

## The history of medicine in the system of modern humanities

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**Abstract.** The achievements of modern theoretical and practical biomedicine and their introduction into clinical practice are creating a fundamentally new anthropological situation on a cross-cultural scale. The ability to not only change but also qualitatively transform the natural morphological, structural and functional components of the human body provides the basis for optimization of its biological status and more effective treatment practices but gives rise to threats and risks of destructive influences. This entails the risk of an uncontrolled transformation of human nature and opens the way for its further development in a different dimension, which is most evident in the ideas and practices of transhumanism. In these circumstances, it is necessary to comprehend the developing situation, to develop approaches and standards that can provide a conscious, controlled character to a whole range of biotechnological influences that are aimed at human beings. Humanitarian knowledge in its present state, as well as perceptions of humanity established in previous periods mainly under the influence of natural sciences, no longer meet modern needs. There is a need for a new type of humanities, which would have a typological, systematizing and regulatory nature. The main foundations for its formation are philosophy, the history of medicine and the arts. The history of medicine acquires special significance in this case because as a scientific discipline it is based on a clear historical and genetic methodology that is inherent to it. It contains the most complete body of knowledge about how to save the valuable status of the person at all stages of general historical development and has significant theoretical and anthropological potential.

**Keywords:** people, humanities, biotechnology, science, transhumanism, philosophy, history of medicine

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The basic idea of this paper should be explained immediately: new knowledge in the humanitarian field – knowledge of the individual, adequate for the complexity of contemporary culture and the acute problems arising from it – has not yet been articulated, it must be created by the joint efforts of the entire body of scientific disciplines, including the history of medicine, which is entrusted with a special task.

The need to update *theoretical* humanities knowledge is due to the fact that the knowledge associated with the *practical* effect in terms of an individual is not only changing, but also the qualitative transformation of its natural givens are no longer of a purely experimental nature: transplantation and the creation of artificial organs, therapy with stem and embryonic cells,

genetic manipulation, creation of artificial tissues and organs, methods of revival and extension of life, medical and technological regulation of human reproduction, and other ways of organismic transformation are already firmly established in the daily practice of clinical medicine. The new situations engendered by this process increasingly often do not fit into the framework developed over centuries of “classical” ideas about the person, shift the old standards and guidelines of the humanities, and actualize the need for questioning their revision. This is evidenced not only by the changes in medical ethics (including bioethics norms, which have more of a legal than moral significance, taking the place of traditional, morally efficacious imperatives of the Hippocratic oath), but also the latest trends in the field of law, which in the long term presuppose the rejection of prohibitions and standards that were until very recently absolutely

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steadfast for thousands of years. In particular, about 15 years ago, lawyers started talking about so-called somatic human rights, which “may include the right to die, change sex, homosexual sex, organ transplantation, the use of illegal drugs or psychotropic substances, the right to artificial reproduction, sterilization, abortion, and (already visible in the long term) cloning and later – virtual simulation, in the sense of a full confirmation (duplication) of oneself in an intangible form of objective existence” [1, p. 43]. The fact that real changes are taking place in precisely this field is demonstrated by the recent legalization of gay marriage in France and the United States, as well as all forms of euthanasia, including for children, in the Benelux countries, the widely publicized preparation for the transplant of human head and a number of other similar phenomena. Moreover, efforts of the supporters of the radical modification of humans have transformed into a project, almost a social institution in the form of the *transhumanism movement* which not only leaves no room for legal or ethical dilemmas, but also any doubt about the feasibility of such a modification.

At first glance, the rise of such trends (most consistently expressed by transhumanism) is based on a good reason, since the ability to transform and improve the functionality of the body is the unique ability of *human reason*, gradually perfected over the course of history, built up with the accumulation of relevant experience. Tools for “biological optimization” surround us from early childhood and are poorly recognized as such (eyeglasses, dental fillings, vaccinations, implants, and so on). Any movement in this direction, it would seem, can only be welcomed. The question is in the *extent* of such changes and their boundaries: plastic surgery is one thing, it is quite another to be manipulated in the manner described in the Victor Hugo’s novel “The Man Who Laughs” – *comprachicos* – intentionally mutilated children who were sold to wandering circuses. In other words, it is a question of the limits of the permissible in relation to the individual, therefore, about views and examples, which are based on standards for theoretical approaches and regulations for practical effects on humans – not only those that have been implemented, but also those that are planned to be introduced.

