

Recognition Culture and Comprehensive Truth. Towards a Model of Fallibility Assumed

Anton CARPINSCHI

Faculty of Philosophy, "A.I.Cuza" University of Iași
Boulevard Carol I, No 11, 700506, Romania
anton.carpinschi@yahoo.com

Abstract. The aim of this paper is to single out the path towards a model of *fallibility assumed* by the establishment and implementation of the *culture of recognition* and *comprehensive truth*. Starting from the hypostases of the human, this anthropological model defines the fallible human being, the author of the comprehensive truth oriented towards the culture of recognition. The main idea of this demarche is, in fact, that between recognition and comprehension there is a deep, organic connection and the comprehensive truth lies at the basis of the culture of recognition.

Keywords: Recognition, Culture, Recognition Culture, Fallibility, Comprehensive Truth, Intensional, Extensional, Hypostases of the Human, Human Nature, Human Condition, Human Essence

I. ARGUMENTUM

Focused on the dynamics of the relations between *culture*, *truth* and *recognition*, this study proposes to delineate the path towards a model of *fallibility assumed* by the establishment and implementation of the *culture of recognition* and *comprehensive truth*. In this context, we bring forward the following series of hypothesis: 1) between 'the essence of truth', as revelation and referential experience, ontological and moral supreme resort, and the various embodiments of partial, temporary and relative truths, there is an operational space of the 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 as the wide-awakeness of the self-conscience haunted by worries and doubts and which, through the quests for faith and reason, becomes capable of recognition. 3) From an *extensional* point of view, the comprehensive truth is the acknowledgement in the cognitive field, and from an *intensional* one, the comprehensive truth is the

acknowledgement in the axiological realm and moral life. 4) If by means of comprehension we recognize something or someone, then comprehension and recognition interacts, and the path towards a culture of recognition can be realized by living the comprehensive truth as a *truth of recognition* oriented to the profound understanding and communication. One of the main ideas of our demarche is that between recognition and comprehension there is a deep, organic connection and the comprehensive truth lies at the basis of the culture of recognition. 5) The path towards an anthropological model of fallibility assumed implies the establishment and implementation of a dynamics between recognition culture and comprehensive truth.

Our anthropological model suggests to start from the dynamics of the hypostases¹ of the human, and explore some correlations between these hypostases. According to this model, the *human nature* (the natural essence of what is human), and the *human condition* of moral and spiritual fulfillment, meet in the *human essence* synthesized in 'the acting person'.² In our opinion, a certain coordinate of the hypostasis of the human, and their corroboration can bring about a complex and encompassing concept of the fallible man. As a heritage of genetic and psycho-social possibilities, the human nature is the natural ground of humans. As a spiritual projection, the human condition is the axiological referential for the scientific, philosophical, and theological reconstruction. The human essence – a permanent tension between the potentialities of the human nature and the spiritual powers of the human condition – comes to light within the daily *social praxis*, through the competition among group interests for the conquest of power and for the implementation of the public policies designed to manage the common good. This model suggests, as we have seen, to start from the dynamics of the hypostases of the human. The

¹ Derived from the Greek *ὑπόστασις*, the term 'hypostasis' means something that is beyond certain things, acting as their ground, support and foundation; that is, substance as a real being (ontological reality) often in opposition with appearances. Introduced in the philosophical vocabulary, mainly by Plotinus, the term refers – according to his doctrine – to the three hypostases or realities: the *Soul*, corresponding to discursive thought; the *Nous* (the Intelligence) of intuitive thought; and the supreme *One* of the mystical experience. The Soul derives from the Intelligence, and the latter from the One, through a logical process of emanation and reflection, procession and return; thus, reality could be represented as a succession of ever more fragmented reflections, from the One to Intelligence, then to the Soul, prior to its extinction into the unconscious matter. Christian theologians applied the term to the persons of the Holy Trinity, treating the three persons of the unitary divinity – God the Father, Jesus Christ the Son, and the Holy Spirit – as substantially distinct.

