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# The culture of acknowledgement and the horizons of truth



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***Abstract:***

*Focused on the dynamic of the relations between truth and acknowledgement, this study brings forward the following series of hypotheses: 1) between "the essence of truth", as revelation and referential experience, cognitive and moral supreme resort and the various embodiments of partial, temporary and relative truths, there is an operational space of thinking and acting, favorable to the comprehensive truths, as we call them; 2) within the unceasing aspiration of overcoming the partial truths and asymptotical closeness to "the essence of truth", the comprehensive truth is the wide-awakeness of the self-conscience haunted by worries and doubts and which, through the quests for faith and reason, becomes capable of acknowledgement; 3) from an extensional point of view, the comprehensive truth is the acknowledgement in the informational-cognitive area, and from the intentional point of view, the comprehensive truth is the acknowledgement in the axiological and moral areas; 4) if by means of comprehension we acknowledge something or someone, then comprehension and acknowledgement interact with each other, and the path towards a culture of acknowledgement can be realized by living the comprehensive truth as a truth of acknowledgement oriented to understanding and communication; 5) the path towards a culture of acknowledgement implies the establishment and implementation of a human model, a real challenge for each of us. The anthropological model that this study suggests starts from the dynamic of the hypostases of the human being. According to this model, the human nature, as the natural essence of what human means and the human condition of moral and spiritual fulfillment, meet in the human essence synthesized in what Pope John Paul II called "the acting person"1. By shaping the real human being, a fallible and creative being, through the dynamic of his hypostasis, we come to a comprehensive truth regarding the human being, a truth on which the culture of acknowledgement is founded. Moreover, the main idea of our demarche is that between acknowledgement and comprehension there is a deep, organic connection for the comprehensive truth that lies at the basis of the culture of acknowledgement.*

## Introduction

The reasoning of these hypotheses is structured in the present study as it follows: I) The horizons of truth and the need for comprehension. II) The *comprehensive truth* as truth of acknowledgement. III) The fallible being, the hypostases of the human being, and the comprehensive truth. IV) Comprehension and truth: towards a culture of acknowledgement. This means that, after drifting briefly through the "ins and outs of truth" in the theory of knowledge and in the hermeneutical one, with the help of the interactions between anxiety, doubt, faith and reason, we will rebuild the condition of self-consciousness that, through the understanding and acknowledgement of someone or something and through the orientation towards communication and communion,

acquires the name of comprehensive truth. Then, starting from the hypostases of the human being, we will elaborate an anthropological model to define *the fallible human being*, author of the comprehensive truth oriented towards the culture of acknowledgement. This is because the infallible person, free from worries and doubts, living in revelations and truth is an ideal-type. The fallible human being is, in fact, the actual being who needs comprehension and acknowledgement and the one who is, in return, capable of showing them after long searches. The fallible person is the one, who, by living the comprehensive truths, trains his/her ability to acknowledge, first his/her own fallibility, thus aspiring to a culture of acknowledgement.

## The Horizons of Truth and the Need for Comprehension

The researches in the field of logics and epistemology contributed to the accretion of a rich description of truth that contains a series of important aspects: the nature, the criteria, the dimensions, the types of truth etc. The correlation to reality, the verification of the coherence of reasoning, and the obtaining of success have opened horizons of expression and, at the same time, have formed the criteria for legitimating the truth. In this respect, it is not by coincidence that we come to speak of the truth-correlation, the truth-coherence, and the truth-utility. Experience, faith, and reason have become sources and ways to define truth, each by itself. At the same time, truth has acquired different forms: *a priori* and *a posteriori*, analytic and synthetic, absolute and relative, abstract and concrete, theoretical and empirical, formal and experimental. Additionally, according to the existential recordings, truth may have a factual, logical, scientific, artistic, philosophical, or religious manifestation.

