept. 1943, p. 3; 11 Aug., 1943, p. 3.
and ideologues constructing Desi Vaidak and the identity of Punjabi/Sikh practitioners. Control over the public meanings of Punjabi linguistic-political representation was now monopolized by Akali leaders and Khalsa ideologues, and therefore integration within Khalsa beliefs and public symbols was also a prerequisite. The contents of the Punjabi Vaid canon had to also be within the cultural universe constructed by Tat Khalsa beliefs. The ascetic sects who were engaged in projecting the Punjabi-Vaid discourse, needed therefore to gain acceptance by following the grammar of Khalsa orthodoxy, so as to legitimize the language of their ideological claims.

The two Sikh ascetic sampradays, most actively associated with the composition of Gurumukhi based Ayurvedic literature and its practice, namely the Udasins and the Nirmalas, already had a history of confronting the predominance of Tat Khalsa beliefs, and their institutionalized control over Sikh shrines and resources of the Panth. The Tat Khalsa in their claims as Sikh sole spokesmen of Panthic interest and Sikh politics, had already drawn Udasin Mahants into a long drawn tussle over the control of Sikh Gurudwaras. Udasin association with Ayurvedic learning persisted upon the initiative of individual heads of various akharas in Amritsar,238 while there was already a collective movement away from a Tat Khalsa and Punjabi based frame of beliefs.

Their public manifestations of their learning emphasized their Shivite beliefs and tended increasingly towards Hindu cultural-political mobilization.239 In terms of situating their intellectual tradition therefore,

238 Interview with Mahant Tarun Parshad, who said that in Amritsar city the largest Udasin Deras such as the Akhara Balanand, Brahmbutta, and Sangalwalla had maintained Ayurved classes taught by Voids of the well known Dharnidhar and Joshi families of Amritsar, until the 1970’s or so.

they located their Braj-Gurumukhi literature as Hindi based Sant Bani. Their alignments with Hindi, Brahminical Sanskrit based learning and Hindu Ayurved were in evidence during the Kumbh celebrations in 1938, when the Udasin Panchaiti Akhara hosted members of Brahman Sabhas as well delegates of the Vaid Sammelan and the Hindi Sahit Sammelan.

The Nirmalas in Punjab, had at an earlier juncture been perceived by a British scholar of Sikh religion, as having been assimilated into Hinduism, due to their increasing preoccupation with Vedantic philosophy and Shastric doctrine. The Nirmal Panchaiti Akhara too, had been engaged with its founding patrons, the Phul rulers, in its resistance to accepting the observation of Khalsa beliefs.

Nirmala ideologues had subsequently made substantial overtures to be integrated within the Khalsa orthodoxy, by a selective emphasis of their history and by elaborating upon their relationship with Punjabi. Influential Nirmala historians such as Giani Gian Singh, emphasized the origins of Nirmala organization within Khalsa beliefs. Their contribution to Khalsa reform through their association with the Singh Sabha movement, and other aspects of Khalsa politics were highlighted, while their Sanskrit scholarship and all association with Hindu religious literature was rarely mentioned.

Nirmala Mahants, as well other Vaid leaders belonging to ascetic orders responded to the debate regarding the nature of Braj-Gurumukhi literature,

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240 Ibid.
244 Dial Singh, Giani Gian Singh, p. 27.
245 Nirmalas now emphasize their contribution to writings on Gurmat, Gurbani, Sikh History and their proficiency earlier in Vedanta is no longer highlighted. Interview with Mahant Bhupinder Singh, Dera Baba Mishra Singh, Amritsar, May 1999.

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for its claims directly undermined the efforts to construct a discourse that associated Punjabi and desi chikitsa. Some Nirmalas argued, that the Sant Voids had employed Braj-Gurumukhi merely to widen the reach of Punjabi prachar. On the other hand, certain Mahant ideologues in subsequent years proposed yet another project of translation and editing, so as to now introduce an orthodox ‘Punjabi’ idiom and vocabulary into the Braj-Gurumukhi texts.

