

# Medicine and Colonialism (post-1600 C E)

**Burton Cleetus**  
**4 Credit Course**  
**MA and MPhil**

**Mode of Evaluation:**  
**2 Tutorials: 2 Credits**  
**End Semester Exams: 2 Credits**

This course deals with the history of multiple medical traditions in the modern world. Historically medicinal practices have been integral to the cultural contexts in which they were located, and accommodation and adaptation of new knowledge of drugs and diseases have enriched healing traditions. For some time now, scholars have been exploring this complex relation that shaped both medical knowledge and colonialism. Medicine and science are no longer seen as politically neutral: their history, as is widely recognized now, is implicated with issues of power and domination. The politics of healthcare was intimately connected to forms of social control and technologies of state legitimation. Studies on the social history of medicine, therefore, can open up new domains of historical understanding, and allow us to reflect on the nature of state and society in modern contexts.

The course will engage with the debates that centred on the evolution of medicine in modern contexts. It will examine the role of colonial officials and missionary initiatives in understanding and controlling tropical diseases in African and Asian societies. Within the over arching themes of each of the modules, the discussion will move between concrete case studies and general overviews, examine changes within 'local' traditions like Ayurveda, Yunani and Chinese medicinal practices on the one hand, and explore the efforts to control epidemics like plague, cholera, small-pox, and malaria on the other.

The lectures will be organized under the following modules:

## **Module 1**

### **MEDICINE AND MODERNITY IN EUROPE**

The course will begin by discussing how medical knowledge was transformed in nineteenth-century Europe, evolving from the older galenic tradition, and explore how it was increasingly subjected to the regimentation processes of the state. From the sixteenth century, imperial expansion and the process of colonization had a profound influence on non-European medicinal traditions and cultural practices across the world. While the effect of power was felt in non-western societies, a reverse flow of ideas transformed knowledge systems in the west. In fact what has been familiarised as 'western medicine' or 'biomedicine' is in itself structured by a complex inter-relationship between Europe and the rest of the world. Thus the history of medicine in modern societies is about interactions, accommodations and transformations.

#### **1.1 Trade and Medicine in Modern Europe**

- a. Trade in Drugs/Spices
- b. Emergence of Botanical gardens in Europe
- c. Translations and compilations of texts

#### **1.2 Medicine and the Rise of Modern Europe:**

- a. Institutionalisation of Medical Knowledge
- b. Establishment of Clinical Medicine
- c. The Rise of the Drug Industry

## Essential readings

### Section A

Raj, Kapil. *Relocating Modern Science: Circulation and the construction of scientific Knowledge in South Asia and Europe*. Permanent Black. New Delhi 2006.

Grove, Richard. Indigenous Knowledge and the Significance of South-West India for Portuguese and Dutch Constructions of Tropical Nature. *Modern Asian Studies*, Vol. 30, No. 1 (Feb., 1996), pp. 121-143

Cook, Harold J. *Matters of Exchange: Commerce, Medicine and Science in the Dutch Golden Age*. Yale University Press, 2007

### Section B

N D Jewson, "The Disappearance of the Sick-Man from Medical Cosmology, 1770-1870", *Sociology*, May 1976. 10, pp. 225-244.

Lawrence, Christopher, *Medicine in the Making of Modern Britain 1700-1920*, London, Routledge, 1994.

Roy Porter and Dorothy Porter. *The Rise of the English Drugs Industry: The Role of Thomas Corbyn*. *Medical History*, 1989, 33: 277-295.

Lane, Joan, *A social history of medicine*, London, Routledge, 1994.

## Module 2

### FROM MIASMAS TO GERMS: COLONIALISM AND THE TRANSFORMATION OF MEDICAL KNOWLEDGE

The reach of colonialism was often constrained by the outbreak of diseases that was encountered in the colonies. Understandings of diseases in the colonies evolved both in responses to the changing facets of colonialism as well as to shifting paradigms of disease causation in Europe. Evolving notions on the body of the colonial subject often increasingly strengthened racial and cultural differences between the coloniser and the colonised. State medicine as it emerged by the closing decades of the twentieth century often created a cultural crisis as it strengthened the exercise of state power over colonised bodies. This module will explore the shift from miasmatic to germ theories of disease, track the history of a set of epidemic in the colonies, and discuss the emergence of the notion of public health.