² Karol Wojtyła, 1980. *Acting Person* (Dordrecht: D. Reidel Publishing Company).

nature, condition and *essence*, as hypostases of the human, delineate fundamental states in the achievement of human being. Reference is made to the plasticity and the creative-productive potentiality of the human nature; to the spiritual transfiguration and moral conscience meeting the requirements of the human condition; to the fulfillment of the potentialities of the human nature and of the powers of the human condition, through the human essence in action. Genetically inscribed, the intelligence of the 'human phenomenon'³ is axiologically-spiritually projected in the human condition and achieved in the praxis that turns to good account the human essence. By shaping the real human being, a fallible and creative being, through the dynamics of his hypostasis, we come to a comprehensive truth regarding the human being, a truth on which the culture of recognition is founded.

The correlation between the hypostases of the human asks, in our view, for a frontal approach in the philosophic, scientific, and theological horizons – that is, an openness to the scientific and philosophical gains of natural reason, and to the divine plan revealed to man through supernatural reason; since, in the words of St. Thomas Aquinas, 'nothing prevents those things, approached by the philosophical disciplines inasmuch they are cognoscible through the light of natural reason, from being approached by another science according to the way they are known through the light of the divine revelation'.⁴ Neither the neutrality of scientific knowledge in the search for objective truth, nor the interrogations of philosophical thought can exclude man's belief in God, revealed as the Absolute Person. In our view, one cannot fully understand and benefit from the genetic-biological nature of the human, the dynamics of complex systems, or the new environmental awareness, unless one possesses a philosophical reflexivity exercised through natural reason, and a comprehensive intuition needed to receive the revelation of the universal creative intelligence – which, by this providential act, reveals itself as the Absolute Referential. The human nature is nothing more than *the necessary, though not sufficient condition* for managing the public good, and, implicitly, for fulfilling the essence of the human. As a necessary, though not sufficient condition, the human nature is the natural ground ensuring the potentialities and predispositions of the human. In other words, man is not entirely human if he relates solely to his nature. To become genuinely

³ Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, 1977. *Fenomenul uman* (București: Editura Aion).

⁴ Thomas of Aquinas, 1997. *Summa theologiae, Despre Dumnezeu* Works I, Pt. I, Quaestio I, Ch. I, (București: Editura Științifică), p.41.

human, he must fulfill his spiritual condition, while in order to achieve his political essence through praxis, he must aspire to the fulfillment of his spiritual condition.

II. 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, which contains a series of important aspects: the nature, the criteria, the dimensions, the types of truth etc. The correlation to reality, the verifying of the coherence of reasoning, the obtaining of success have opened horizons of expression, at the same time forming criteria for the legitimating of truth. In this respect, it is not by coincidence that we come to speak of the truth-correlation, the truth-coherence, the truth-utility. Experience, faith and reason have become sources and ways of truth, each by itself. At the same time, truth has acquired different forms: *a priori* and *a posteriori*, analytical and synthetically, absolute and relative, abstract and concrete, theoretical and empirical, formal and experimental, and according to the existential recordings, it may have a factual, logical, scientifically, artistically, philosophical or religious manifestation.

The semantic theory of truth elaborated by Alfred Tarski provided a prolific direction in the research of truth, more precisely his method of systematic formalization of 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 field of logics often haunted, because of the excesses of coherentism, characterized by a sterile formalism. On this 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, the semantic competence has been introduced, *the truth having the meaning of correlation + semantic competence*. The distinction within 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 on the same direction, Petre Botezatu demonstrated that the four alethic dimensions – correlation, representation, reference and information –, require an

evaluation system which leads, in the end, to a synthetic definition of truth as, ‘evaluation of the degree of correlation between the set of representations and the set of objects, a correlation endowed with representative capacity, referential force and information transport’.⁵ 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 complementarity of the theories of correlation, coherence and utility.

The variety and incompleteness of the perspectives of the research of truth brought 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. Inaugurated in the vocabulary of modern post-Kantian gnoseologism 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 and, afterwards, through the opening of Heidegger’s, Ricoeur’s or Gadamer’s hermeneutics to phenomenology and ontology, to a comprehension perceived as universal human element and, first of all, as the human element in ‘the production of works’, structure of the means of being human, not only part of it.

In the context of these acquisitions of the theory of knowledge in accordance 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 recognition founded on the comprehensive truth perceived as a truth of recognition 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

⁵ Petre Botezatu, 1981. ‘Dimensiunile adevărului’ in Petre Botezatu (coord.) *Adevăruri despre adevăr* (Iasi: Editura Junimea), p.47.

approaches become always more popular.⁶ 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 sensitivation regarding the ecological, historical and multicultural contexts, the analysis of contradictions and the assumption of paradoxes concerning the socio-human complexity, the preeminence of qualitative analyses, all this turn the comprehensive paradigm into an adequate analytical model, characterized by a gradated way of thinking, regardful of the consequences and side-slips of the hyper-rationalism, determinism or historicism, all the more so in the era of the postmodern challenges.

