

THE ESSENCE OF PERSONAL CONSCIOUSNESS AS PRESENTED BY KAROL WOJTYŁA

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Abstract:

The author of this publication entitled: The essence of personal consciousness as presented by Karol Wojtyła, shows the model of consciousness proposed by Cardinal Wojtyła. It explicates the aspect of being which in traditional philosophy was “implied” by rationality, and in ethics - by freedom of action. Król describes the consciousness of an intellectual nature, which does not have an intentional structure. Following the indications of Person and Action, he writes that whereas understanding and knowledge contribute to the formation of the object in an intentional way, consciousness is limited to reflecting everything that has already become familiar. Consciousness of action is one of many reflections that make up the overall content of a person’s consciousness. This reflection itself is conscious and does not involve active objectification of the action or the person, although it presents the image of the action and the person as faithfully as possible. All human cognition interacts with consciousness: the ability and efficiency of active understanding. Therefore, consciousness is conditioned by this ability and efficiency, i.e. the whole cognitive potentiality, which is, according to the Western philosophical tradition, the basic property of a human being as a person. This consciousness gets the meaning of things “from the outside” as the fruit of knowledge, which results from an active understanding of the objective reality acquired by a human being in different ways and at different stages, which also determine different levels of consciousness. There is quite a fundamental difference between knowledge and consciousness in terms of intellectual and cognitive formation.

Out of all the forms and types of knowledge that a human being acquires

and possesses, Cardinal Wojtyła singled out self-knowledge, i.e. self-understanding. Self-knowledge occurs when a human being intentionally, intellectually moves towards their own “self”; but differs from knowledge in that its object does not have the character of generality, whereas the object of knowledge - does. Through self-knowledge, consciousness reflects actions and their relationship to the “self”. It is of great importance to take this fact into consideration, since it affects the character of the “self” and opposes the idealistic position which does not sufficiently take account of this mode of existence in consciousness of all that is in it.

Keywords: awareness, being, rationality, freedom of action, intentionality, objectification, potentiality, cognition, knowledge, self-knowledge.

The human person, which is the object of experience, does not constitute only the content of consciousness; it is not only something well-thought-out but also a specific reality¹. Karol Wojtyła thought that the survivorship “self” separation from its ontological basis is out of the question here, and that any conscious analysis aims at a more thorough setting of the index “self” in its own ontic basis. “Every man, also the one that is myself, is realized in a comprehensive, that is simple, experience as an individual real being, as the subject of existence and acting (that is *suppositum*)”². Karol Wojtyła’s dissociation from any kind of standpoints: idealistic, phenomenalist, actualistic, and him emphasizing his philosophical orientation is, here, explicit, unambiguous and does not require any further explanation”³. The author of *The Acting Person* gave consideration to the human person from his very own human being perspective, and treated the direct data not as the functions of consciousness but, rather, as beings existing in real terms. He remained on the philosophy of being grounds keeping from the philosophy of consciousness what it provides for the man cognition from the consciousness side; the data of consciousness or, strictly speaking: the consciousness of acting, the action would be the point of departure⁴. “Since the man not only acts consciously but he is also aware of his acting as well as who is acting – he is, therefore, aware of the action and the person in their dynamic correlation. Such consciousness appears together with conscious acting, and, as it were, accompanies it. It also precedes it and follows it. It has its continuity and identity, separate from the constitution and identity of every single action. And every action, so to speak, already finds consciousness, gets shaped according to

1 Cf. M. Jaworski, “Koncepcja antropologii filozoficznej w ujęciu kardynała Karola Wojtyły”, *Analecta Cracoviensia* V-VI (1973-1974), p. 94.

2 K. Wojtyła, *Osoba i czyn oraz inne studia antropologiczne*, Lublin 1994, p. 94.

3 M. Jaworski, “Koncepcja antropologii”, p. 94.

4 Cf. *ibidem*, p. 95.

it and sneaks past it leaving some trace of its presence behind”⁵. The action, that is *actus humanus*, in a traditional interpretation, took into account that meaning of consciousness which is included in the definition of the action as “conscious acting” but, in addition, in that meaning “consciousness” blends completely in *voluntarium*, that is the human will dynamism; the aspect of consciousness is not, according to this interpretation, distinguished and developed⁶. Meanwhile, consciousness as such allows itself to be distinguished during conscious acting for it deeply pervades the “person–action” relation and constitutes an important aspect of it. “It is such an aspect in which being of the person and his acting is not only reflected but also shaped in a peculiar manner”⁷. The revelation and, sort of, opening of that *sui generis* of conscious aspect that contains within itself *actus humanus* or, rather, the “explication” of conscious aspects allows to present consciousness as an important and constitutive factor of the entire dynamic structure made of the person and the action⁸. Consciousness always accompanies the action and “reflects” (shows) it when it comes into being and finds fulfilment, and such consciousness company decides not so much that acting is conscious but, rather, that the man is conscious of his acting and that he acts as the person and experiences his acting as the action, “in which the consciousness aspect plays the most appropriate part”⁹.

