CONCLUSION

In 1918, in a clear sighted and eloquent introduction to a health tract, a well known Vaid publicist argued that the project to revive indigenous medicine or Swadeshi Hikmat was inseparable from that of protecting and reviving indigenous language or Swadesh Bhasha. He noted that with the arrival of foreign rule, it was the loss of a native tongue that had spelt the decay of indigenous reason. No wonder, he concluded, foreign rulers did not merely plunder booty, but also stayed on to introduce their language followed by their learning.

In the same tract, the Vaid writer also sowed the seeds for the renegotiation of these claims of reason and science. He outlined an agenda consisting of vernacular translations and print publicity to recover and publicize this indigenous medical knowledge. This would not only bring about an awareness of indigenous intellectual advances, but also serve to strengthen the country. Vaid writing was already mapping the claims of an indigenous reason and power redressal.

Vaid writers and publicists had an understanding of the relationship between the recovery of indigenous learning and indigenous languages. They therefore projected the decline of indigenous medicine not merely as a loss of intellect and enlightenment but also of authority. In their mobilization lies therefore the process of renegotiating the political claims of an indigenous, ‘different’ modernity. This was represented in the claims of an indigenous, scientific medical knowledge that was expressed in historicized idioms

---

1 Cited in Ch. 6, section III, p. 291.
and reconstructions that borrowed from and validated reformist projects. In the public sphere, these representations were articulated through the grammar of language identities that had acquired a fixity of interests under colonial rule. Punjab's distinct language based political alignments and aggregational claims in the public sphere, coloured the specific vocabulary as well as the legitimacy of this process.

This thesis has argued, that Vaid claims to patronage and representation, as well as the process of recasting their identity in Punjab was marked by irregular alignments and multiple imaginings that marked a process both of projected unity, as well as of divisiveness. Indigenous practitioners attempted to project through the languages of indigenous science, both the claims of a Hindu nation as well as a Sikh community identity.

The annexation of Punjab in the mid nineteenth century, gradually unfolded an agenda of Colonial public instruction as well as the establishment of the institutional apparatuses of medical administration, that altered the ideas and conditions that had so far anchored indigenous medical learning and its practice. In Punjab, the priorities of colonial public instruction led to the withdrawal of state patronage to indigenous education and ended Ayurved and Yunani teaching at the Lahore Medical College. Other projects such as the Hakimi programme that had been initiated by local administrators such as the Deputy Commissioner of Sialkot, witnessed a limited expansion with the cooption of rural Hakims in rural dispensaries, but floundered as medical administrators prescribed the employment of Native doctors over indigenous practitioners.
Colonial medical intervention and initiatives were based upon a specific understanding of the nature of indigenous medical knowledge. Just as western medical learning drew its claims to authority from its scientific, and rational-critical basis and served to validate the claims of a colonial modernity, it also constructed indigenous medical knowledge as its empirical 'other', based upon its irrational nature and grounded in religion and custom. Punjab's Colonial medical administrators echoed these views in debates and Enquiries that appraised the condition of indigenous medical knowledge. The Hakimi programme in the districts was criticized by officers based upon doubts regarding the compatibility of rational 'scientific' training for indigenous practitioners steeped in inferior, empirical cures.

The debate over the preservation of indigenous medical learning in the curriculum of the new medical college further occasioned criticism of indigenous medical learning. The Ayurvedic treatises were identified as being grounded in antiquated, religious scriptures and its critics also claimed that they had evolved through a process of literary interpolations rather than progressive, scientific method.

The construction of these generalizations regarding indigenous medicine were rooted in the colonial understanding of the nature and scope of indigenous languages and learning. Orientalist researchers had established an objectified, characterization of indigenous languages that was derived from methods of comparative philology. Based upon these writings, colonial administrators claimed that indigenous languages lacked the qualities of absorbing scientific knowledge and were therefore unsuitable for transferring scientific ideas. Indigenous languages like Sanskrit that formed the basis of the
Ayurvedic treatises, reflected a rote based and uncomprehending reproduction of knowledge that was in turn termed as characteristic of indigenous learning.