The semantic theory of truth elaborated by Alfred Tarski provided a wide path in the research of truth. More precisely, he came up with a method of formalizing systematically the relations between expressions and the objects they designate. Through the understanding of the logical consequence as the transmitting of truth and the rehabilitation of the notion of truth through correlation, Tarski introduced a realistic spirit in the frequently haunted field of logics, because of the excesses of coherency, characterized by a sterile formalism. On the road opened by Tarski, Hans Herzberger revealed the semantic aspect of the alethic dimensions, by explaining away the assumptions of meaning that go along with the fact of correlation and turn it into a possible reality. This way, he introduced the semantic competence, *the truth having the meaning of correlation + semantic competence*. The distinction in the field of semantics between the theory of meaning and the theory of reference allowed the study of the referential dimensions of truth. The idea of correlation itself constitutes a referential dimension of truth, with different degrees. Following the same direction, Petre Botezatu demonstrated that the four alethic dimensions- correlation, representation, reference and information- require an evaluation system that leads, in the end, to a synthetic definition of truth as, "evaluation of the degree of correlation between a set of representations and a set of objects, a correlation endowed with representative capacity, referential force, and information transport"[2]. The integration of the semantic dimensions of truth within a conceptual system permitted the re-evaluation of the theory of the truth-correlation, within the epistemological context of the complementarities of the theories of correlation, coherence, and utility.

The variety of the incomplete perspectives on the research of truth brings us again, through relation to the question of hermeneutics, development, and interpretation, to the

old idea of "the circle of comprehension", very important in the methodology of reasoning in philosophy and socio-human sciences. As it has already been said, the circularity of comprehension sends us back to the human being and to the tout ensemble of the forms of his coming to be. Comprehension developed gnoseology not only towards the hermeneutic universe, but also in the direction of phenomenology and ontology. First found out in the vocabulary of modern post-Kantian gnoseology of the emancipation of socio-human sciences, "the comprehension of comprehension" has evolved through the "universal hermeneutics", or Schleiermacher's science of comprehension, Dilthey's historical hermeneutics, M. Weber's comprehensive sociology. Afterwards, through the opening of Heidegger's, Ricoeur's, or Gadamer's hermeneutics it became a phenomenology and an ontology, a comprehension method perceived as the universal human element and, first of all, as the human element in "the production of works" and the structure of the means of being human.

In the context of these acquisitions of the theory of knowledge according to hermeneutics, phenomenology, and ontology and starting from the set of hypotheses we have already mentioned, we decided to delineate a *theory of the culture of acknowledgement founded on the comprehensive truth perc*eived as acknowledgement-truth as practiced by the fallible human being. It is a known fact that, within the socio-human knowledge of the late modernity, the hermeneutical exegeses, the relativist-contextual intercessions, and the systemic epistemology of complexity have developed more and more. In the context of an intellectual anti-positivist atmosphere, the comprehensive approaches always become more popular[3]. In our opinion, the heterogeneity of the meaningful socio-human facts, the interdependency of the subject and object of knowledge and action, the knowledge acquired through synthetical intuition and lived experience, the emphatic attitude and holding the subject responsible, the sensitization regarding the ecological, historical and multicultural contexts, the analysis of contradictions and the assumptions of paradoxes concerning the socio-human complexity, as well as the preeminence of qualitative analyses, turn the comprehensive paradigm into an adequate analytical model. This model is characterized by a gradated way of thinking, regardful of the consequences and sideslips of the hyper-rationalism, determinism or historicism, all the more so in the era of postmodern challenges.

Engendered by the searches of faith and reason, constantly haunted by worries and doubts, *the comprehensive truth coagulates the self-conscience, the trust in oneself, and one's own confirmation through acknowledgement and communication with the others*. Developed within the horizon of personal self-conscience, the way to the self-recognizing truth and acknowledgment of others implies the constant meeting between faith and reason, because – as we may read in the first lines of the Encyclical letter *Fides et ratio* – "faith and reason are similar to two wings by means of which the human soul raises towards the contemplation of truth. God is the One who placed the desire to discover the truth in the human being's heart and, this way, the desire of knowing Him so that, by knowing and loving Him one may discover the whole truth about oneself"[4]. The path of the truth towards the whole truth about one's self is, after all, the road of the comprehensive truth through faith and reason lived by the self-conscience, through "the dirt of the philosophical truth" and "the memory of the theological truth"[5], that constantly entwine.

