



Healing in Community: Medicine, Contested Terrains, and Cultural Encounters Among the Tuareg

Susan J. Rasmussen

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Exploring the multiple communities of healing among the Tuareg people of Niger, this work examines the beliefs and practices that surround healing and the quest for medicine. In studying ideals of healing that face challenges from wider political and economic forces, the author enables us to understand these culturally and historically constructed processes. This leads us to comprehend how many Tuareg construct and deconstruct local notions of medicine and healers, how patients cope with current problems in health care, and more broadly, how medical knowledge is constructed in anthropology and ethnography.

Rasmussen reveals new perspectives on healing in systems of power and symbolism, bridging interpretive cultural and political economy approaches. This book explores the consequences and implications of the idea that in order to obtain medicine, one must submit to authority, but proceeds beyond merely demonstrating this idea, already largely a truism in anthropology. The Tuareg data show how local residents are not passive victims, but rather active agents in responding to and resisting authority structures of medicine and medical knowledge.

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