What are these boundaries and views in transhumanism? To judge them is quite difficult,

as its supporters, in stating their position, have focused exclusively on the effects of planned human modifications, the positive significance of which hardly anyone will deny: “Strengthening of intelligence, spirit, will, commitment, responsibility, achievement of personal freedom from biological mediums, increasing the degree of mastery of space and the level of control matter and energy” [2, p. 242]. However, contradictions, inconsistencies and other weaknesses in their positions come from behind the scenes. Therefore, the general characteristics of the transhumanists’ project have to be taken as real (accepted as a starting point for further enquiry, investigation), taking into account indirect data – identifying the premises from which they proceed, and evaluating the consequences that will result in the realization of their intentions.

First of all, attention should be drawn to the purely reductionist approach to the individual adopted in transhumanism, and the methods included in it. Based on the recognition that the ultimate goal of transhumanists is the “full cyborgization each human cell and the transformation of the body into a fully manageable matter” [2, p. 215], the conclusion must be drawn that they have reduced people to nothing more than a body and the body to a set of physiological processes, physiology – to physics, and physics to technics. This is evidenced by the fact that in the lexicon of transhumanism the terms “soul” and “spirit” are absent and the “mind” is rarely used; in their place is “intelligence” or, at best, “consciousness”, which, however, “have come to be seen as a counterpart to the computer, but in fact a kind of calculating machine – super complex – but which, nevertheless, is evolving as an information system. Disputes about whether a machine can think are relegated to the past. If at the beginning of the development of computer technology it was compared with the human brain, “measured against a person”, now this relationship has turned on its head: the human is measured against a computer [3, p. 272].

Despite the fact that proponents of transhumanism are most eagerly discussing the problems associated with the impact on the body of an individual, their efforts are to a no lesser extent directed towards society in general, and imply profound social and political transformation. In particular, Francis Fukuyama – the author of the

well-known publication “The End of History?” – in his next work, with the characteristic title “Our Posthuman Future: Consequences of the Biotechnology Revolution”, discarding all thoughts about the end or even the suspension of social development in a purely technogenic form as adopted by the modern globalized community, characteristically makes the statement: “Not only do we not see this conclusion now, but it seems to stand at the start of a period of unprecedented progress in the history of technology. Biotechnology and a better understanding of the science of the human brain will have significant political consequences – they will reopen the possibility of *social engineering* [italics mine – V.R.], which was rejected by society possessing 20th century technology” [4, p. 30]. And then once again he emphasizes: “As soon as we discover not just a correlation, but the actual molecular link between genes and such personality traits as intelligence, aggression, sexual identity, criminal tendencies, alcoholism and the like, it becomes all the clearer that this knowledge can be applied to specific social objectives” [4, p. 31].

All the transhumanists’ projects for “human design”, “the optimization of humans’ natural nature” and so on are actively promoted in the media,<sup>1</sup> and ultimately presuppose the elimination of *homo sapiens* species, or at any rate, of its form and biological status, which it gained in the process of anthropogenesis at least 40,000–50,000 years ago. Within the framework is transhumanism “is the justification that humans are not the last link in evolution, they can be improved indefinitely, dramatically increasing mental and physical capabilities, eliminating aging and death. For this we need to stop being afraid ‘to cease to be a person’ and ‘become more a perfect being’, ‘become transhuman.’ Transhumanism is a direct challenge to the human identity, as we know it, as we have been for thousands of years, or as God created us” [3, p. 267]. “In this context”, argue the most radically minded transhumanists, “we should not have to talk about the individual, but some humanoid, different forms and types of humanoid life, among which humanity as we know it is just one species, already on its way out. Humanity is a dying species. <...> in its place will come the biocyborg, the Centaur” [6, p. 92, 93].

It’s hard not to notice the obvious dissonance between the statements of transhumanism supporters on the rights of the individual to use the achievements of biomedicine without any restrictions for the modification of the body, i.e., full freedom of choice, on the one hand, and their denial of any alternatives to the movement in this field, i.e., the actual elimination of the possibility to choose – on the other. The aforementioned Fukuyama in concluding his book wrote: “Maybe we are ready to enter into a posthuman future where technology will enable us to gradually change our essence over time. Many welcome this opportunity under the banner of human freedom. They want to maximize the freedom of parents to choose what kind of children to have, the freedom of scientific research and freedom of entrepreneurs to use technology to make a profit ... It may be that we are somehow *destined to this new kind of freedom* [my italics – V.R.] or that in the next stage of evolution, as some suggest, we consciously take on our biological structure, and not leave it in the hands of the blind forces of natural selection” [4, p. 307].