Engendered by the searches of faith and reason, constantly haunted by worries and doubt, the comprehensive truth coagulates the self-conscience, the trust in ourselves and our 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 recognition 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 he may discover the whole truth about himself.’⁷ 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 philosophical truth and the theological truth, constantly entwining.

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

⁶ John R. Searle, 2000. *Realitatea ca proiect social* (Iași: Polirom); G. King, R. Keohane, S. Verba, 2000. *Fundamentele cercetării sociale*, (Iași: Polirom); A. Mucchielli (coord.), 2002. *Dicționar al metodelor calitative în științele umane și sociale* (Iași: Polirom); R. King, 2005. *Strategia cercetării. Treisprezece cursuri despre elementele științelor sociale* (Iași: Polirom).

⁷ *Fides et ratio*, Pope’s John Paul II (1999), Encyclical letter, regarding the relations between faith and reason, (Iași: Editura Presa Bună), p.3.

previous study⁸, 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', which should only become aware of its own existence.⁹

As form the self-conscience, the philosophical conscience is the attempt of the human being, as a rational being, of becoming wiser and more comprehensive, in himself. What we want to do here is to make a parallel between *philosophical conscience* and *comprehension*. Personal act of rational living and understanding of the other, the philosophical conscience watches over the path of reflexivity towards measure and 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 manipulator ones of ideology and propaganda, or the ones regarding the fundamentalism, *philosophic conscience as the acting comprehension* manifests 'in the natural light of reason', involving the ability to understand and interpret, judge and discern.

Provoked by worries and anxieties, fears and doubts from within and outside it, the human being takes on the charge of attending to the soul through faith and reason. In this respect, there are various ways of cognition and adjustment to the world: the objective cognition of reality by means of scientific acquisitions, subjective cognition by means of artistic creation and esthetic experience, cognition through faith, revelation and adjustment of the human being to the divine perfection. Through science, we come to know the causes and effects in the light of reason and, according to these, we project and build the technologies guaranteeing our welfare and comfort. Through art, we live esthetic experiences and moods that facilitate the understanding of the others and of ourselves. Through

⁸ Anton Carpinski, 2004. 'Nevoia de filosofie în lumea de astăzi' in *Dialog teologic*, Revista Institutului Teologic Romano-Catolic Iași, Anul VII, Nr.13, pp.19-30.

⁹ Lucian Blaga, 1974. *Despre conștiința filosofică* (Cluj-Napoca: Editura Facla), pp.172-3.

cognition and experience ‘in the supernatural light of faith’, as limited beings, we relate to the divine Referential, for, as Thomas of Aquinas says:

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 revelation¹⁰

for

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.¹¹

The impersonal neutrality of science in search of 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, none of these can exclude the *philosophical conscience, the comprehensive action of the human being as person*, his interrogations and questionings of the intellectual and moral condition of man, of 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 is a comprehensive act of understanding and recognition* of our own limits and, at the same time, 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 experience of evil. Faced to the ambiguities of eclecticism, to the relativism of historicism, the sufficiency of scienticism, the disintegrating negativism of nihilism, philosophy should not allow itself to be attracted into the risky situation of abandoning the question of ‘the nature of things’, of moral devotion and responsibility, degrading reason to the instrumental functions and, thus, depriving it of the sapiential

¹⁰ Thomas of Aquinas, *Summa theologiae*, p.40.

¹¹ *Ibidem*, p.41.

dimension, of the metaphysics and axiology of the openings towards transcendence, meaning and value. That is exactly why, since it is sensible to openness, difference, dialogue and complementarity, philosophical conscience is manifested as a wide-awakeness of self-conscience through the dialogue with the other, and thus as an act of comprehension.