In one of his aphorisms, Lucian Blaga said that philosophy was the flat symbol of life since it lowers its tone with a semitone, thus passing onto a thicker register. Going back to a paraphrase we ventured in a previous study[6], we could make the following

affirmations: *the philosophical conscience* is, in its own turn, "the flat symbol of philosophy" because, in its complex psycho-spiritual condition, it manifests into a state of maximum lucidity towards the value of the various demarches of philosophy. The philosophic conscience is, "when it comes to life and in the place it riches the fulfillment, a product of the supreme vigilance of the human being. (...) it is <something> permanently requiring to be done, very rarely something already done, and taken once and for all as an alleged <canon>, that should only become aware of its own existence"[7]. As it forms the self-conscience, the philosophical conscience is the attempt of the human being, as a rational being, of becoming wiser and more comprehensive, in itself. What we want to do here is to make a parallel between *philosophical conscience* and *comprehension*. As a personal act of rational living and understanding of the other, the philosophical conscience watches over the path of reflexivity towards measure and towards reasonable acceptance of the differences by means of facing up to the responsibilities and acknowledgement of our own limits. Counter-balancing the dangerous, amoral side-slips of the "science with no conscience", the theist and manipulating ones of ideology and propaganda, or fundamentalism, *philosophic conscience as the acting comprehension* manifests "in the natural light of reason" and involves the ability to understand and interpret, judge and discern.

Challenged by worries and anxieties, fears and doubts raised from within and outside it, the human being starts attending to the soul through faith and reason. In this respect, one encounters various ways of one's cognition and adjustment to the world: the objective cognition of reality by means of scientific acquisitions, by subjective cognition, by means of artistic creation and esthetic experience, by cognition through faith and revelation, as well as by the adjustment of the human being to the divine perfection. Through science, one comes to know the causes and effects in the light of reason and, according to these, one can project and build technologies guaranteeing one's welfare and comfort. Through art, one can live esthetic experiences and states of mind that facilitate the understanding of the others and of oneself. Through cognition and experience "in the supernatural light of faith", as a limited being, one can relate to the divine Referential, as Thomas of Aquinas said: "it was necessary for the human being, in order to be redeemed, to discover what lies beyond human reason, with the help of the divine revelation. (...) Thus, beyond the philosophical disciplines studied by means of reason, it was necessary for the human being to receive the divine doctrine through revelation"8, as "there is no impediment for any another science to study these things, according to the way they are revealed in light of the divine revelation, the same things which are developed by the philosophical disciplines to the extent to which they are knowable in the light of natural reason"[9]. The neutrality of science in the quest for the objective truth, the sensibility of the esthetic experience in the artistic act, the religious faith, or the revelation of the Absolute Person of God, cannot exclude the *philosophical conscience and the comprehensive actions of the human being as a person*, with his/her interrogations and questionings about the intellectual and moral condition of man and about the virtues and limits of the philosophical reflection. By ruling out the elations of scientism, the expressed platitude of propaganda and the ambitions of fanaticism, *the philosophic conscience develops into a comprehensive act of understanding and acknowledging one's own limits and, at the same time, becomes a form of openness towards new horizons of knowledge and action governed by wisdom and measure.*

The exactingness of the philosophical conscience as a comprehensive act seems of actuality today, in a world characterized by "the crisis of meaning", by the disintegration

of knowledge, relativization of values, and the terrible experimentation of evil. Faced with the ambiguities of eclecticism, the relativism of historicism, the sufficiency of scientism, or the disintegrating negativism of nihilism, philosophy should not allow itself to be drawn into the risky situation of abandoning the quest for "the nature of things" of moral devotion and responsibility. Thus, it would degrade the reason for the instrumental functions, depriving itself of the sapient dimension, of the metaphysics and axiology, and of the openings towards transcendence, meaning and value. This is exactly why, since it is sensible to openness, difference, dialogue and complementarities, the philosophical conscience appears as a wide awakening of self-conscience through the dialogue with the other, therefore, as an act of comprehension.

## The comprehensive truth as the truth of acknowledgement

An important idea in our study is that *there is a deep and original relationship between comprehension and acknowledgement standing at the basis of the configuration of the comprehensive truth.* Comprehension implies acknowledgement, and vice versa, acknowledgement implies comprehension. If by means of comprehension, we acknowledge someone or something, and by acknowledging, we realize comprehension, then comprehension and acknowledgment interact organically. Not accidentally, this interpretation is included in the Latin etymology of the word itself that stresses on both the literal (to take, to contain something) and the figurative meanings of the word: to comprehend with the soul and mind, to understand and feel with somebody[10].

In our opinion, the two meanings of the word "comprehension" can be found in the two levels of the comprehensive truth, respectively in the truth by acknowledgement. The first one is the *extensional level*, that is to be observed in the *informational-cognitive acknowledgment* applying to the comprehension by means of the power of mind, therefore to the neutral acknowledgement of elements, features, distinctive dimensions of an object, process, entity, and concept. The second one is the *intentional level*, regarding common experiences and emotional resonance, a level observed in the axiological and moral acknowledgement.

