

Foreword

The papers published in this monograph were presented at a symposium that took place in Seoul, South Korea, on October 22, 1999. I organized this part of the symposium at the request of Dr. Kwang-Yul Cha, MD, of CHA General Hospital, Pochon CHA University, Dr. Cha had approached the Richard and Hinda Rosenthal Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine (RHRC), where I was a visiting faculty, in the hope of collaborating on projects of common interest. In this context, Dr. Cha generously agreed to underwrite the workshop I was organizing in Seoul as chair of the International Collaboration for Information on Complementary and Traditional Medicine. Further, Dr. Cha had the excellent idea to suggest this symposium because a number of international experts in alternative medicine already were to be present at the workshop.

I proposed to focus this part of the symposium on factors that shape the field of alternative medicine because I feel that it is a most important topic, and one that is frequently neglected. Most meetings on alternative medicine focus on the science of alternative medicine and not on the context within which this science is conducted. This is somewhat unfortunate, as science is not conducted in a vacuum, and the ultimate impact of any discussions and studies in that field will continue to be less than optimal if all the factors that are indeed playing a role in making “alternative” medicine “alternative” are not taken into account.

I would like to express my deep appreciation to Dr. Kwang-Yul Cha, both for his generous support, and also for his foresight and his wonderful hospitality while we were in Korea. I would also like to thank the team of organizers he appointed in Seoul. They not only helped us with the logistical arrangements for the symposium, but they also organized the presentation of a series of papers discussing the practice of Korean traditional medicine. These papers

were not immediately relevant to the topic of the present monograph (and therefore are not included here), but they certainly contributed to the success of the overall symposium. I worked very closely with our Korean colleagues, and their help was invaluable. I would like in particular to thank Dr. Lee Kyung-Ah, PhD, and Dr. Lee Youngjin, MD, for their tireless efforts in dealing with the endless issues that predictably came up while preparing this joint symposium halfway around the world. I would also like to thank Mr. Sung-Dae Suh, and other staff members of the CHA Hospital too numerous to mention here, for their attentive dedication while we were in Seoul. On the American side, I would like to acknowledge the help of Dr. Janet Mindes of the RHRC and her considerable input in collecting and editing the papers presented here.

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