By means of such translation agenda, Punjabi Voids aimed to paper over any heterogeneities in the history or images of Punjabi Ayurvedic discourse, that were not in congruence with the dominant interpretation of Punjabi as a political-cultural symbol. The editor of Vaid Visharad, who was a leading member of the Punjabi Vaid Mandal elaborated, that Vaid publicists now needed to turn themselves towards the task of creating a literature that was suitable for Punjabi to take its position as a provincial language. He wrote:

Ancient Ayurved might very well be written in Sanskrit, but there are efforts in all directions [all over the country] by Voids to express it in the provincial languages. But in Punjabi, this literature amounts to nothing but cipher. For if we turn to assess the Granths that we value so highly, we realize that they are not [written in] Punjabi at all but in Braj Bhasha.

The construction of a language based discourse, to buttress the claims for sanction and patronage in the public sphere achieved an equivocal support for Punjab Vaid interests. The political agenda of needing to prove the provincial level standing of Punjabi, made Vaid publicists reconstruct a Dharmik-Vaidak tradition based on its literary genealogy and historical past as sources for legitimitizing Punjabi based, Sikh separatist politics. Despite

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246 ‘Akali’ scholars have often referred to the work of Nirmala Vidvans as being based upon Sanskrit vocabulary. Pritam Singh, p. 499. Sceptics included well known Punjabi literary giants and critics such as Shamsher Singh Ashok. Cited in, Nirmal Kumar Kaushik, Nirmal Santon Ka Hindi Sahit, Ph. D. Dissertion, G.N.D.U.
247 Nirmal Sampraday, p. 263.
these limitations and angularities that challenged a fit between Punjabi Vaid ideological mobilization and Khalsa claims in the public sphere, the following years witnessed developments in this rhetoric that were to take the logic of the discourse on Desi Vaidak forward to legitimize the Punjabi based claims of Sikh community.

The ideas that constructed Punjabi Vaid rhetoric by extension were also to serve as a means to challenge the binary between Ayurved and Yunani as representing distinct and singular politicized traditions of Hindu and Islamic medicine. The challenge for Punjabi Vaid ideologues lay precisely in overcoming this generalization and to argue for an epistemological space that secured Sikh/Punjabi based interest.

In this case, Punjabi based Ayurved emphasized an alternative linguistic-cultural norm, for representing indigenous medical knowledge. This formed a crucial lever, that aimed not so much at collapsing the distinctions between Ayurved and Yunani as systems of medicine, but their politicized appropriations within the boundaries of Hindu and Muslim cultural traditions.

The emergence of the Punjabi Ayurvedic Tibb Sabha, implied the end of fluid alignments in the nature of membership and interests that had existed in contemporary corporate bodies such as the Ayurvedic Tibbia Committee and the Punjab Tibbia Committee. These bodies had not been solely defined by the generalizations of ‘Hindu Ayurved’ and ‘Muslim Yunani’ interest, and their politics had also been sustained by lateral networks and mobilization centered around municipal patronage and civic philanthropy.

The issue of Sikh/Punjabi representation on in the Board of Medicine, lent urgency to elaborate upon the contents of Desi Vaidak rhetoric, so as to be
able to integrate both Ayurvedic as well as Yunani within the representation of Punjabi-based claims of Sikh interests. This however, did not mean any detailed extension of the claims of Desi Vaidak rhetoric, and the outline of the concerns of desi chikitsa as voiced by the Punjabi Ayurved Tibb Sabha leadership amply demonstrated this.