From the *informational-cognitive* perspective, acknowledgement has no axiological, juridical, or moral connotation, but only a minimal one, important from a cognitive point of view: the transmission, reception, and increase in the amount and quality of the information and knowledge. Informational acknowledgement implies the intervention of memory, by means of which the conscience identifies the object of an actual representation with an object previously perceived. In fact, we are talking here of a closeness between perception and memory, which helps the studying of reality in order to determine its content, features, and becoming. In this informational and neutral direction, we are speaking of the acknowledgement itself of a person or place, with no emotional connotations. We are also considering the acknowledgement of the road before an official race, of the military action of acknowledging the field, of the recognition of a book, of an object, a title, a text, or a song, etc.

Nevertheless, there is also a deeper level, *the intentional one*, and in this context, comprehension means the acknowledgement of something or of someone by means of the power of going beyond the meaning and understanding the spiritual and inward senses of human action, co-living through empathy, self-overcoming, and self-objectifying the ego, the transposition in the position of the other. Practiced on the intentional level of

living similar experiences, comprehension means acknowledgement of the principles, norms and values of the other. This means that, besides informational acknowledgement and comprehension on the cognitive level, there are also other types of acknowledgement – *axiological, juridical,* and *moral*– according to the level of their deepness and manifestation of comprehension.

Thus, in an *axiological* context, acknowledgement allows for the evaluation and recognition of the value of someone or something, from a professional, political, economical, religious, artistic, and sports point of view. This implies appreciating and validating the competences, abilities and performances of a person or group according to their activity field; evaluating the amount and quality of the information, the explanations, or the style of a text, whether religious, scientific, literary or philosophical. It also implies the appreciation of cultural acquisitions and of the political, economical, religious, and artistic experience of the various types of societies. Axiological acknowledgement goes beyond the informational acknowledgement, but is not confounded with moral acknowledgement. Two persons may acknowledge or appreciate somebody from a professionally, political, economical, artistic or sports point of view, without acknowledging him/her also on a moral level. Life continues to witness the activity of some important people from a professional, political, economical, or artistic point of view, but far from the standards of *minima moralia.* The degrees of axiological acknowledgement vary according to the value of the work or activity in question, of the field of activity, spatial-temporal coordinates, etc. Thus, they speak of acknowledgement at a local, national, regional and international level. It is known that the processes of evaluating and establishing hierarchies are among the most complex and controversial human activities, often giving birth to a genuine "turbillion" of egos, jealousies, and animosities.

From a *juridical* perspective, acknowledgement means the institutionalization of someone or of something, accepting the legal status of a person, a political or confessional-religious group, a sexual, ethnical, or generational one, etc., the official acknowledgement of a particular situation legally undisclosed up to that moment. The juridical acknowledgement of someone or something does not automatically imply the axiological acknowledgement and, least of all, the moral acknowledgement of that person or thing. Of all the forms of acknowledgement, the juridical type seems to be the closest to toleration. Someone might not agree with homosexual behavior or with certain exotic cultural models, but as long as they do not interfere with the freedom and security of others, they do not represent a public danger, and do not threaten the democratic society, they begin to be accepted and legalized as such in the societies with a well-founded democracy. Somebody might particularly agree with the doctrines and practices of some fundamentalist or extremist parties and groups. Beyond the debatable character, this personal option is sanctioned as such, from a juridical point of view, supposing its political materialization. The criminal character of activities counts out the extremist parties and political orientations within the legally acknowledged political frame.

Regarding the religious acknowledgement of a person or group, outside its own religion, but of a non-fundamentalist type, this requires, first, juridical acknowledgement. Of course, one may also speak of an axiological or moral acknowledgement of various degrees, even though one does not belong or adhere to that particular religion. If one does not admit the doctrinaire truth of a certain religion or confession, this does not mean that one cannot accept the legal acknowledgement of that religion or confession, if these do not interfere with the governing principles and democratic practices. From a legal point of view, religious acknowledgement of a group means the institutionalization of that

group and the juridical acknowledgement of its organization and religious practices.

