“Doctoring Traditions: Ayurveda and Small Technologies, 1860-1930”

Thursday, March 19, 2015
206 Ingraham Hall
Noon - 1pm

Quite a few accounts over the last couple of decades have described the modernization of Ayurvedic medicine in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. These works however, have all focused on the external context such as changes in patronage, professionalization, government policy etc. No attempt has been made to understand how the medical knowledge itself changed through this modernization or what was is exactly changed. In this talk, Mukharji will argue that the modernization of Ayurveda resulted in a radical refiguration of bodily knowledge. Moreover, contrary to popular belief, this refiguration was not a result of the introduction of ‘western’ anatomical knowledge. Rather it was instigated by the integration of a series of minor technologies ranging from pocket watches to thermometers into Ayurvedic clinical practice.

Projit Bihari Mukharji is Martin Meyerson Assistant Professor at the University of Pennsylvania. He was educated at Presidency College, Calcutta, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi and School of Oriental and African Studies, London. His articles have appeared in journals such as JAS, IESHR and Contemporary South Asia amongst others. Mukharji is also the author of Nationalizing the Body: The Medical Market, Print and Daktari Medicine (Anthem, 2009) and, along with David Hardiman, co-editor of Medical Marginality in South Asia: Situating Subaltern Therapeutics (Routledge, 2012). He is currently the Associate Editor of South Asian History & Culture and the Editor in charge of Asia for History Compass.

This event is free and open to the public! Samosas will be served!