#### 2.1 Empire and Diseases

- a. Emergence of tropical Medicine
- b. Case Studies: Cholera, Smallpox, Malaria, Syphilis, Plague
- c. Public Health and sanitation

#### 2.2 Biomedicine in non-European contexts:

Hospitals, medical colleges, Indian doctors, hospital assistants, nurses

## Essential readings

### Section A

Arnold, David. *Colonizing the Body: State Medicine and Epidemic Disease in Nineteenth-century India*, OUP. 1998

Anderson, Warwick. *Colonial Pathologies: American Tropical Medicine, Race, and Hygiene in the Philippines*. 2006

Naraindas, Harish. Poisons, “Putrescence and the Weather: A Genealogy of the Advent of Tropical Medicine”, *Contributions to Indian Sociology* 30, 1: 1-35, 1996.

Vaughan, Megan. *Curing Their Ills: Colonial Power and African Illness*. Stanford University Press, 1991

### **Section B**

Mukharji, Projit Bihari. *Nationalizing the Body: The Medical Market, Print and Daktari Medicine* (Anthem South Asian Studies)

Kumar, Deepak. Medical Encounters in British India, 1820-1920. *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 32, No. 4 (Jan. 25-31, 1997), pp. 166-170

### **Module 3**

#### **RELIGION, RACE AND GENDER IN MEDICINE**

This section will look at the way Christian missionaries acted as carriers of western modernity and healing methods, unpack the debates on indigenous and local medicines, and discuss the processes of change within the colonial societies of Africa, Indonesia, the Caribbean, and India.

#### **3.1 Christian Missionaries**

- a. Leprosy and mission work in Africa
- b. Medical mission in India

#### **3.2 Defining the Normal: The Asylum, Madness and Psychiatry**

- a. The Asylum in Europe, Africa and India
- b. Psychiatry and Empire

#### **3.3 Women and Medicine**

- a. ‘Sexual Vices’ and the Emergence of Lock Hospitals
- b. Midwifery, childbirth and women’s health

### **Essential readings**

#### **Section A**

Hardiman, David, ed. *Healing Bodies, Saving Souls: Medical Missions in Asia and Africa*. Amsterdam; New York: Rodopi, 2006.

Hokkanen, Markku. *Medicine and Scottish missionaries in the Northern Malawi Region 1875-1930: Quests for Health in a Colonial Society*. Edwin Mellen Press. 2007.

Kakar, Sanjiv. Leprosy in British India, 1860-1940: Colonial Politics and Missionary Medicine. *Medical History*, 1996, 40: 215-230.

#### **Section B**

Ernst, Waltraud. Colonial psychiatry, magic and religion: The case of mesmerism in British India. *History of Psychiatry*, 15(1): 057–071

J Sadowsky. *Institutions of Madness in Colonial Southwest Nigeria*

Vaughan, Megan. *Psychiatry and Empire*. Introduction

#### **Section C**

Ikeya, Chie. The Scientific and Hygienic Housewife-and-Mother: Education, Consumption and the Discourse of Domesticity. *Journal of Burma Studies*, Volume 14, 2010, pp. 59-89

Tsang, Chiu Long. *Out of the Dark: Women's Medicine and Women's Diseases in Colonial Hong Kong*. 2011 (unpublished Ph D thesis). Hong Kong University

#### **Module 4**

##### **Medical Knowledge beyond Europe:**

The status of bio-medicine under colonial regimes was linked to a variety of concerns of the colonial state. An exploration of the relationship between western medicine and localised healing traditions can explain the nuances of the larger implication of colonial intervention within non-European societies. Healing traditions in Africa, the Caribbean, South Asia and India were subjected to considerable strain in the wake of western medical intervention in the last two centuries. To exist within the frame of colonialism and the modern world, older medicinal practices had to be restructured, and they had to often reposition themselves within modern forms of standardization and institutionalization: they had to be represented in a language that met contemporary sensibilities, had to meet modern demands of production, techniques of packing, bottling and marketing. At each of these sites there were various forms of resistance or adaptation that mediated the drive of western medicine to acquire a hegemonic position.

##### **4.1 Reformulation of medical traditions**

- a. India (Ayurveda, Yunani, Siddha)
- b. Chinese and Tibetan Medicine

##### **4.2 Adaptation and Accommodation**

- a. Drug industry and reformulations in Ayurveda, Tibetan and Chinese medicine
- b. The rise of the alternatives: Non-western medicine in Europe and United States

#### **Essential readings**

##### **Section A**

Engler, Steven. "Science" vs. "religion" in classical Ayurveda. *NUMEN*, Vol. 50

Sivaramakrishnan, Kavita. *Constructing Boundaries, Contesting Identities: The Politics of Ayurved in Punjab (1930–40)* *Studies in History* 2006; 22; 253

Attewell, Guy. *Refiguring Unani Tibb: Plural Healing in Late Colonial India*. *New Perspectives in South Asian History*, Orientr Blackswan. 2007

##### **Section B**

Banerjee, Madhulika. *Public Policy and Ayurveda: Modernising a Great Tradition*. *Economic and Political Weekly*. March 23, 2002

Pordie, Laurent. *The Politics of Therapeutic Evaluation in Asian Medicine*. *Economic & Political Weekly*. Vol. XLV no 18

#### **SUPPLEMENTARY READINGS**

##### **Module 1**

Baber, Zaheer. "Colonizing Nature: Scientific Nature Colonial Power and the Incorporation of India into the Modern World-System", *British Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 52, No. 1, 2001, pp. 37-58.

Drayton, Richard. *Science, Imperial Britain and the 'Improvement' of the World*, London: Yale University Press, 2000.

Tickner, A B. Core, periphery and (neo) imperialist International Relations. *European Journal of International Relations* 19(3) 627–646

Donovan Williams, "Clement Robert Markham and the Introduction of the Cinchona Tree into British India", *The Geographical Journal*, 128(1962) pp. 431-4

Bynum, W.F., *Science and the practice of medicine in the nineteenth century*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1994.

Bynum, W.F. and Roy Porter (eds.), *William Hunter and the eighteenth century medical world*, Cambridge, 1985.

Granshaw, Lindsay and Roy Porter, *The Hospital in History*, Routledge, 1989

Michel Foucault. *The Birth of the Clinic: An Archaeology of Medical Perception*. Vintage Books, 1973. London

## Module 2

Shula Marks and Neil Anderson, "Typhus and Social Control: South Africa: 1917-1950", in Roy McLeod and Milton Lewis ed. *Disease, Medicine and Empire: Perspectives on Western Medicine and the Experience of European Expansion* (Taylor & Francis: 1988) pp. 257-84

Arnold, David. *Science, Technology and Medicine in Colonial India*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000)

Echenberg, Myron. *African in the Time of Cholera: A history of Pandemics from 1815 to the Present*

Bastos, Cristiana. 'Medicine, Colonial Order and Local Action in Goa'. in W Ernst, A Digby and P Mukharji ed. *Crossing Colonial Historiographies: Histories of colonial and Indigenous medicine in Transnational Perspective*. Cambridge Scholars Publishing. UK. 2010.

Rosenberg, Charles. *Explaining epidemics and other studies in the History of Medicine*. Cambridge University Press.

Macfarlane, Alan. Civility and the Decline of Magic in P. Slack, P.Burke and B.Harrison, ed. *Civil Histories: Essays in Honour of Sir Keith Thomas* (Oxford Univ. Press, 2000)

Mukharji, Projit Bihari. The "Cholera Cloud" in the Nineteenth-Century "British World": History of an Object-Without-an-Essence. *Bull. Hist. Med.*, 2012, 86 : 303–332

Pereira, Ricardo. Processes of Securitization of Infectious Diseases and Western Hegemonic Power: A Historical-Political Analysis *G H Global Health Governance*, volume ii, o n . 1 (2008)

Naraindas, Harish. Preparing for the pox: a theory of smallpox in Bengal and Britain. *Asian Journal of Social Sciences*, 31, 2: 304-339, 2003.

Naraindas, Harish. Care, welfare and treason: the advent of vaccination in the 19th century. *Contributions to Indian Sociology* 32, 1: 67-96, 1998.

Naraindas, Harish. Crisis, charisma, and triage: extirpating the pox. *Indian Economic and Social History Review*, 40, 4: 425-457, 2003.

Bhattacharya, Nandini. The logic of location: malaria research in colonial India, Darjeeling and Duars, 1900–30. *Medical History*, 2011, 55: 183–202

Boomgaard, Peter. "Dutch Medicine in Asia, 1600-1900", in David Arnold ed. *Warm Climates and Western Medicine* (Rodopi: 1996) pp. 42-64

Mohamed, Jama. "Epidemics and Public Health in Early Colonial Somaliland", *Social Science and Medicine*, Vol. 48 (1999) pp. 507-21

Seth, Suman. Putting knowledge in its place: science, colonialism, and the postcolonial. *Postcolonial Studies*, Vol. 12, No. 4, pp. 373\_388, 2009

Ernst, Waltraud. *Plural Medicine, Tradition and Modernity, 1800-2000*, New York: Routledge, 2002

Bala, Poonam. *Imperialism and Medicine in Bengal: A Socio-Historical Study*, New Delhi: Sage Publishers, 1991.

Attewell, Guy. *Refiguring Unani Tibb: Plural Healing in Late Colonial India*, New Delhi: Orient Longman, 2007.

Pati, Biswamoy & Harrison, Mark (ed.), *Health, Medicine and Empire: Perspectives on Colonial India*, Hyderabad: Orient Longman. 2001.

Sivaramakrishnan, Kavita. *Old Potions, New Bottles: Recasting Indigenous Medicine in Colonial Punjab (1850-1945)* New Delhi: Orient Longman, 2006.

Macleod, Roy and Milton Lewis (ed.), *Disease Medicine and Empire: Perspectives on western medicine and the Experience of European Expansion*. London: Routledge, 1988.

Kumar, Deepak. (ed.) *Science and Empire. Essays in Indian Context (1700-1947)*, Delhi: Anamika Publications, 1991.

### **Module 3**

Mahone, Sloane "The Psychology of Rebellion: Colonial Medical Responses to Dissent in British East Africa", *Journal of African History*. Vol 47(2) (2006) pp. 241-58

Harrison, Mark. "Quarantine, Pilgrimage and Colonial Trade: India 1866-1900", *Public Health in British India: Anglo-Indian Preventive Medicine 1859-1914* (CUP, 1994) pp. 117-38

Arnel E. Joven. Colonial Adaptations in Tropical Asia: Spanish Medicine in the Philippines in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries

Porter, Roy, *A Brief History of Madness*. OUP. 2002

Foucault, Michel, *Madness and Civilization. A History of Insanity in the Age of Reason*. Vintage Books, 1988

Ernst, Waltraud. Idioms of Madness and Colonial Boundaries: The Case of the European and "Native" Mentally Ill in Early Nineteenth-Century British India. *Society for Comparative Study of Society and History*. 1997

Keller, Richard. *Madness and Colonization: Psychiatry in the British and French Empires, 1800-1962*

Sivasundaram, Sujit. A Christian Benares': Orientalism, science and the Serampore Mission of Bengal. *Indian Economic Social History Review* 2007 44: 111

### **Module 4**

Basham, A L. *A Cultural History of India*. OUP, 1998

Stacey A Langwick. *Bodies, Politics and African Healing: The Matter of Maladies in Tanzania*. Indiana University Press. 2011

Wujastyk, Dominik. *The Roots of Ayurveda: Selections from Sanskrit Medical Writings, Selection, Translations & Introduction*, New Delhi: Penguin Books, 1998.

Chattopadhyaya, Debiprasad, *Science and Society in Ancient India* (Amsterdam: B. R. Gruner, 1978).

Laurent Pordie, Jean Paul Gaudiliere. The Reformulation Regime in Drug Discovery. Revisiting Polyherbals and Property Rights in the Ayurvedic Industry. *East Asian Science, Technology and Society*. 2013

Pordié, L. (2008). Tibetan medicine today. Neo-traditionalism as an analytical lens and a political tool, in L. Pordié (ed.), *Tibetan Medicine in the Contemporary World. Global Politics of Medical Knowledge and Practice*, London & New York: Routledge (Series of the Needham Research Institute), p. 3-32.

Naraindas, Harish. 2006. 'Of Spineless Babies and Folic Acid: Evidence and Efficacy in Biomedicine and Ayurvedic Medicine' in *Social Science & Medicine* 62, 11: 2658–2669.

Lang, Claudia and Eva Jansen. 2013. 'Appropriating Depression: Biomedicalizing Ayurvedic Psychiatry in Kerala, India'. In: *Medical Anthropology* 32, 1: 25-45.

Mukharji, Projit B. *Vishalyakarani as E. Ayapana: Retro-botanizing, Embedded Traditions and Multiple Historicities of Plants in Colonial Bengal, 1890-1940*

Alex, Gabriele "Healing Practices and Health Explanatory Models of the Narikuravar (Vagri) in Tamil Nadu", *Societies and Medicines in South Asia, Newsletter Nr. 2*. 2007

Maarten Bode. Taking Traditional Knowledge to the Market: The Commoditization of Indian Medicine. *Anthropology & Medicine*. Vol. 13, No. 3, December 2006, pp. 225–236

Keren Flint. *Healing Traditions: African Medicine, cultural Exchange, and Competition in South Africa, 1820-1948*.