According to the *moral* meaning, acknowledging someone or something implies, according to each situation, acceptance, consideration, admiration, and respect for that someone or something. Moral acknowledgement is, after all, the maximum of comprehensive power and, implicitly, the realization of human condition, the fulfillment of the human being as person. Moral acknowledgement focuses on moral conscience, therefore on the ethical evaluation and moral values and, last but not least, on the evaluation of professional, political, economic, and sports skills. Even at the expense of losses at the level of axiological or juridical acknowledgement, moral acknowledgement remains the sign of reaching the human condition. When the human being raises to the level of human condition and starting from the acknowledgement of his own limits and mistakes, he is able to admit the other's superiority, a defeat on the battlefield or in the vertiginous current of the professional, political or artistic skills might turn into a moral victory. The lesson of moral acknowledgement is characterized by discernment and correctness, spiritual growth, and self-overcoming.

We can also make the most of the abundance of meanings of the word *acknowledgement* by means of other distinctions of levels. Passed through the filter of voices, acknowledgement can be classified into three types: *reflexive, active,* and *passive*. First, we speak of *reflexive acknowledgement* because, in the context of the coagulation of self-conscience and formation of the personality, the reflexive moment of self-discovering and self-recognition plays a vital role. In the process of forming comprehensive truths, self-discovering and recognition are also validated through the discovering and acknowledging of the other. In some circumstances, before acknowledging something or someone, it is necessary to discover ourselves and to be able to acknowledge our own qualities and limits as much as possible. Ideally, one would evaluate others only after passing the reflexive moment of self- acknowledgement, as honestly and correctly as possible. The honest acknowledgement of our own limits and mistakes implies, at the same time, courage on one's part and trust in the critical judgment, the discernment, and understanding of others.

Acknowledgement implies the active moment – *to acknowledge someone or something* – and the passive one: *being acknowledged by someone*. Consequently, acknowledgement can be *nonreciprocal* and *reciprocal*. Nonreciprocal acknowledgement is either active or passive. One may acknowledge someone, and that someone may not acknowledge one; or someone acknowledges one, but one does not acknowledge him/her. For example, A acknowledges B as being a good professional, but B does not acknowledge A's professional qualities. In this situation, we have a univocal, nonreciprocal acknowledgement, going one way. We speak of reciprocal acknowledgement, bringing together the active and passive moment, when the acknowledgement goes both ways: one acknowledge and is being acknowledged.

From the perspective of the number of actors involved another distinction with important social and political consequences can be made, between inter-personal acknowledgement and the inter-group one, with important social and political consequences, on several levels: informational, axiological, juridical, moral or religious. The big political issues – of acceptance, projection, and construction of a new culture of acknowledgement – are raised by the minority groups, when it comes to the relations among themselves or between them and the majority group, when problems and distinctive interests between generations, professional, cultural, religious, or sexual orientations arise. Going from the inter-personal level to the inter-group level makes acknowledge-

ment more complex and complicated.

Starting from the extensional and intentional levels of comprehension and comprehensive truth, the different types of acknowledgement show us a multitude of meanings and nuances of acknowledgement, perceived as a psychosocial fact and process. However, the honest experience of acknowledgement implies, as I was saying, a particular human type. The real man, aware of his own fallibility, able of acknowledging the other, becomes this way the carrier of the comprehensive truth. How would such a human type look like? How could we form the profile of this actor of the comprehensive truth and of the culture of acknowledgement?

## Fallible man, the hypostases of the human and the comprehensive truth

The model of the hypostases of the human is the expression of a comprehensive truth born through the understanding of the fact that *the human being lives in an anthropological context* functioning as a *matrix of his distinctive nature*. Conceived as a totality based on the dynamic of its complementary and concurrent elements, according to the interdisciplinary researches in the last decades, the anthropological field brings together: *the genetic system* (genetic code, genotype), *the brain* (the phenotypic epicenter), *the social-cultural system* (phenomenal-generative system), *the ecosystem* (ecological niche, environment)[11]. The ecosystem controls the genetic code, the brain, and the society; the genetic system produces the brain that determines the society and the development of cultural complexity. In return, the social-cultural system brings up to date the capacities and abilities of the brain, modifies the ecosystem, and acts upon the selection and genetic evolution. This means that, from a scientific point of view, any sequence of human behavior exists in an anthropological context presenting a genetic, cerebral, social, cultural, and ecosystemic dimension. From a philosophical point of view, this means that the human being is a *multidimensional being* and that the human nature is not exclusively genetic or cultural. Viewed as multidimensional, circumstantial, plastic, and creative, the human being can be considered a *genetic-cerebral-socio-cultural* system whose organic epicenter is the brain, the real "bio-cultural revolving base plate" by means of which the individual organism, the genetic system, the ecosystemic environment or the social-cultural system communicate. As the integrating center of the anthropological field, the brain of *Homo Sapiens* accounts for the communication between biological and cultural, conferring particularity to the human nature and, thus, openness to its other hypostases: the condition and essence.

