

NOTES TOWARDS A HISTORY OF THE FACULTY OF MEDICINE, UNIVERSITY OF KELANIYA

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Willy-nilly, we have been specially commissioned to write the history of the Faculty of Medicine of the University of Kelaniya. Boastful though it may sound, the reality is that, in a manner of speaking, we made it. One of us (CF) was the Founder Dean from 1991 to 1997; the other was Dean from 1997 to 2006. That adds up to 15 of the Faculty's 17 years. When the makers of history write it, the outcome is necessarily an exercise in self-accounting and all self-accounting would and should be suspect. Particularly is this so in the present case, because as some modern historians say, history is not so much a search for truth as a quest for identity, usually a national identity. As with the history of a nation, so with the history of an institution. In these notes, we are certainly concerned with defining the specific identity of the University of Kelaniya's Medical Faculty (UKFM). However, the documentation of the quest for identity will be evidence-based. Axiomatically, the validity of our account of what actually happened in the beginning of the UKFM will depend on the verifiability of the evidence we adduce. This must be so because what is not verifiable may become a matter of disagreement and if the criterion of verifiability is abandoned, all versions become equally tenable. History then is liable to become indistinguishable from fiction.