

## The Indianisation of Colonial Medicine.

### The Case of the Ranchi Indian Mental Hospital, c. 1925-1940

Historians of medicine have tended to conceive of medicine and psychiatry in South Asia during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in terms of its colonial provenance, as 'colonial medicine' and 'tools of empire'. How does this suggestion fit in with the devolvement of political governance to the provinces and the 'Indianisation' of the medical services in the early twentieth century?

The presentation focuses on Surgeon J.E. Dhunjibhoy, a member of the Indian Medical Service and superintendent of the Indian Mental Hospital at Ranchi in the north east of British India. He was the first Indian in charge of a large mental hospital in British India. He visited numerous psychiatric institutions in North America and Europe during the 1920s and 1930s and corresponded with the most innovative clinicians of the period. The case of this senior psychiatrist highlights that in the minds of Indian psychiatrists such as Dhunjibhoy psychological medicine was a global, scientific venture rather than a specialist field that derived its impetus exclusively from the colonial metropolis and British blueprint. It also shows that old colonial attitudes towards Indians continued to prevail during the period of Indianisation and that Dhunjibhoy's generation of Indian senior medical officers worked within a socially, politically and professionally difficult context.



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