Gajendra Singh Gajraj, Secretary to the Sabha in his speech at its annual conference, merely evoked the indigenous, ‘Punjabi’ derivation of both Ayurved and Yunani.\(^{249}\) He claimed, that both Ayurved and Yunani shared common, indigenous origins since Yunani had been transplanted upon indigenous soil and both represented a common derivation of humoral theories, herbs, and plants for drug preparation. Yunani medicine, once it began to be publicized now shared a common linguistic-cultural tradition with Ayurved.\(^{250}\) By this device, with the intention of addressing the immediate challenge of the Punjabi Ayurvedic Tibbi Sabha front in 1945-46, a leadership dominated by Mahant Vaids now extended the Punjabi Vaid discourse to lend a derivative, ideational sanction, so as to represent Sikh Hakim practitioners as well.

The challenges that were faced both by Hindi based Ayurved as well as Punjabi Vaidak, in their attempt to carve out spheres of spokesmanship however need a brief but telling footnote. The realms of contest or resistance in the public sphere were not monopolized by competing politicized, cultural representations of indigenous medical knowledge. In the fluid overlap between learned, empirico-rational projections of Ayurvedic knowledge and its urban centered hierarchy of practice on the one hand, and on the other, the heterogeneous sphere of popular, medical culture, there

\(^{249}\) Khush Dil, May 1945, pp. 3-4.
\(^{250}\) Khush Dil, May 1945, pp. 3-4.
always persisted the unorganized but often contesting presence of popular medical culture, variously termed as Sanyasiana or Fakiri Hikmat.

In these decades of Vaid mobilization in the public sphere, Sanyasi Hikmat emerged frequently into the sphere of print publicity. It began to derive its authority or legitimacy from print based publicity that followed its Sanyasi authors to combine an influence rooted in personalized healing, sacred mantras, and charismatic preceptors; along with a newly elaborated focus upon pharmacies and a market oriented vernacular publicity.

For instance, the Hikmat Sanyasi and the Sanyasi journals had enterprising Sanyasi Editors who ran Aushadalyas, and printed tracts and books on their mantra vidya. These journals were well produced and similar to contemporary Vaid journals, and even claimed a circulation as widespread as Bombay and Burma. The Sanyasi, claimed a subscriber list of nearly 5000, as high as any popular vernacular journal could then aspire for, and regularly entertained a mass of letters from subscribers for medical advice.

The crucial point of interest and relevance in Sanyasi authored writing lies in its intersection and association with learned, empirico-rational traditions such as Ayurved, and what it tells us in turn about the nature of Vaid discourse. Sanyasi authors and their columns for instance, formed a regular

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251 Hikmat Sanyasi, was run from Sanyasi Aushadalya in Gujranwala and was published in Urdu approximately between 1912 and 1915; the Sanyasi another Urdu journal was published from Sargodha in 1910. Sanyasi Ki Jholi, published by Swami Laxmi Giri, Ayurved Martand, April 1928, p. 21. Vaid journals carried advertisements for books published by Sanyasi Bhandar, Ugoke, Sialkot. In Jeewan Sudhar, May 1915. The same Bhandar published a Journal, Vaid Ratan also from Sialkot, Ed. By Giani Budda Singh, June 1928, cover page.

252 Claim by editor of Hikmat Sanyasi in cover page of journal.

253 Editorials in Sanyasi, stating that they received 210 letters to their first issue, and asking readers to restrict themselves to only pertinent enquiries! Sanyasi, Nov. 1910, p. 2.
feature in Vaid journals.\textsuperscript{254} In a sense, their columns allowed Sanyasi authors such as Baba Harinam Singh to claim a legitimate status derived from sharing authorial authority with Vaid editors and the journal, or its readership itself, indirectly attested to their healing and gave them a reference.\textsuperscript{255} This made their Fakiri healing and medical prescriptions distinct from other ‘quack’ Sanyasis who had to hawk their publicity themselves, and were roving and therefore further not to be pinned down to take responsibility for their preparations.\textsuperscript{256} Writing in the Ayurved Martand a Sanyasiana columnist wrote:

They [the Sanyasis] install themselves in shops hawking jadi booties, and in ringing tones proclaim their own skills, others in Sanyasi robes roam the villages and bring shame to this tibb or medical knowledge.\textsuperscript{257}

