



Medical Marginality in South Asia: Situating Subaltern Therapeutics

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This project, which has in part been funded from the Wellcome Strategic Award, has involved two conferences, one at Warwick, and one in New Delhi. A selection of the papers, presented at these conferences, were published in 2012 in an edited book under the above title, co-edited by Professor David Hardiman and Dr Projit Mukharji of the University of Pennsylvania. Most existing studies in the field of South Asian medical history and the sociology of medicine have focussed either on biomedicine or the systems that now in India go under the acronym AYUSH (Ayurveda, Yoga and Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha, Homoeopathy). Beyond this, there have been and continue to be many forms of popular therapeutics of a highly eclectic type that are considered marginal to the health-care system, and which are even branded as illegal, though still very widely pursued. Although this domain has been explored to some extent by anthropologists, no history of it has hitherto been attempted. This project aims to situate this sphere – defined here as ‘subaltern therapeutics’ – within a discrete field of historical study. The focus is on the relationships of power that run through the whole field of medicine and therapeutics and its governance that operate so as to marginalise subaltern practices.