So, then, it turns out that the future agreed upon by transhumanists is already predetermined, no other options are proposed, and all the talk about freedom and right of choice are only ambiguous and deceitful?

Summing up the situation under consideration, in relation to the implementation of new biomedical technologies and the resulting consequences, it should be recognized that they are poorly controlled and used with insufficient responsibility, the most consistent expression of which is the position of transhumanism and its apologists. It is in need of scrutiny and a balanced evaluation. The fundamental problem, therefore, is transferred *to the theoretical plane*: in its current state, is humanitarian knowledge ready to conduct such an assessment? Is its potential sufficient to not only record the views and opinions about humans that have developed in the course of putting scientific and technological progress into social practice, including the practice of biomedicine, and also to develop clear criteria for a balanced, regulated relationship to the variety of existing or planned techniques, approaches and methods for influencing a person – his or her mind and body, his or her nature? It seems from this point of view that modern humanitarian knowledge is in need

<sup>1</sup> See: [5].

of substantial renewal. Let us try to justify this position and show a way out of the situation, based on the materials of the *The Humanities: Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow round table*, published in the *Person* journal (No. 2, No. 3, 2015).

Opening the discussion and commenting on the ever more intensive “turn to the person” taking place at present in all areas of science, the editor-in-chief of the journal *Person* B.G. Yudin nevertheless admits that “such a turn does not always turn out to be an absolute good for humanity” that it “is often something that is conceived and created as a kind of scientific and technical good, but is closer to evil in its practical implementation” [7, p. 13]. This assertion transforms the question concerning the border between “can” and “cannot” in relation to the person into a question of the possibility of human knowledge to theoretically express human specificity with the aim of keeping the process of its transformation with a “human-dimension” framework appropriate for humanity. Unlike Yudin himself, as well as some of the other participants in the discussion, specifically expressing a spirit of “technological optimism”, the majority who took part in the debate appreciated the opportunity to address this issue more skeptically.

First of all, they recognize the person in his or her highest, purely human form – viewed either in a “transcendental dimension” (F.I. Girenok) [8, p. 9–10], or as a bearer of the values “truth, goodness and beauty” (M.S. Kiseleva) [7, p. 23], either as an individual (V.M. Naydysh) [8, p. 19], or as a unique being (irrespective of whether it is understood as a product of natural evolution or creation, created in the image and likeness of God) – is not a focus of research interest today in science. “People themselves are valued the least in a global world, their ancestral (creaturely divine or naturally genetic) substantialities, which in past cultures were regulators of society, have been eliminated as unnecessary or exposed to global editing: the person has been replaced by ‘user’, ‘group member’, ‘agent’, and so on” (M.S. Kiseleva). [7, p. 24] Furthermore, humanists believe, here lies uncertainty or even risk because such trends are “only an intermediate stage of transition to the understanding of the human being as an artifact. The problem here, of course, is not limited to the concept of the person as a social artifact, on which society and culture place their signs. First of all, we are talking

about the construction of a new type of person – “unnatural” by nature, “constructed” before his or her time in the world in general, before his or her conception, complicated in his or her artifact status in his or her further existence, attaining superior body parts, implanting cognitive enhancers and absorbing some drugs to modify their mood and feelings of control” (O. Popova) [7, p. 37–38]. The underlying reason for this situation in the modern humanities is “the increasingly permeating methods and results of the natural and exact sciences”, (G.L. Tulchin) [7, p. 40], i.e. the natural science approach prevails in its methodology.

This aspect should be emphasized. The fact is that the possibilities for natural science methodology in its application to humanity are not unlimited: all natural sciences view it (quite naturally) in a limited way – as a physical body, as a biological organism, as a collection of functions, a system tissue substrates, etc., leaving aside its specific, purely human, personal characteristics that are not taken into account by experimental methods, statistics, mathematical modeling, and so on. This does not mean that such an approach is flawed at its core, on the contrary, humanity is indebted to it for the considerable advances in its knowledge of external nature, and of humanity itself; flaws occur when the natural-scientific approach becomes the sole approach, when it begins to overshadow other ways of understanding the world and human comprehension.

