

Foreword



THIS BOOK IS BASED on a selection of papers presented at an international seminar on 'The History of Unconventional Medicine – Approaches and Concepts' in Norrköping, Sweden, 11–12 September 1998. The seminar was organised by the Department of Health and Society at Linköping University in co-operation with the Institut für Geschichte der Medizin der Robert Bosch Stiftung, Stuttgart. More than 30 scholars from 10 different countries were gathered for an interdisciplinary discussion, which also constituted a continuation of the annual seminars held in Denmark between 1993 and 1996 within the framework of the International Network for Research in Alternative Therapies. The Norrköping seminar and this volume have been generously supported by grants from the Swedish Council for Research in Social Science and the Humanities.

The initiative for the seminar was taken by Dr Motzi Eklöf, who with energy and skill has been active in the project from the early planning of the meeting and throughout its organisation, through to the publishing of this book. Professor Robert Jütte and Dr Martin Dinges of the Institut für Geschichte der Medizin have also participated in organising the event, and their contacts and expertise within this field of medical history and their involvement in the preparations for the meeting have been invaluable. Professor Jütte has also played an active role as co-editor of the selected papers in this volume. As a representative of the local organisers I would like to express my gratitude to them. It has been a pleasure working together with the Institute.

My colleague at the Department of Health and Society, Professor Marie Clark Nelson, has carried the burden of corresponding with the authors and the publisher, giving the selected papers a professional linguistic touch, and has also served as one of the co-editors. Professor Jütte and Dr John Woodward, University of Sheffield, have also been of great assistance

as editors of the European Association for the History of Medicine and Health Publications, the series in which this book is published. A special thanks should also be directed to other members of the Department of Health and Society, who in different ways helped organise the seminar and take care of the practical arrangements. I would especially like to mention our administrative secretary Yvonne Blixt who is an unbeatable professional in these kind of arrangements.

Finally, it remains to thank all who presented papers and contributed to the discussions during the meeting. Unconventional medicine is part of the past and present of all societies, but until recently its history has largely been ignored by professional scholars. The roots and functions of unconventional medicine in different times and places comprise a fascinating part of social and cultural history and provide us with indispensable keys to the understanding of today's medical market. This volume will, hopefully, be an inspiration for future comparative research in the field.

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