

# The Conception of the Human Person in Medicine

## Exploring Boundaries between Traditional Chinese and Western Medicine

Unterschiedliche medizinische Disziplinen und Ansätze nehmen den Patienten in unterschiedlicher Weise wahr und hinter dieser Wahrnehmung steckt ein jeweils spezifisches Menschenbild. Dieses implizite Menschenbild ist in der Medizin je nach Disziplin verschieden - innerhalb der sogenannten westlichen Medizin und mehr noch darüber hinaus. Dieser Band geht der Frage nach den unterschiedlichen Menschenbildern in verschiedenen medizinischen Traditionen - Traditionelle Chinesische Medizin und Westliche Medizin - nach. Philosophen, Theologen, Ärzte, Ethnologen und Historiker aus Österreich und Taiwan entwerfen mit Ihren Beiträgen ein facettenreiches Menschenbild in der Medizin.

Searching for medical assistance in case of sickness, one goes to see a doctor. Seeing a doctor implies some expectation on the part of the human-being-turned-patient in terms of anticipated treatments. The patient sees the doctor, but the doctor sees the patient too. The doctor applies a particular type of perception - medical perception - in the communication with and examination of the patient. It is this medical perception, and further conceptualization, that stands in the center of this anthology on *The Conception of the Human Person in Medicine*. This conception differs depending on the frequented doctor. Already with the large field of Western Medicine, the conception of the human person is considerably different among, for example, general practitioners, psychiatrists, gerontologists, and cardiologists. The differences in the conception of the human person are aggravated if we take different medical approaches into consideration. As expressed in the subtitle, this anthology addresses the ideas of the human being mainly in two medical traditions: *Exploring Boundaries between Traditional Chinese and Western Medicine*.

The anthology thus deals with an implicit rather than explicit aspect of medicine, i.e. its underlying understanding of the human person. Medicine as a practical science builds equally upon elements from natural science and the humanities. Health and illness are not just brute facts "out there" to be detected by the empirical methods of natural science. Rather, they are also socially and culturally constructed. The conception of the human person thus depends on the particular medical tradition. Exploring the question at stake requires an interdisciplinary approach involving experts from the fields of Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM), Western Medicine, Philosophy, Theology,

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Anthropology, and Medical History. This wide range of expertise allows for a multifaceted perspective on the way the human person is perceived in the different medical traditions.

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