

Presentation

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This is the preface to a collection of ethnographic papers. The volume grew out of the Second Meeting of Medical Anthropology at Home in 2001 in Tarragona, Spain. When the meeting ended, we decided to revise and rewrite our contributions. The lively discussions during the meeting provided all of us with enough comments and new inspiration to do so.

Those who are inclined to the challenge of medical anthropology at home will get a good idea about the work of anthropologists who have studied their own societies for many years. The volume has four main themes – the influence of medical Anthropology within anthropology, the Body, migrations, and commitment, ethics and applied anthropology and within those broad themes the reader will find a wide variety of sub themes. The studies cover a wide geographical area; from the North of Europe to the South and from the West to the East.

The papers generate rich and detailed data about health and illness in a European context. They attempt to show the relevance of medical anthropology in Medicine and Anthropology today, particularly in the context of the welfare state. The papers also show the 'differences within' European diversity and discuss the problems of conceptualisation and comparison.

We are grateful for the many contributions to the conference and – subsequently – to this volume, the first to come out of the meeting. We would also like to thank our Italian colleagues Tullio Seppilli and Pino Schirripa who offered a 'home' for our papers and made this publication possible. We thank the University of Amsterdam, the Medical Anthropology Unit, the University Rovira i Virgili, the Fondazione Angelo Celli in Perugia and the Società italiana di antropologia medica for providing technical and financial support.