A characteristic feature of consciousness model proposed by Cardinal Wojtyła is, requiring explication, the aspect of being which, in traditional philosophy, “was implicated” by rationality (*animal rationale*), and in ethics – the freedom of the action¹⁰. The author of *The Acting Person* believed that consciousness, although

5 K. Wojtyła, *Osoba i czyn oraz inne studia*, p. 79. The author explained in the footnote that “the problem of identity and consciousness continuity constantly return in Western philosophical thought – from Plato, through Descartes and Kant and up to Ingarden. (...) Consciousness, in and of itself, determines the reality of the man as the person. The person is, to a certain extent, constituted also through consciousness (and not »in consciousness«). The continuity and identity of consciousness reflect, but also condition the continuity and identity of the person”.

6 Cf. *ibidem*, p. 78. The author was of the opinion that it is generally believed that according to the traditional conception *actus humanus* was included *implicite* or that there was a hidden aspect of consciousness that needs to be “discovered and revealed”. At the same time, one can notice an even deeper belief about fundamental continuity and homogeneity of all human philosophy irrespective of whether it is practiced from the position of the philosophy of being or the philosophy of consciousness (*ibidem*).

7 *Ibidem*, p. 78.

8 *Ibidem*, p. 79; cf. W. Starnawski, “Próba syntezy. Książka George’a H. Williama o myśli Karola Wojtyły”, *Znak* 38 (1986), No. 1(374), pp. 133-144.

9 *Ibidem*, p. 80; cf. A. B. Stępień, “Fenomenologia tomizująca w książce *Osoba i czyn*”, *Analecta Cracoviensia*, V-VI (1973-1974), pp. 153-157.

10 Cf. S. Grygiel, “Hermeneutyka czynu oraz nowy model świadomości”, *Analecta Cracoviensia* V-VI (1973-1974), p. 147.

of intellectual character (“the function of consciousness can, in the final analysis, be described as cognitive”¹¹) does not have intentional structure¹². Probing into the object and its intellectual objectivizing, which leads to “understanding”, belong to the essence of cognitive acts of the man. In that sense, cognitive acts are of intentional character for they are directed at the object being cognized where they find their *raison d’être* as the acts of understanding or knowledge. Consciousness does not have such a property because cognitive *raison d’être* of consciousness and its appropriate acts do not mean probing into the object and objectivization that brings about understanding¹³. “That is why intentionality characteristic of cognitive acts, thanks to which we are able to acquire understanding of the objective reality in any of its dimension, does not seem to be reserved for consciousness acts. These acts are not of intentional character although what is the object of our cognition, understanding and knowledge is also the object of consciousness”¹⁴. While understanding and knowledge contribute to shaping the object in an intentional manner, consciousness is restricted to the reflection of everything that has already been cognized; it is the understanding of something already understood¹⁵. An essential cognitive dynamism, the action of cognition itself – does not belong to consciousness for it is not consciousness that constitutes the meanings of the objects being cognized although they are constituted, without any doubt, also in consciousness¹⁶.

“Such a statement goes beyond the tradition of phenomenological philosophy according to which consciousness is inseparably linked with intentionality. In modern philosophy, which makes use of phenomenology, only experience of oneself intentionalised to the object does not have intentional structure. Experience pervades every intentional act of consciousness, opening subjectiveness for cognition”¹⁷. Cardinal Wojtyła, unlike the majority of contemporary thinkers, claimed that consciousness acts cannot be attributed intentional character. If, by intention, we mean an active diversion towards the object, consciousness – in this conception – has no right to intentionality in the appropriate sense but has it merely in a secondary meaning, “thanks to intentionality of the acts of

11 K. Wojtyła, *Osoba i czyn oraz inne studia*, p. 80.

12 Cf. S. Grygiel, „Hermeneutika czynu”, p. 147.

13 Cf. K. Wojtyła, *Osoba i czyn oraz inne studia*, p. 80.

14 Ibidem, p. 81; see E. Lévinas, “Notes sur la pensée philosophique du Cardinal Wojtyła”, *Communio* V (1980), No. 4.

15 Ibidem; cf. M. Seretti, *Autocoscienza e autoconscenza*, in: R. Bottigilione, *La Filosofia di Karol Wojtyła*, Bologna 1983, pp. 45-59.

16 Ibidem, p. 81; cf. T. Styczeń, “Doświadczenie człowieka i świadczenie człowiekowi (Kardynał Karol Wojtyła: filozof-moralista)”, *Znak* 32 (1980), No. 3(309), pp. 263-274.