As an ever-changing interaction of abilities, conditions, and necessities, human nature is dynamic and contradictory. "The key to human nature lies in the variety- John W. Chapman wrote- Our nature is plastic and impressionable. We symbolize self-modeled cultural artifacts. Or, better said, our nature is a mixture of tendencies and features, constantly confronted to a variety of circumstances and meanings"[12]. Instinctual and intellective, optimistic and pessimistic, constructive and destructive, ordered and less order, heroic and coward, tragic and comical, human beings display an amazing variety that cannot be understood starting out from a simple and rigid principle of unity, but only from an ensemble of generating principles with a specific action in various historical contexts. The multidimensional human nature determines people to always be paradoxical and unpredictable. This is because of the cleavages formed between the biologi-

cal-genetic substratum, the richness of the brainwork and of physical experiences, social plurality and the diversity of groups of interest. Human nature, as a dynamic reality that expresses the natural essence of what is human, has been shaped during the process of humanization through the exigencies of survival and selection.

Human nature, plastic and innovative, intelligent and amoral, enables the human being to get different forms of manifestation and adapting performances. The consequences and social risks of this fact, unimportant when compared to the moral and rightful values, disclose the limits of human nature. Moreover, by observing the implacable rules of nature, the human being remains a limited and dependent individual. The agonizing conscience of his finitude gave birth to the "thirst for immortality" of the human being, the subjective conscience founded on the faith in the spiritual values of transcendence and transmortality. "Facing death – the documents of the Second Vatican Council admonish – the enigma of the human condition reaches its climax (...). The seed of eternity it bears in itself rebels against death, incapable of being reduced to materiality"[13] and, through the divine revelation, the human being discovers that, being created by God for a blessed purpose, he was endowed with the dignity of moral conscience that exists in man's call to the communion with the everlasting God.

Of what has been said until now, one may infer that the transcendental meaning of human existence cannot be understood from the perspective of human nature exclusively. In his aspiration to spirituality, the human being assumes and overcomes his nature. In fact, since the appearance of the "anthropological breach", the human being has made the first step towards the dissociation of his spiritual destiny from his natural one. Indifferent, implacable, and objective, the human nature could not gain an insight into the world of ethical values, of spiritual freedom and personal decisions, *sua sponte*. The human being can only deal with transcendence by aspiring to the state of maximum axiological and spiritual altitude of the human condition. Exploring the depth of conscience, the man discovers "a law he doesn't put up himself, but he must observe and whose voice reverberates at the right time in the ear of the heart, ceaselessly calling him to love, to perform good actions, and avoid bad ones: Do this, avoid doing that!"[14]. Only through an "inner meting within the spiritual experience", can man become better, more humane, and reach his human condition.

*Immanent in his protean nature and transcendental through his spiritual condition, the human being fully comes to fruition as "person in act" within social life.* Human essence becomes real in praxis. The problems every society faces unleash the potential of human nature calling, at the same time, for the principles and values of human condition. The meeting between nature and human condition takes place within action, within the great systems of socio-human activity. Each of these systems of activity makes the most of the human essence and constitute, at the same time, conditions for the existence of any human community. This way, every community continues to exist and multiply (the biosocial system), lives and organizes its space, coexisting with other species (the eco-social system), commercializes the goods it produces (the economical system), creates and assimilates cultural values (the cultural system), and shares information, images, symbols. It also mediates (the communicational system), controls groups of interest, social rapports, and orients collective actions according to the politic system in power at a certain time. We see that each of the conditions of a human society exists within the context of the appearance of the corresponding social system. Each of these systems performs specific functions through precise means as well as through the interaction with the other systems. Although autonomous, social systems are not "indepen-

dent entities", "essences", or "metaphysical substances", but ensembles of activities interacting within the actual totality of a global society. Both autonomous and interdependent, the multi-stabile social systems constitute the global society manifesting as a complex "integron" (François Jacob) with the multi-finality propriety[15]. In this social context (social-global, societal), human essence appears as the effective resultant of nature and human condition.

*Nature, condition and essence shape the profile of the fallible man as "person in act" through their dynamics.* However, only as an actor of comprehensive truth as the truth of acknowledgement, is the fallible man able to admit his own limits and the value of the other and, at the same time, aspires to a culture of acknowledgement. The fallible man can only get to comprehension and truth by traveling the long and difficult journey from recognition to the culture of acknowledgement.