III. THE COMPREHENSIVE TRUTH AS TRUTH OF RECOGNITION

An important idea of our study is that *there is a deep and original relation between comprehension and recognition, which stands at the basis of the configuration of comprehensive truths*. Comprehension implies recognition, and in its own turn, recognition 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, which lays stress on both the literal (to take, to contain something) and the figurative meaning: to comprehend with the soul and mind, to understand and feel with somebody.¹²

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 *extensional level*, which is to be observed in the *informational-cognitive acknowledgment* applying to the comprehension by means of the power of mind, and thus to the neutral acknowledgement of elements, features, distinctive dimensions of an object, process, entity, concept and the *intensional level*, which is to be observed in the *axiological and moral acknowledgment*, regarding common experiences and emotional resonance.

From the *informational-cognitive* perspective, acknowledgement has no axiological, juridical or moral connotation, but only a minimal one, very important from a cognitive point of view: the transmission, reception and increase of the number and quality of the information and amount of 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

¹² 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.

talking here of a closeness between perception and memory, which helps the studying of a 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, of the acknowledgement of the road before an official race, of the military action of acknowledging the field, of the recognition of a book, as an object, of a title, a text or a song, etc.

Nevertheless, there is also a deeper level, *the intensional 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-objectivisation the ego, transposition in the position of the other. Practiced on the intensional 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 one* – according to the depth level and register of 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, demonstrations or style of a text, whether religious, scientific, literary or philosophical; 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 one, but is not confounded with moral acknowledgement. We can both acknowledge or appreciate somebody from a professionally, political, economical, artistic or sports point of view, without acknowledging him also on a moral level. Life has been and continues to be the witness of the activity developed by some important persons from a professionally, 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 a known fact that the processes of

evaluating and establishing of 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 unadmitted 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. A particular person might not agree with homosexual behavior or with certain exotic cultural models, but as long as these do not interfere with the freedom and security of others, if 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 in the legally acknowledged political frame.

Regarding the religious recognition of a person or group, outside its own religion, but of a non-fundamentalist type, first it requires juridical acknowledgement. Of course, we may also speak of an axiological or moral acknowledgement of various degrees, even though we do not belong or adhere to that particular religion. If somebody does not admit the doctrinaire truth of a certain religion or confession, this does not mean that he 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, the juridical acknowledgement of their organization and religious practices of the group in question.

According to the *moral* meaning, acknowledging someone or something implies, according to each situation, acceptance, consideration, admiration, 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, and thus on

the ethical evaluation and moral values and, less or not at all, 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. A defeat on the battlefield or in the vertiginous current of the professional, political or artistic skills might turn into a moral victory, when the human being raises to the level of human condition, when, starting from the acknowledgement of his own limits and mistakes, he is able to admit the other's superiority. The lesson of moral acknowledgement is characterized by discernment and correctness, spiritual growth and self-overcoming.

We can also make the most of the copiousness of meanings of the word *recognition* by means of other distinctions of levels. Passed through the filter of voices, recognition can be classified into three types: *reflexive*, *active* and *passive*. First, we speak of *reflexive recognition* because, in the context of the coagulation of self-conscience and forming of the personality, the reflexive moment of self-discovering and self-recognition plays a vital role. In the process of the forming of comprehensive truths, self-discovering and recognition are also validated through the discovering and acknowledgement 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. The ideal would be to pass onto the evaluation of others only after having passed through 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 the part of the person in question 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* or *reciprocal*. It is nonreciprocal when it goes only one way, either active or passive. You acknowledge someone, but that someone does not acknowledge you, in his own turn; or someone acknowledges you, but you do not acknowledge him. 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: you acknowledge and are being acknowledged, in your own turn.

Another distinction with important social and political consequences can be done, from the perspective of the number of actors involved, 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 between them or with the majority, when problems and distinctive interests between generations, professional, cultural, religious or sexual ones arise. The passage from the inter-personal level to the inter-group one places acknowledgement not only under the perspective of multiplication and complication of problems, but also under the one of political complexifying and of multiple implications, which it implies.

Starting from the extensional and intensional levels of comprehension and comprehensive truth, the different types of acknowledgement showed us the richness of meanings and nuances that acknowledgement assumes, as a psycho-social 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, this way becoming 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 recognition?

