Notes

1. International Collaborative Research in Biomedicine

1. The International Science and Bioethics Collaborations project was funded by the U.K. Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) grant number RES-062-23-0215. The project included ten anthropology researchers from Cambridge University, Durham University, and Sussex University. Along with Sri Lanka, the researchers focused on India, the People’s Republic of China, Taiwan, and South Korea, investigating international collaborations and stem cell research.

2. The authors are introduced using their full names but thereafter will be referred to by their first name only. All other individuals who participated in the research are identified by their roles only to preserve their anonymity. We shared drafts of this book with the key research participants at various stages in its development.

2. Collaboration in Context

1. For example, see the details of the World Bank’s project “Sri Lanka: Health Sector Development” (Project ID: P050740, approval date: 2004; closing date: 2010), http://projects.worldbank.org/P050740/health-sector-development?lang=en.

2. Notwithstanding these trends, Sri Lanka is often cited as a nation that has been able to achieve improvements in the health of its population that are disproportionate to the state of the county’s economy (Nuffield Council on Bioethics 2002, 20). With health expenditures running at only 3 percent of the gross domestic product (compared with 7.1 percent in Japan, and 5.2 percent in India), Sri Lanka still maintains a comparatively high level of life expectancy for the region (65 years for men and 73 years for women), and it also maintains a relatively high ratio of doctors and nurses to the general population (36.5 doctors and 102.7 nurses per 100,000 of the population).

3. For example, Buddha is often compared to a physician diagnosing an illness and prescribing its cure. As the influential scholar-priest Walpola Rahula pointed out, “he is the wise and scientific doctor of the world [Bhisakka or Bhaiṣajya-guru]” (Rahula 1978, 17).

4. See the Institute for Research and Development’s site at http://www.ird.lk/.


6. See, for example, the International Collaboration Awards, an initiative launched by the U.K. Royal Society to promote international collaborative research (https://royalsociety.org/grants-schemes-awards/grants/international-collaborations/). Also see the Royal Society’s 2017 report on a survey of international collaboration and mobility, which shows a marked increase in such activity.

7. The meeting took place at King’s College, London, in September 2009.

8. ELSI first appeared as part of the work of the National Human Genome Research Institute (NHGRI) and was established in 1990 as an integral part of the Human Genome Project (HGP).

3. The Joint Pain Trial

1. Clinical trials are experiments designed to evaluate drugs, devices, or medical procedures. Trials aim to produce replicable data about the effectiveness of different interventions before they are made available for commercial or other use. According to the WHO guidelines, there are normally four phases through which new chemical compounds must progress (WHO 1995). From one stage to the next, the dosage of the drugs and the number of people exposed to the drug are gradually increased. Phase 1 clinical trials, otherwise known as “first in-human trials,” are performed using healthy individuals to identify preliminary evidence of safety. Phases 2 to 4 are often performed with patients who have the condition for which the drug is intended. Studies to reproduce drugs that are out of patent and have already been tested (so-called generics) use primarily healthy individuals to measure the absorption and efficacy of the tested drug as compared with an existing
one. Trials can also be performed on existing medicines approved for a new condition, to validate an existing clinical practice for which there is some evidence but not yet proved with an RCT, or in an attempt to find more effective combinations. Trials also can be conducted using new populations to access new markets. Finally, pharmaceutical companies also use trials to extend their patents by creating new formulas (for example, developing a drug in liquid rather than tablet form) to ensure a monopoly for the product and thereby avoid the risk of losing its patent to cheaper alternatives.

5. Localizing Ethics

1. We are grateful to Claudia Merli for pointing out an earlier genealogy of this distinction that goes back to Heidegger, whose notion of being-in-the-world (dasein) was built on the idea of caring for others.

6. Negotiating Collaborative Research

1. Cargo cults was the term used to describe millenarian movements that sprang up across Papua New Guinea in the wake of contact with Westerners. Fascinated by the goods they brought [“cargo”], the people began to create conditions that would facilitate the arrival of future wealth and prosperity, such as making landing strips to encourage the arrival of aeroplanes (Burridge 1969).

7. Precarious Ethics

1. We do not wish to invoke the whole of Kristeva’s psychoanalytic project in the context of Sri Lankan society, but her conceptualization of the “abject” as being neither object nor subject has been helpful in developing the argument we put forward here.

2. Decontamination of the stomach was often spoken of as gastric lavage and/or forced emesis. In practice this usually meant making patients drink water mixed with sodium bicarbonate to induce vomiting. Patients might also be subject to flushing the stomach with water or given activated charcoal or a combination of all of these. Despite the fact that the concepts were collapsed together like this, different practices have differing consequences on the patients’ conditions—for example, vomiting with sodium bicarbonate is not recommended in international toxicology guidelines as it may tear the digestive track and actually make the toxins absorb faster. Therefore, clarity on what the clinical practice is, and should be, matters for the recovery of the patient.

8. Strategic Ethics

1. A contributor from Pakistan planned to attend but unfortunately had to cancel at the last minute due to family reasons.
2. Institute of Research and Development (http://www.ird.lk).