The claims of colonial medicine, based upon its representation of scientific authority were only gradually consolidated in Punjab. Even in the late nineteenth century, professional rivalries and differences in perceptions regarding medical theories persisted. Chetan Shah’s writings in the journal, Marat ul-Tababat reflected an attempt to define a collective identification and hierarchy of occupational practice for western medical practitioners. The Marat ul-Tababat, projected western medical learning in the vernacular and indicated the existence of overlapping spheres of polemic and exchange, between western and indigenous learning through a nascent sphere of print publicity.

Western medicine and its rational-critical authority was represented not only by the secular, ‘modernizing’ claims of colonial authority, but also in alternate projections of its scope and authority by medical missionaries. Medical missionary work and their writings affirmed the superior civilisational assumptions regarding western medicine, and also cited the scientific, rationality of western medicine as an attestation of the rational basis of Christian belief. Implicit in these claims, were also shared resonances with the views of colonial administrators regarding indigenous medicine and its origins in a ‘false’/unscientific religious-scriptural tradition.

However, medical missionary work and self-representation also formed an alternate projection of western medicine that consisted of reconciling a physical and moral/spiritual understanding of disease
that was absent in State sponsored, scientific medicine. For, medical missionaries represented western medical science in the context of Christian moralism, and rationalized it through the claims of Christian benevolence. Medical missions were however, unable to evolve a continuing rationale for Christian healing, as State patronized western medicine extended its institutional networks in urban centres. The missions retained an ambivalence regarding the definition of a distinct role for their labours, and were unable to sufficiently link their medical moralism with local symbols and images amongst the growing influence of national Churches.

By the turn of the century, western medical learning and practice was consolidating its monopoly over the institutional apparatuses of state patronage and medical-administrative initiatives. State sanctioned spaces of medical education and research, as well as state legislative norms of medical practice began to be identified and served to fence off indigenous medical learning and practice. Vaid practitioners responded by reorienting the moorings of their practice in the emerging print based, scriptural economy and growing medical market in urban centres. They participated in and were influenced by the concerns of an emerging critical public shaped by print and publicity based engagements, and assumed new roles and authority as an emerging lay literati of Vaid publicists.

By means of engaging with a print readership in the public sphere, Vaid publicists engaged with the issues and concerns surrounding Colonial medical intervention. They began to press for participation in the initiatives and engagements of medical administration, as well as attempted to shape its priorities through their writings in the vernacular press.
Vaid mobilization as expressed both in print publicity as well as the claims and projections of Vaid organized corporate bodies were shaped by as well as limited by the politicized idioms and constituencies that existed amongst a 'public' of readers and patrons. Vaid Sammelans and their confederated sabhas in turn projected representational unities of ideas and interests, that fused or fragmented based upon the availability of issues or campaigns, such as in the mobilization in response to the Medical Registration Bill or over the demands for establishing provincial Boards of Medicine.

This thesis has argued that the process of Vaid mobilization through print publicity and corporate organization, also represented a crucial ideational development that was emerging from and being shaped by the matrix of urban publicity and politics. Vaid practitioners in Punjab were attempting to understand the bearings of scientific western medical knowledge and its validation of colonial modernity. Their rhetoric and writing was informed by efforts to appropriate and renegotiate in the public sphere, the representation of scientific authority so as to construct an indigenous tradition of medical science in the idiom of religion.

Vaid responses to Colonial medicine can therefore be contextualised in the emerging response amongst the Indian middle class élite, towards the representation of science and its validation of Colonial authority. Since the late nineteenth century, the claims of indigenous science were being historicized in a Hindu, Vedic past and being gradually reconstructed in a Hindu religious idiom. Scientific authority was naturalized by these histories of Hindu science, that served to affirm a unified Hindu community and Hindu-nation-in-the-making.
In Punjab, Vaid engagements with the emerging claims of indigenous, Hindu science and its validation of the modernizing claims of Hindu reformist projects can be traced to their engagements with Arya reformist ideas and Arya patronage of Ayurvedic learning. Aside from the institutional support offered to Ayurvedic education in Arya colleges, Arya leaders also elaborated upon the place of Ayurvedic science in securing ‘the social life of the Hindu nation’, and recalled Dayanand’s views on the Vedas containing both ‘truths of science as well as truths of religion’.