IV. FAILLIBLE MAN AND THE HYPOSTASES OF THE HUMAN

Nature, condition and essence of human being shape the profile of *the fallible man* as ‘person in act’, author of the comprehensive truth oriented towards the culture of acknowledgement. Moreover, only as an actor of comprehensive truth as truth of recognition, is the fallible man able to admit his own limits and the value of the other, at the same time, aspiring to a culture of recognition. The long and difficult journey from admission to the culture of acknowledgement implies the comprehension and truth the fallible man can deal with. This since 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 his own turn, capable of these two after long searches. The fallible person is the one, who, by living the comprehensive truths, trains his ability to acknowledge, first his own fallibility, thus aspiring to a culture of acknowledgement.

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 field' functioning as a *matrix* of his distinctive nature. Conceived as a totality due to 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, the brain, the social-cultural system, the ecosystem. Rejecting 'the insular notion of man', as withdrawn from his own nature, Edgar Morin reopened in his *The Lost Paradigm: Human Nature*¹³, the debate on the human nature in the context of the new ecological awareness. As a reaction to the closed paradigms of anthropologism, sociologism, and culturalism, the new ecological awareness demonstrates, by putting together results from the fields of ecology, ethology and molecular biology, that there are no longer any adiabatic frontiers (frontiers that preclude the transfer of heat to and from the exterior) between the three superposed layers: man-culture, life-nature, physics-chemistry. Morin concludes: 'neither pan-biologism, nor pan-culturalism, but a richer truth, one that would grant human biology and human culture more significant roles, given the mutual role either of them plays on the other'¹⁴. This new ecological awareness looks at the eco-system as a whole, operating according to the logic of negentropic self-organization. In this context, the organization of living systems is achieved through a process of permanent self-production, of *autopoiesis* or continuous re-organization. The transformation of 'noise' into information and the integration into the social order of a new element, generated by a random behavior, also became the logic of the hominization process.

According to Morin, ecological calamity, genetic deviation and sociological dissidence are the initiators of the hominian revolution, while the anthropogenesis resulting from the ecological, genetic, cerebral, social, and cultural interferences is based on the cerebralization that unites all organizational developments. Consequently, from the standpoint of research carried out within the past decades, the anthropological field can

¹³ Edgar Morin, 1999. *Paradigma pierdut: natura umană* (Iași: Editura Universității Al.I.Cuza).

¹⁴ Ibidem, p. 209.

be singled out as an *anthropological totality* through the dynamics of its elements, complementary and competitive, at the same time: *the genetic system* (genetic code, genotype), *the brain* (phenotypic epicenter), *the social-cultural system* (phenomenal-generative system), *the eco-system* (ecological niche, environment). The eco-system controls the genetic code, the brain and society; the genetic system produces the brain, which conditions society and the development of cultural complexity. In its own turn, the social-cultural system actualizes the capacities and abilities of the brain, modifies the eco-system, and influences the genetic selection and evolution. This means that, from a scientific standpoint, any human behavioral sequence features genetic, cerebral, social, cultural, eco-systemic dimensions. Philosophically, this means that man is a *multidimensional being*; there is no particular human essence, exclusively genetic or exclusively cultural. The biological and cultural layers co-exist, and man is, by his nature, *multidimensional, circumstantial, plastic and creative*.

It follows that man can be considered a genetic-cerebral-social-cultural system, whose organic epicenter is the brain, the true 'bio-cultural turning block' through which communication occurs between the individual organism, the genetic system, the eco-systemic environment, and the social-cultural system. As the integrative center of the anthropological universe, the brain of *Homo Sapiens* allows for the communication between the biological and the cultural, giving specificity to the human nature. As an ever changing interaction of capacities, conditions and necessities, the human nature is dynamic and contradictory. 'The key to the human nature relies in variety', argues John Chapman, and he continues: 'Our nature is plastic and malleable. We symbolize some self-patterned cultural artifacts. Or rather, our nature is an amalgam of propensities and attributes permanently confronted with a variety of circumstances and meanings'.¹⁵ Instinctual and rational, optimistic and pessimistic, constructive and destructive, orderly and disorderly, heroic and cowardly, tragic and comical, people display an amazing diversity that cannot be understood starting from a simple and rigid principle of unity, but solely from a set of generative principles that operate specifically in different historical contexts. The multidimensional human nature makes humans for ever paradoxical and unpredictable, due to the cleavages that occur between the

¹⁵ John W. Chapman, 1977. 'Toward a General Theory of Nature and Dynamics' in J. Roland Pennock and John W. Chapman (eds.), *Human Nature in Politics, Nomos XVII*, (New York University Press), p. 293.

biological-genetic basis, the richness of cerebral activity and of psychic experiences, the social plurality, and the diversity of interest groups.