## Comprehension and truth: towards a culture of acknowledgement

Taking into consideration the meanings of the term "acknowledgement", one can identify two important forms of the process of acknowledgement: one *limited* or *partial* and the other one *global* or *multidimensional*. When one speaks about limited or partial acknowledgement, one refers to the nonreciprocal, interpersonal, informational acknowledgement and eventually to the axiological and/or juridical acknowledgement. Limited to certain meanings and levels, the incomplete and fragile partial acknowledgement is still far from a true culture of acknowledgement. In our opinion, the journey towards the culture of acknowledgement marks *the process of getting from the reciprocal, inter-group acknowledgement to the informational, axiological, juridical, religious and most important, the moral level*. The acknowledgement that, at the community level, becomes a culture of acknowledgement implies a systematic process that takes a long time, is difficult, and does not have only a cognitive-informational role anymore, but only moral and practical ones.

As a culture of a matured humanity, the culture of acknowledgement adjudges the diversity of the levels and meanings of culture – philosophical, sociological and anthropological – melting them into a concept of synthesis. Thus, it manages to comprise almost all the products of the human collectivities by means of which the conscious transformation of the natural and social environment takes place. Culture, the vital code of humanity, turns into a culture of acknowledgement the moment it can communicate on the interpersonal and inter-group level in different environments such as social, ethnical, religious, professional, and generational. The Culture of acknowledgement is, after all, the arranging system of the different life expressions, the necessary correlation of often contradictory existential and dynamic contents. In this context, one should mention the constructive role of critics in the projection and forming of a culture of acknowledgement. Authentic, interpersonal, inter-group, axiological, juridical, or moral acknowledgement implies a critic evaluation from the perspective of the permanent activation of discernment. One could say that, if somebody does not pass through the collimator of critic judgment on the professional, political, or artistic level it means he/she is not acknowledged.

The culture of acknowledgement is a real multidimensional and synthesizing concept of culture. As an inner reality marking "the journey of the soul towards itself"[16], implicitly "the process of progressive self-deliverance of man"[17] and construction through language, art, religion and science of his own universe, the culture of acknowledgement

necessarily relates to nature, society and human becoming. In addition, this provides the philosophical concept of culture of acknowledgement with a meaning of emancipation. From a behavioral perspective, the culture of acknowledgement may be seen as a "configuration of learned behaviors and of their results"[18] shared and transmitted on to the members of a society. In a sociological sense, culture designates the "values, norms, and material goods specific for a certain group"[19]. In other words, through the totality of its products, the society is the favorable environment for a culture of acknowledgement. Having as the actor the fallible creative man, the culture of acknowledgement is a whole that comprises language, art, customs and traditions, knowledge, different mentalities, religious beliefs, and principles achieved by man in a social context. As far as the origin of the cultural products is concerned, we consider the culturological point of view of Alfred L. Kroeber and Clyde Kluckholm[20]. According to him, the culture of acknowledgement, does not only refer to behaviors, but is an unsubstantial, superorganic, symbolic reality, as well. It also creates new structures, meanings, and models for action and thought.

The concomitant use of the multidimensional concept of culture of acknowledgement in various contexts – literal-figurative, subjective-objective – or from complementary scientific perspectives – sociological, psychological, ethnological, anthropological, historical, politological, etc. – turns it into one of synthesis. In fact, in an attempt to systemize it, Raymond Williams distinguished its three important directions: 1) the general process of intellectual, spiritual, and esthetical development; 2) the particular way of living of a nation, era, group, or humanity, in general; 3) the works and practices of intellectual and, most of all, artistic activities filtered through time[21]. We notice the interpenetration of contexts and meanings that we will call *psycho-educational, ethno-sociological,* and *historic-axiological*. The psycho-educational process shows the degree of instruction and socialization of the individual, the ethno-sociological context focuses on the indestructible connections between culture and the social group, and the historic-axiological one shows culture as a synthesis of values and historical fact. We can distinguish here the logical-historical articulations of the culture of acknowledgement constituted in the space-time of the social pluralism's becoming and of multicultural collectivities' maturation. This way, the culture of acknowledgement appears as a *cultural synthesis of a matured humanity*[22]. When we speak of cultural synthesis, we think of the force and synthesizing vocation of culture and, particularly, of the peace making, reconciling, and synthesizing ability of the culture of acknowledgement in an experimental and wiser community of fallible men.

