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Description

Unani Dawakhanas and Reimagining the Idea of Health vis-a-vis Popular Print Culture in Urdu in Mid-twentieth Century North India

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Abstract:

The paper attempts to answer these questions through an assessment of articles, advertisements, and editorials from a selection of 'health and social' magazines that were published through the 1930s till the 1960s from various Unani Dawakhanas. The aim is to briefly outline the earlier resources of health i.e. the traditional understanding of cures through Unani. This view is then juxtaposed with the renewed social reimagining of health through the influx of new research to show how these two were amalgamated to suit South Asian sensibilities and concerns. The first section of this paper is an overview of the presence of Unani tibb² in South Asia and its movement from a scholastic mode to a more popular one; the second section delineates various kinds of popular print literature that were publishing material related to health during mid-twentieth century. Their affiliations to various dawakhanas and an analysis of their advertisements and advice vis a vis physical health and anatomy is studied. The final section is dedicated to articles on mental health, cleanliness, representation of a healthy body, and a broader definition of akhlaq that constituted the parallel paradigm required for achieving and maintaining holistic wellness.

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