So far, it follows that the origins and the transcendental meaning of spiritual values cannot be grasped from the perspective of the human nature. In his thrust for spirituality, man assumes and transcends his nature. Actually, with the 'anthropological niche', man took the first step towards dissociating his natural and spiritual fates. Indifferent, objective and implacable, the human nature could not, *sua sponte*, enter the realm of ethical values, spiritual freedom and personal decisions. Only by striving for the condition of axiological maximum and spiritual altitude of the human condition, man is able to achieve harmony with the divine transcendence. Only by means of an 'inner encounter in the spiritual existence', the scientific account is supplemented by the philosophical and the theological ones.

Immanent in his protean nature, 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 at the same time calling 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 making the most of the human essence constitutes, at the same time, conditions for the existence of any human community. This way, every community continues to exist and to 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), shares information, images, symbols interposing between the parts and at the same time mediating (the communicational system), controlling groups of interest, social rapports and orienting the collective actions according to who is in power (the politic system). We see that each of the existing conditions of a human society is the context of the appearance of the corresponding social system. Each of these systems performs specific functions through specific means, but also through the interaction with the other systems. Though autonomous, social systems are not 'independent entities', 'essences' or 'metaphysical substances', but ensembles of activities interacting in the actual totality of a global society. Both autonomous and interdependent, the multi-stabile social systems together constitute the global society manifesting as a

complex 'integron' (François Jacob), with the multi-finality propriety.¹⁶ In this social context (social-global, societal), human essence appears as the effective resultant of nature and human condition.

The human nature, as a dynamic reality expressing the natural essence of what is human, has patterned itself during the process of hominization, through the requirements of survival and those brought about by the selection of the better endowed individuals. Plastic and innovative, intelligent and amoral, the human nature allows for various forms of manifestation and adaptation. The social consequences and risks of this state of fact, indifferent relative to moral and legal values, unveil the limits of the human nature. Moreover, obeying the implacable laws of nature, man is, by his very nature, a limited and dependent being. The painful awareness of his finitude and the thrill in the face of death have imbued him with a 'thirst for immortality', a subjective awareness grounded in his belief in the spiritual values of transcendence and trans-mortality. 'In the face of death', says the encyclical *Gaudium et Spes*, 'the enigma of the human condition reaches its peak... The seed of eternity carried in itself, irreducible to matter, rebels against death'¹⁷; the divine revelation teaches man that, as God created him for a lofty goal, he was endowed with the dignity of moral conscience, grounded in the call for him to join the communion with the eternal God. So, the human condition supposes the reconstruction of the spiritual life of the fallible man. The man is able now to turn on itself and he thinks itself. The reflexivity of the human condition implies a systematical form of thought and rationality. The spiritual life is essentially an explicit and personalized response to the problems raised by the organization of communal life.

The human essence appears in the social praxis, especially as the exercise of power, the art of government, the elaboration of collective decisions, the authoritative allocation of values. Relating to the needs and potentialities of the human nature, but also to the reflexive-interpretive powers of the human condition, the human essence is a multifaceted and

¹⁶ Anton Carpinski, 1997. 'Inovația socială și puterea politică – fundamente pentru o paradigmă anti-utopică', introductory study to the book: Lapierre, Jean-William, *Viața fără stat?*, (Iași: Institutul European), and the study: 'Paradigma complexității și sistemul acțiunii concrete' in A.-P. Iliescu (coord.), 2002. *Mentalități și instituții. Carențe de mentalitate și înapoiere instituțională în România* (București: Editura Ars Docenti, Universitatea București), pp. 319-38.

¹⁷ Pope Paul VI, 1990. *Gaudium et Spes*, Encyclical in *The Ecumenical Concillium, Vatican II. Constitutions, decrees, statements* (edited by the International Catholic Organization for Assistance "Kirche in Not", Nyiregyháza), p. 336.

dynamic activity. *Functionally*, it points to the organization and direction of the various specialized systems and sub-systems of the global society; *structurally*, to the relations of power, force and influence among individual and collective actors; and finally, *spiritually*, to the ideas, views and mentalities of those actors. Summarizing, it can be argued that human essence is brought into the light through the social praxis related to the organization and direction of the global society, i.e. through the distribution and redistribution of resources and values by the legitimate political power. As a competition among group interests, a game of power relations, and, at the same time, management of the common good, social end political praxis regulates the social order by holding 'the monopoly of legitimate physical violence' (Max Weber) and by the implementation of public policies.