17 S. Grygiel, „Hermeneutika czynu”, p. 147.

knowledge or self-knowledge as real potentialities of the person”¹⁸. Karol Wojtyła, not pretending to the creation of “some developed and finished theory of consciousness” believed that one should perceive consciousness not as an unconnected reality but as subjective content of that being and acting which is conscious, that is, which is appropriate for the man. In the entirety of human dynamisms, consciousness is a constitutive characteristic of the action and is, therefore, connected with the dynamism and agency of the person. This way of understanding and interpretation of consciousness protects against recognizing it as some separate subject. “Recognizing consciousness as a separate subject could make the way to its absolutization and, later, to idealism if consciousness – the absolute was treated as the only subject of all the contents which eventually come down to it (in that case *esse = percipi*)”¹⁹. Consciousness, on account of the person and his agency, is characterized by the reflection and screening function which is characteristic of individual acts of consciousness and all the sum or, rather, “resultant” of those acts, which, after all, decides about the actual state of consciousness. The subject of such a state is not, however, consciousness but the man about whom we say that he is in the state of consciousness (or beyond it), that he has full consciousness at his disposal and the like. Consciousness itself, though, does not exist as a substantial subject of conscious acts; it exists neither as a separate ontic base of experiences nor as authority. All consciousness “is depleted” in its acts and in their conscious specificity which is connected with reflection as something different from cognitive objectivization. The man not only “enters” cognitively into the world of objects (and even finds himself in that world as one of such objects) but also “has that whole world in conscious reflection which he lives in the most inner and personal manner. Since consciousness not only reflects but also (...) makes things internal, that is interiorizes what it reflects, which is all expressed in a true »self« of the person”²⁰. Consciousness of the action is one of many reflections making up the material entirety of the person’s consciousness; such reflection is, in and of itself, of conscious character and is not grounded on an active objectivization of either the action or the person although the picture of such action or person is comprised in it in the most faithful manner²¹. Although consciousness does not cognitively objectivize the actions or the person who takes them, yet consciousness acts remain in a clear relation with everything that is behind them, especially when it comes down to the relation with the actions taken by the true personal “self”; this relation is

18 K. Wojtyła, *Osoba i czyn oraz inne studia*, p. 81, footnote 15.

19 Ibidem, p. 82; cf. H. Piluś, “Problem osoby ludzkiej w ujęciu Karola Wojtyły”, *Humanitas* V (1980), pp. 131-161.

20 Ibidem, p. 83; cf. T. Styczeń, “Metoda antropologii filozoficznej w *Osobie i czynie* Kardynała Karola Wojtyły”, *Analecta Cracoviensia* V-VI (1973-1974), pp. 107-115.

21 Ibidem, p. 83; cf. T. Styczeń, “Objawić osobę”, *RF* 27 (1979), book 2, pp. 159-165.

initiated through the content of consciousness which is made up of particular elements of reality meanings as well as their mutual relations. All human cognition cooperates with consciousness: the ability and skill of active understanding; that is why consciousness is conditioned by such ability and skill, that is all cognitive potentiality which constitutes, according to Western philosophical tradition, a fundamental characteristic of the man person²².

Thanks to the ability and skill of active understanding, one can discover the meaning of the objects as well as master them mentally; to understand, then, – means to capture intellectually the meaning of the objects and the relations between the objects. That all is foreign to consciousness for all the process of active understanding is accomplished neither through nor with the help of it. Consciousness gets the meaning of the objects from “outside” as a fruit of knowledge which is the result of active understanding of the subjective reality acquired by the man in a different way and to a different extent which also determines a different level of consciousness. Between knowledge and consciousness there happens to be quite a thorough difference in respect of intellectual and cognitive shape as well as the acts entirety.

Cardinal Wojtyła distinguished from all the forms and kinds of knowledge that the man acquires and has and which shapes his consciousness in respect of the content (that is in terms of the meaning side) – self-knowledge, that is the understanding of oneself, a kind of cognitive pervading of that object that the man for himself is, and where the object constitutes the true “self”²³. At that point self-knowledge is consistent with consciousness as that true “self” is its subject with which consciousness stays in the closest subjective union but, at the same time, self-knowledge separates itself from consciousness for, the latter, in its subjective union with that “self”, is not oriented cognitively towards it as the object. Consciousness is cognitively indifferent to its true “self” as to the object; there are no intentional acts of consciousness that would objectivize that “self” in respect of existence and acting – this function is performed by the acts of self-knowledge²⁴. Self-knowledge occurs then when the man, in an intentional manner, intellectually heads towards his true “self”; it is different, however, from knowledge in that its object is not of general character while the object of knowledge is. A specific, individual “self” is the object of self-knowledge; “self-knowledge cognitively objectifies the person and his action, objectifies the “self” connected by a causative relation with its action. It also objectifies consciousness

22 Cf. *ibidem*, p. 84; see A. Perzyński, *Il principio personalistico nel pensiero ecclesologico di Karol Wojtyła*, Roma 1990.

23 *Ibidem*, p. 84, cf. M. Jaworski, “Koncepcja antropologii”, p. 101.

24 K. