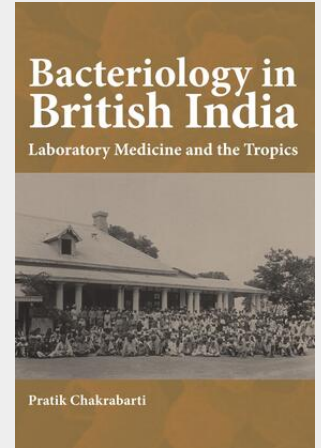


Chakrabarti

Bacteriology in British India

Laboratory Medicine and the Tropics

The first book to provide a social and cultural history of bacteriology in colonial India, situating it at the confluence of colonial medical practices, institutionalization, and social movements. During the nineteenth century, European scientists and physicians considered the tropics the natural home of pathogens. Hot and miasmatic, the tropical world was the locus of disease, for Europeans the great enemy of civilization. In the late nineteenth century when bacteriological laboratories and institutions were introduced to British India, they were therefore as much an imperial mission to cleanse and civilize a tropical colony as a medical one to eradicate disease. Bacteriology offered a panacea in colonial India, a way by which the multifarious political, social, environmental, and medical problems and anxieties, intrinsically linked to its diseases, could have a single resolution. Bacteriology in British India is the first book to provide a social and cultural history of bacteriology in colonial India, situating it within the confluence of advances in germ theory, Pastuerian vaccines, colonial medicine, laboratory science, and British imperialism. It recounts the genesis of bacteriology and laboratory medicine in India through a complex history of conflict and alignment between Pasteurism and British imperial medicine. By investigating an array of laboratory notes, medical literature, and literary sources, the volume links colonial medical research with issues of poverty, race, nationalism, and imperial attitudes toward tropical climate and wildlife, contributing to a wide field of scholarship like the history of science and medicine, sociology of science, and cultural history. Pratik Chakrabarti is Chair in History of Science and Medicine, University of Manchester.



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