To conclude, starting from the hypostases of the human, we had elaborated an anthropological model which defines the fallible human being, author of the comprehensive truth oriented towards the culture of recognition by the fallibility assumed.

V. TOWARDS A CULTURE OF RECOGNITION

By means of the corroboration of the meanings of the term recognition, we can identify two important forms of the process of recognition: one *limited* or *partial* and the other one *global* or *multidimensional*. When we speak about limited or partial recognition, we refer to non-reciprocal, interpersonal, informational acknowledgement and eventually the axiological and/or juridical one. Limited to certain meanings and levels, incomplete and fragile, partial acknowledgement still is far from a true culture of recognition. In our opinion, the journey towards the culture of acknowledgement marks *the process of passage to the reciprocal acknowledgement, inter-groupal on the informational, axiological, juridical, religious level and most of all on the moral one*. The acknowledgement that, at the level of community reaches the statute of culture of recognition implies a systematic process, which takes a long time, has difficulties, and in which comprehension does not have only a cognitive-informational role anymore, but also a moral and practical one.

As culture of a matured humanity, the culture of recognition adjudges to 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, vital code of humanity, culture turns into a culture of acknowledgement the moment when it can communicate on the interpersonal and inter-group level in social, ethnical, religious, professional and generational different environments. The culture of recognition is, after all, the arranging system of the different life expressions, the necessary correlation of existential, dynamic and often contradictory contents. In this context, we should mention the constructive role of critics in the projection and forming of a culture of acknowledgement. Authentic acknowledgement, interpersonal or inter-group, axiological, juridical or moral implies the judgment and critic evaluation from the perspective of the permanent activation of discernment. We could say that, if somebody does not pass through the collimator of critic judgment on the professional, political or artistic level it means he is not acknowledged.

The culture of recognition is a real multidimensional and synthesizing concept of culture. As an inner reality marking 'the journey of the soul towards itself'¹⁸, implicitly 'the process of progressive self-deliverance of man'¹⁹ 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'²⁰ 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'.²¹ 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, which comprises language, art, customs and traditions, knowledge, different mentalities, religious beliefs, 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

¹⁸ Georg Simmel, 1998. 'Despre filosofia culturii' in *Cultura filosofică. Despre aventură, sexe și criza modernului* (București: Humanitas), p.209.

¹⁹ Ernest Cassirer, 1994. *Eseu despre om. O introducere în filosofia culturii umane* (București: Humanitas), p.314.

²⁰ Raplh Linton, 1968. *Fundamentul cultural al personalității* (București: Editura Științifică), p.72.

²¹ Anthony Giddens, 2001. *Sociologie* (București: Editura All), p.624.

initiated by Alfred L. Kroeber and Clyde Kluckholm²², according to which culture, and so the culture of acknowledgement, does not only refer to behavior, but is also a unsubstantial, superorganic, symbolical reality, creating new structures, meanings and models for action and thought.

The concomitant use in various contexts – literal-figurative, subjective-objective – or from complementary scientific perspectives – sociological, psychological, ethnological, anthropological, historical, politico-logical, etc. – turns the multidimensional concept of culture of acknowledgement into one of synthesis. In fact, in an attempt to systemize it, Raymond Williams distinguished 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 time²³. We can observe the interpenetration of contexts and meanings, which 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 discern here the logical-historical articulations of the culture of acknowledgement constituted in the space-time of the becoming of the social pluralism and of the maturation of multicultural collectivities. This way, the culture of recognition appears as a *cultural synthesis of a matured humanity*.²⁴ 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 recognition in an experimental and wiser community of fallible men.

²² A. L. Kroeber, C. Kluckholm, 1963. *Culture, A Critical Review of Concepts and Definitions* (New York: Vintage Books, Random House).

²³ Raymond Williams, 1988. *Keywords. A Vocabulary of Culture and Society* (Fontana Press, An Imprint of Harper Collins Publisher).

²⁴ Anton Carpinschi, 2005. 'Cultura' in Bogdan. S. Pîrvu (coord.) *Dicționar de genetică literară* (Iasi: Institutul European).