This is precisely the situation today, not only in science but also in culture on the whole, when in the triad of “truth, goodness and beauty”, truth is endowed with the highest value. Only scientific knowledge is considered truth itself, but scientific knowledge is considered as true when derived exclusively according to the canons of natural science methodology (“cognitive science”, according to the canons of which the human mind in its nature is a “computer”, is a vivid example). But the fact of the matter is that the methodology in principle does not take humanity in fullness of its manifestations. This fact is evident in the position of the modern philosophy section that provides the theoretical basis for “cognitive science”: “Modern philosophy, which has become scientific, has renounced the holistic person, leaving his or her with the brain alone, or more precisely, his or her left hemisphere. The concept of personality

has fallen out of use, replaced by ‘human factor’, ‘human capital’, the individual is dissipated, transformed into multiple forms, personality, singularity and the like” (V.A. Kutyrev) [8, p. 16].

Thus, reliance on humanitarian knowledge in its current form allows theorists to only comment on the developing situation with displeasure and skepticism, or, as in case with the positivist-minded humanist, regard the tendency for observing humanity in line with the narrow natural science trend as legitimate and rationally justified.

But this is an external, general social, *actual theoretical* aspect of contemporary humanities; there is also an inner, mostly *practical*, aspect aimed at the individual and associated with medicine, its cognitive and value potential. Admittedly, similar processes are deployed here also, with the only difference being that they possess a really significant, factual character. Let us examine them in detail, commenting on the analysis of the participants’ statements given at the discussion.

Briefly described, the paradigm dominant in current contemporary theoretical and clinical medicine looks like this: a person is presented here as a biological organism, the organism as a set of functions, functions as the subject of focused, selective action. As a consequence, the value dimension of medicine – the one that comes from a holistic view of a person, that maintains his or her value status and separates medicine from veterinary practice and manipulation of biological material – takes second place, losing significance. The logical consequence of this fact is that, despite all the advances in biological and medical science, modern clinical medicine is rapidly losing its status of the “medicine of health” and is finally being transformed into a “medicine of disease”: medical practice is actually already preventive in nature, and the etiological treatment principle is almost completely absorbed by the pathogenic, which, in turn, leads to the elimination of syndromes according to the principle “take a tablet and you will be fine” (S.A. Smirnov) [7, p. 22]. Large amounts of medicine, which relieve symptoms but do not help the healing process, are produced by the pharmaceutical industry and thrown onto the market so rapidly and to such an extent that not only are individual professionals are unable to understand their diversity and evaluate their effectiveness, but nor are entire sections of the health system. Physicians’ specializations are

becoming more narrow, and medical practice – more one-sided and fragmentary. This would not be a problem if all these practices, being focused on the image of a person in its full manifestation, were organically combined with each other. However, as has already been mentioned, the doctrine of modern medicine is dominated by a “physicalist” natural science approach, which because of its one-sidedness, on the one hand eliminates an orientation towards the body’s integrity. On the other, beyond certain boundaries, it turns treatment into invasion and destruction. No wonder that the population of developed countries, provided with the highest quality (in accordance with accepted standards) of health care, is becoming less healthy and the spread of cardiovascular diseases and cancer, from which it widely suffering, is considered an epidemic.

Against this general background, the success of theoretical biomedicine and the expanding range of its practical applications cannot inspire the former optimism, and the worsening trend for natural science, the transformation of medicine into part of the biosciences, looks menacing, because, according to I.T. Kasavin, bioscience is “the surrender of biology and medicine to physics, chemistry and computational mathematics” [7, p. 11]. At first glance, these findings could be questioned, by pointing out countermeasures – evidence-based medicine as a form of response to the explosive growth in the number of drugs and treatment methods; on bioethics as a way to save the valuable components of medicine; the increase in life expectancy in developed countries, explaining the increase in the proportion of “diseases of civilization” in the structure of morbidity. However, these arguments are not convincing: evidence-based medicine is based on statistics, averaging methods, while every effective treatment is individual; bioethics only documents the moral dilemmas that arise in the modern practice of medicine, but does not solve them, revealing itself to be, so to speak, “ethically palliative”; “diseases of civilization” demonstrate not only absolute, but relative growth, not only recorded statistically, but also by the “naked eye”: it is enough to note the frightening speed with which neurovascular diseases are increasingly affecting the younger.