Hindu Vaid publicists reformulated and projected the discourse on Hindu science through their writings and rhetoric on Ayurvedic science or Ayurvedic Vigyan. Ayurved Vigyan was a part of, as well as an elaboration upon the representation of an ‘indigenous’ science that combined rational-critical method and religion, and offered the intellectual legitimacy to project the claims of a Hindu, national identity.

Hindu Vaid leaders employed the device of reconstructing a historicized indigenous science to identify the place of Ayurvedic knowledge in the evolution of this indigenous scientific tradition. Leaders such as Acharya Gannath Sen and Pandit Shiv Sharma both in Sammelans as well as in response to criticism from Colonial medical administrators, reconstructed an ancient history of Ayurvedic science to demonstrate its evolution as a complete, medical system that was based upon the scientific Tridosha theory.

Vaid leaders and publicists in their reconstruction of these histories of Ayurved as indigenous, Hindu science, were employing this integration of science and religion to rationalize a role for Ayurvedic
learning in contemporary reformist projects. Ayurvedic revival therefore promised a renewed modernity, with indigenous science or its rational-critical authority being deployed to critique the physical and social degradation that was identified in contemporary Hindu society.

However, Vaid elaboration upon their claims on indigenous science, their representation of reformist projects and of a Hindu national identity was also shaped by the correspondence of or disjunction between various languages of political, particularist interest in the public sphere. Even as it was being formulated, Vaid reconstruction of the rational authority of Hindu Ayurved had also to define its difference not only with relation to Colonial authority. It also had to constantly strive to exclude representations of Hindu science and Hindu national identity from alternate, contesting representations and particularist claims that were emerging in the provincial peripheries. Vaid publicists could only unevenly and incompletely integrate these differences, and were unable to subsume popular forms of learning to fuse them into the singular claims and projections of Hindu identity.

Issues such as the identification of a Sanskrit based canon of Samhita literature as the original, authoritative basis of Ayurvedic learning no doubt underlined a consensus amongst Hindu Vais in the Ayurved Sammelan as well as in provincial bodies, regarding the basis of Hindu science. Vaid leaders employed this rational-critical authority and canon to criticize Ayurvedic literature in the vernacular, as well as forms of popular healing.

However, the representation of Ayurved Vigyan also brought out varying interpretations and approaches amongst Vaid ideologues.
During the debate over the proposed critical editing of the *Charak* passages, Vaids defending a reformist approach argued that the project for the critical editing of Ayurvedic texts by rational scientific method, was aimed to recover their original, scientific content. Others opposed it on Sanatan, orthodox grounds, claiming that Hindu Puranic authority suggested that the texts already carried the sanction for continuous, progressive scientific interpretations. These arguments between factions in the Ayurved Sammelan and their supporters, were closely tied to the competition to control the interpretations of scientific, scriptural authority and the bounties of a newly emerging market in indigenous medical education. They also demonstrated that reformist/orthodox approaches to *Ayurved Vigyan* were not always in congruence with Arya/Sanatan affiliations amongst their respective Vaid ideologues.

The politicized claims and constituency of Hindi in the public sphere served as a means for Vaid publicists to project the scientific authority of Ayurved. Through its identification with the politics of Hindi, Ayurvedic learning was represented by Vaid publicists as validating the claims of a Hindu nation. Ayurved *prachar* and the identity of Hindi in the public sphere were already being linked by reformist organizations in the project of constructing a unified, Hindu identity. Vaid publicists elaborated upon these ideas in their association with the Hindi Sahit Sammellan and their support for Hindi in Ayurvedic education.

Hindi supporters claimed a role for it over and above other vernaculars, based on its claims to be the national language. Hindi literati also cited its reformulated canon and vocabulary to affirm its rational and scientific nature. Due to these attributes, they argued,
Hindi was the appropriate medium to project an enlightened, indigenous learning.

