



Medicine and Society in Late Imperial China: A Study of Physicians in Suzhou, 1600-1850 (Asian Thought and Culture)

Yüan-ling Chao

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Medicine and Society in Late Imperial China explores the vibrant medical landscape in late imperial China (1600-1850), focusing on one of the most cultured and elegant cities in the lower Yangzi region, Suzhou. The central theme of the book is that the economic prosperity and intellectual vibrancy of late imperial Jiangnan fostered the emergence of a community of physicians who engaged in lively debates concerning qualifications and practice, leading to a growing sense of identity and new ways of theorizing and practicing medicine. It shows that the classical medical tradition interacted in a fluid relationship with both the state and the folk traditions. *Medicine and Society in Late Imperial China* is divided into two parts. Part I provides a broad framework on the discourse on the ideal physician, as well as examining the *sanhuang miao* (Temple of the Three Emperors) and challenges to existing medical theories by the *wenbing* (warm factor) school. Part II focuses on Suzhou physicians and their writings within the broad medical tradition, illustrates a local perspective of medicine's relationship with the state through an examination of the outbreak of epidemics in Suzhou, and discusses the development of the fields of specialties in medicine.

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