In general, we must acknowledge that modern medicine does not actually work in a holistic way, but in a reductive way, i.e., with a distorted view of the person, losing the very idea of his or

her specificity, the elimination of which is the main problem for the theory of modern human knowledge. This means that the path of radical and aggressive transformation of the individual's body and mind by means of modern science leaves neither any external (actually theoretical) or internal (internal medical, practical) barriers. For this reason the biological modification of people is threatening to become *infinite* – carried out according to the transhumanism model, i.e., without any controls and balances, already outside the boundaries separating human from non-human. There is a situation that an expert on legal issues in medicine expressed as follows: “It is time, finally, to see the forest for the trees. A terrible threat hides in its thickets. The sequential evolution of ‘somatic rights’ in a direction, set out in life’s current trends, may in the end result in a loss for humanity: *the loss of humanity itself*. Instead of the usual reflection, the ‘mirror’ of civilization may one day reflect a very different anthropomorphic creation” [1, p. 47].

Whatever the case, modern philosophy, and humanities knowledge, and medicine are involved in a confrontation between two opposing general cultural trends, the first of which denotes the transition to an uncontrolled transformation of human nature with its further development into a non-human dimension, the second saving its *internal* formation, biological, “God-given” nature under the conditions of intense *external* changes. “Which model will become more successful depends on which the baseline scenario humanity chooses for itself: the suicidal scenario under the influence of advanced technologies with the replacement of itself with the posthuman, or anthropological alternative scenario, that is, the preserving of the person with ancestral qualities, but using cutting-edge science and technologies” (S.A. Smirnov) [7, p. 23].

In this situation, there is clearly a need for a *new type of humanities knowledge*, aimed at the “knowledge of human specificity with subsequent determination of its cultural and historical perspectives and borders”, (S.M. Klimov) [7, p. 31] the ability to “influence the course of scientific and technological progress, giving it a human-dimension, to create adaptive mechanisms, a kind of bridge for the introduction of technology” (O.V. Popova) [7, p. 37]. The problem is that it remains unclear *exactly how* to create this new knowledge. The

results of these aforementioned discussions are summarized as follows: “Humanities in conjunction with biology is an affirmation of life, a bet on the individual, on subject-subject relations, to the level that scientific thought draws us to – that is, I think, now the only encouraging intellectual landmark” (A.N. Fatenkov) [8 p. 15]. Meanwhile, this is not enough to solve these problems, an at least approximate but clear model is necessary, and in addition, we need methodological certainty. These conditions, however, were not maintained during the round table, as a result, it seems, of the fact that *interdisciplinarity*, repeatedly mentioned by participants as a prime condition for the formation of a new type of humanities knowledge, was not defined concretely, which is why none of its components were defined, with no ways of bringing them into a coherent whole. Nevertheless, the need to comply with this provision is not in doubt. Therefore, adhering to an *interdisciplinary* framework, we try to offer our own version of how we must create the required humanities knowledge.

Let’s start with the general provisions of the plan, confirming the discussion’s results. Given that in the course of all preceding modernity, the scientific development period of humanities knowledge was based on the methodology of natural science (which, as we have seen, gave birth to most of these negative effects), an updated humanitarian knowledge cannot serve for the extrapolation of natural science approaches and methods in the sphere of human existence. At the same time it should not be a simple denial of the bulk of natural and technical sciences, it should not oppose science and its methodology; on the contrary, the new humanities knowledge should *include this in itself*, be *humanities knowledge about the first* (natural), *and second* (artificial, human created) *nature*. Consequently, such knowledge must be *knowledge of the completeness of culture* because it is culture that includes both the knowledge of people about nature (not only foreign, but also their own, internal) and the methods of influence on it as well as their original relationship, thanks to which they are aware of, build and implement its actions.

Knowledge of this kind must be able to act as a reference, allowing the transformations of human nature to relate to each other, while maintaining the stability and balance of some purely human parameters inherent only to it. Long-term examples of such knowledge already exist among

the sciences, studying nature (taxonomy, biological typology), and among the humanities disciplines (the study of style in art, teaching about the canon in linguistics). However, humanities knowledge, meeting the needs of the present, should be more perfect, reaching, holistic,<sup>2</sup> and for this, in turn, the following requirements must be met.

Firstly, it must be *systematic*, i.e. based on some unified principle. Therefore, cultural studies, which at first glance, could serve as a *knowledge of the completeness of culture*, does not meet this requirement: it is interdisciplinary and complex, [8, p. 25] and not a systematic knowledge (it lacks a unified synthesis principle, it suffers from methodological uncertainties as a consequence of its descriptive nature, which as a result makes it simply material for a new type of humanities knowledge).

Secondly, the new humanities knowledge should have a *practical effective, regulatory nature*, particularly in relation to the practical application of natural sciences, which are now the main engine for cultural change.