## Notes:

1 Karol Wojtyla, *The Acting Person*, D. Reidel Publishing Company, Dordrecht, 1980; also the French translation: *Personne en acte*, Éditions du Centurion, Paris, 1983; the title of the original work in Polish is *Osoba I czyn*.

2 Petre Botezatu, *Dimensiunile adevărului*, in the book: *Adevăruri despre adevăr* (Petre Botezatu, coordinator), Editura Junimea, Iaşi, 1981, p.47.

3 John R. Searle, *Realitatea ca proiect social*, Polirom, 2000; Gary King, Robert Keohane, Sydney Verba, *Fundamentele cercetării sociale*, Polirom, 2000; *Dicţionar al metodelor calitative în ştiinţele umane şi sociale*, (a book coordinated by Alex Mucchielli), Polirom, 2002; Ronald F. King, *Strategia cercetării. Treisprezece cursuri*

*despre elementele ştiinţelor sociale*, Polirom, 2005.

4 *Fides et ratio*, Pope's John Paul II Encyclical letter, regarding the relations between faith and reason, Editura Presa Bună, Iaşi, 1999, p.3.

5 Wilhelm Dancă, *Fascinaţia adevărului, de la Toma de Aquino la Anton Durcovici*, Sapienţia, Iaşi, 2005.

6 Anton Carpinschi, *Nevoia de filosofie şi politică în lumea de astăzi*, in "Dialog teologic", *Revista Institutului Teologic Romano-Catolic Iaşi*, Anul VII, Nr.13, 2004, pp.19-30.

7 Lucian Blaga, *Despre conştiinţa filosofică*, Editura Facla, 1974, pp.172-173.

8 Thomas of Aquinas, *Summa theologiae, Despre Dumnezeu*, Books I, Part I, Quaestio I, Chapter I, (Editura ştiinţifică, Bucureşti, 1997, p.40).

9 Ibidem, (p.41).

10 The Latin verb , *comprehendo, -dere, -di, -sum* (made up of *cum* and *prehendo*), meant to grab, to take, to cover, to show, to count, but also to understand, that is to comprehend something with the soul and mind.

11 Edgar Morin, *Paradigma pierdută: natura umană*, Editura Universităţii "Al.I.Cuza", Iaşi, 1999.

12 John W. Chapman, *Toward a General Theory of Nature and Dynamics*, in: *Human Nature in Politics*, "Nomos" XVII (edited by J. Roland Pennock and John W. Chapman), New York University Press, 1977, p.293.

13 Pope John Paul's II Encyclical, *Gaudium et spes*, in the *Second Vatican Council. Constitutions, Decrees, Declarations*, edited by the International Catholic Organization for Help "Kirche in Not", Nyiregyháza, 1990, p.336.

14 Ibid., p.335.

15 Anton Carpinschi, *Inovaţia socială şi puterea politică – fundamente pentru o paradigmă anti-utopică*, introductory study to the book: Jean-William Lapierre, *Viaţă fără stat?*, Institutul European, Iaşi, 1977; by the same author, the study: *Paradigma complexităţii şi sistemul acţiunii concrete*, in the book: *Mentalităţi şi instituţii. Carenţe de mentalitate şi înapoiere instituţională în România* (coordinator: Adrian-Paul Iliescu), Editura Ars Docenti, Universitatea Bucureşti, 2002, pp.319-338.

16 Georg Simmel, *Despre filosofia culturii*, in the book: *Cultura filosofică. Despre aventură, sexe şi criza modernului*, Humanitas, Bucureşti, 1998, p.209.

17 Ernst Cassirer, *Eseu despre om. O introducere în filosofia culturii umane*, Humanitas, Bucureşti, 1994, p.314.

18 Ralph Linton, *Fundamentul cultural al personalităţii*, Editura ştiinţifică, Bucureşti, 1968, p.72.

19 Anthony Giddens, *Sociologie*, All, 2001, p.624.

20 Anthony Giddens, *Sociologie*, All, 2001, p.624.

21 A. L. Kroeber, C. Kluckholm, Culture, *A Critical Review of Concepts and Definitions*, New York, Vintage Books, Random House, 1963.

22 Anton Carpinschi, the article *Cultură* in: *Dicţionar de genetică literară* (Bogdan. S. Pîrvu, coord.), Institutul European, 2005.