The relationship between Ayurved Vigyan and Hindi was also the subject of competing views as expressed during the Hindi-Sanskrit controversy. Hindi supporting leaders of the Ayurved Sammelan argued with Sanskrit supporting Voids, for sanctioning Ayurvedic education in Hindi, since Hindi, authorized by its claims as Rashtra Bhasha would serve to translate the scientific essence and modernity of Ayurvedic learning, that had so far been obscured by Sanskrit based scriptures.

The construction of Hindi based Ayurved Vigyan demonstrated the various contingencies in the projection of rationalized Ayurvedic learning as it contended with specific interests and alignments, such as in Punjab’s public sphere. In Punjab, the projection of Ayurved Vigyan in Hindi found supporters amongst influential leaders who wrote and campaigned in support of this agenda, both within the province as well as outside, in the Ayurved Sammelan. However, inspite of Arya support, the association of Ayurved Vigyan and Hindi, was constructed in projections from without rather than within Punjab’s public sphere engagements, since the place of Hindi in Punjab’s public sphere was limited.

The efforts to construct a Vaid identity through the reconstruction of a discourse on Hindu science, that was a structured through the vocabulary of Hindi and formed the modernizing claims of a Hindu nation found elaboration by Vaid publicists in disparate and contesting projections. Sikh Vaid practitioners in Punjab understood the implicit confines of the construction of Hindu Ayurved and its
indigenous, scientific authority. The representation of Ayurvedic knowledge by Sikh practitioners in their writings and speeches formed a process of renegotiating its particularist vocabulary and historicized accounts, to rationalize an ethnic, Sikh community constructed through the claims of Punjabi.

Sikh Vaid writings in their reconstruction of an indigenous, Ayurvedic tradition based in religious learning articulated a response partly to the authorizing claims of western medicine and Colonial modernity. However, Sikh Vaid publicists while reproducing these histories of indigenous science, were also engaged in employing the device of Punjabi based translation to insert an alternate vocabulary and idiom in this reconstruction. Punjabi based histories of Ayurvedic knowledge, argued that Hindu Ayurved and its knowledge system was ‘indigenous’ without being ‘Hindu’ in its association with the Hindu community of the present. The history of ancient, indigenous Ayurved therefore supported the claims of an indigenous and different modernity, but also denied the Hindu religious idiom of Ayurvedic scriptures and Hindu Vedic civilization.

Initially, Sikh Vaid reconstructions of indigenous Ayurvedic learning were addressed towards legitimizing Khalsa reformist concerns. In subsequent decades, a new generation of Sikh Vaids elaborated upon the claims of an indigenous Ayurved, or Desi Vaidak that was located in a recent past and was rationalized by the scriptural authority of Ayurvedic works that had been composed in Gurumukhi based Punjabi Bhasha.

A lineage of Sant Vaid tikkakars and Babas who wrote translations and commentaries on Sanskrit based Ayurvedic treatises were
identified as having formed a Punjabi based tradition of Desi Vaidak. The device of Punjabi based translation served to alienate Hindu politicized ideas and images in this indigenous tradition of Ayurved. The Sant Vaids therefore embodied an indigenous modernity that consisted both of the intellectual, scientific essence derived from Ayurvedic shastras, as well as represented their traditional role in the diffusion of Sikh religious-sacred knowledge.

Desi Vaidak no doubt continued to possess crucial links with a Hindu religious idiom, that Khalsa critics brought up in evaluating the Sant Vidya lineage and its Punjabi prachar claims. Yet, it also provided to Punjabi and its Sikh publicist supporters a ‘secular’ as in a ‘rational-critical’ literature that Punjabi/Sikh publicists needed and employed in projecting their interests at the provincial level. In Punjabi based Desi Vaidak, Sikh Vaid publicists constructed an alternate discourse on indigenous science, that projected a rational-critical, scientific learning that was rooted in a religious Sant tradition. This began to consolidate Khalsa Sikh patronage for Sikh publicists and cultivated their representational interests, since the rational-critical grounds for an indigenous Sikh modernity and its claims to provincial leadership were being laid.