These writings and columns also implied that Vaid publicist-Editors, who included leaders of corporate bodies were willing to share their print and publicity based space with Sanyasi healers or representatives of popular, folk healing without any direct contradiction in their construction of and claims of scientific, rational Ayurvedic learning. Journals like the Ayurved Martand as well as many Punjabi Vaid journals like the Vaid Raj, as well as Sukhchain and Khush Dil, the last which was a prominent mouthpiece of the Punjabi Ayurvedic Tibb Sabha, had long standing columns by Sanyasi authors or carried writings on Sanyasi medicine.\textsuperscript{258} Considering the popularity of its Sanyasi column, the Ayurved Martand even as it reinvented itself as the ‘Sehat-u-Daulat’\textsuperscript{259} due to its dipping circulations, demonstrated

\begin{footnotesize}
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\item \textsuperscript{254} The Ayurved Martand, Jeewan Sudhar, Sukh Chain, Vaid Ratan, Khush Dil were a few of the journals who carried columns by Sanyasis such ‘Sanyasi Ki Jholi’, ‘Sanyasi de Kamalat’ or featured frequent articles by these authors.
\item \textsuperscript{255} Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{256} Ayurved Martand, Aug. 1931, p. 15.
\item \textsuperscript{257} Ayurved Martand, Aug. 1931, p. 15.
\item \textsuperscript{258} Sukh Chain, March 1938, pp. 13-14.
\item \textsuperscript{259} Sanyasi nuskha columns continued in the new series of the journal. Sehat u Daulat, April 1930, pp. 34-5.
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
that the projection of Ayurved prachar required taking recourse to popular symbols associated with Sanyasi healing.260

No doubt, Sanyasi healing often lingered on the margins of the emerging organization of rational, scientific professional practice, that was associated with institutionalized Ayurvedic education, corporate Sammelans or Sabhas and their emerging legitimizing discourse. Sanyasi writing and its authors were extraneous to the ranks of the Ayurved Sammelan or even provincial Vaid Sammelan leadership. References to popular, folk healing were now being excluded from the rhetoric voiced by these leaders as they claimed a brahminical, textual ‘high-culture’ as the underpinning of Hindu Ayurvedic learning, that informed the writings of publications associated with the Ayurved Sammelan or the larger institutionalized colleges.

The demands of institutionalized teaching and degrees, however did not always serve to limit popular, medical culture and its insertion into the newer mediums and realms of legitimate practice. In the absence particularly of centralized medical-administrative intervention, to establish the boundaries of ‘qualified’ indigenous medical practice, even the emergence of private colleges for instance implied often a further confusion of the boundaries of rational Ayurvedic learning, with the offer of a mix of ‘naturopathic’ or indigenous medical training that included Sanyasi cures.261

Without any direct confrontation or ideational elaboration therefore, desi or vernacular based and indigenously derived drugs that formed a part of folk healing, such as Sanyasi cures formed a persistent counter-point both in institutional as well as print based terms, to the claims of Punjabi, desi chikiisa, even forming a part of Punjabi Vaidak publicity.

261 Ayurved Marland, p. 40.
Despite Tat Khalsa disapproval of the claims of individual *karamat* and other irrational folk healing, the demands of Punjabi Sikh Vaid mobilization and the politics of collective representation, made for the Punjabi Ayurved Tibb Sabha to seek concessions for a wide variety of practitioners. In its claims therefore it also demanded Registration benefits for 'popular' or vernacular educated practitioners, who specialized in 'particular' forms of healing.  

The constituency of Punjabi Vaids both in its political claims and intellectual construction now tended to legitimize within it Punjabi or vernacular educated practitioners of a small-town or rural provenance. This made Punjabi based *Desi Vaidak* share a wider surface area of interaction with folk, popular medicine both in terms of the identity of Punjabi language as well as based upon a Sikh constituency beyond the urban areas alone.

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