Thirdly, it must have clear guidelines for the *preservation of the integrity* of humanity in unity with its biologically provided and socio-cultural determined characteristics. A focus on anthropological integrity is that very “*human-dimension*” principle, which can form the new humanitarian knowledge as a full theoretical *system*, with research significance and regulatory potential.

On what components should this system be based?

The first is *philosophy* – the only discipline having a scientific status that can bring together the diversity of anthropologically significant social experience into a coherent theoretical field. To this end, both directions of modern philosophy, which finally split in the 20th century – *positivist*, which dealt with the scientific-technical sphere of human existence, and *philosophical-anthropological*, with its antiscientific and existential positions – must be “grounded” in a wider basis, in relation to which science, the most effective factor of contemporary historical progress, would act as only *one of its* manifestations. This base, it turned out, is *culture*. So, the version of modern philosophy, the most appropriate issues of our time, is a *philosophy as a general theory of culture*. In this version of philosophy, the former (natural philosophy) must

finally be abandoned, as must the current (cultural philosophy) claims to global scientific knowledge, focusing on its unique mission – the ability to trace the inextricable and organic connection between humanity and culture and culture with humanity in a uniform theoretical context.

However, philosophy is a purely theoretical discipline, in itself it is insufficient to impact on practice; it needs a mediating mechanism that would carry out the interaction between the theoretical, philosophical understanding of ideas about the person with the body of natural sciences, virtually expanding the world of humanity – both in external and internal relations. The experience of medicine is indispensable in this matter.

At all stages of its existence, medicine has always maintained human integrity, bringing order to all the experience accumulated in everyday practice and in scientific knowledge in accordance with the historically specific ideas about the essence of humanity, its health and disease, not allowing specific technologies that applied to its body and soul to be splintered, be limited to unilateral corrections or have destructive effects, such as the aforementioned *comprachicos*. Medicine has always been a social institution for the stabilization of culture by the standards of the image of humanity, which is a representation of the image and the goal in the minds of people of a certain historical period. Due to the problems indicated by us, we must admit that starting from a certain point in time, this function began to be lost, as manifested in the anthropologically destructive effects of “narrowness” and “selectivity” which are found in the humanities, as well as in biomedical practice. But if this has become a fact, we should (keeping in mind the continuity of medicine’s “stabilizing” role in culture) “untangle” the conglomeration of accumulated problems, identify the main trends and demonstrate how to return medicine to the right path under existing conditions, to fully carry out its historical role.

Thus, *the history of medicine* is the second, indispensable component of the formation of modern humanities. No other discipline has the capacity to allow us to identify and record the laws for an organic combination of objective, cognitive processing, and the subjective, axiological aspects of human existence in the course of history, and, therefore, identify the origins of the loss of this unity today. *The history of medicine*, based on historical

<sup>2</sup> See: [9].

and genetic methodology and tracing the process of retaining and building human integrity to a new level each time, in accordance with the nature of experience acquired at a given stage of development of human culture, *implicitly* accumulates a background understanding of the causes for a loss of integrity in a given historical moment, and, consequently, for its re-establishment under new conditions, with a new, broader foundation. It only remains to *explicate* this potential.

Yet the formation of modern human knowledge is not complete without the introduction of another component capable of most economically and convincingly expressing the general historical trend of retaining the integrity of human culture in the course of its development – *art*. Art images clearly demonstrate what *real form* human integrity takes in certain historical periods, in which *particular form* the fullness of human potential is embodied in different cultures, thanks to which *specific techniques* the human principle in humanity, modified by social and cultural context but retained by medicine, persists in the development process. Art is able to clarify understanding of some specific circumstances of historical order: in particular, the

fact that Galen's continued authority in medicine has remarkably lasted right up to modern times, which researchers rightly point out [10, p. 74] can be explained by the emergence of the type of human individuality that took shape in the late Roman period (absorbed by work of Galen) and expressed in such wonderful art phenomena as *Roman portraits of the 2nd to 3rd centuries AD* which was entrenched in European culture for almost 1,500 years.

Thus, an understanding of our knowledge of the humanities in its currently existing state, and the situation prevailing today in experimental and clinical medicine, gives reason to conclude that the latest knowledge of the humanities adequate for the complexities of the problems of the modern era and able to respond to its challenges, should be established as a *theory of culture and humanity*, rationalized *philosophy*, presented through the prism of *the history of medicine* and the expressive image of *art*. This work is dedicated to the identification of the special role of the social institution of medicine in the preservation of the integrity of the person at all stages of general historical development and the consequent special significance for the history of medicine of the modern human cognition.

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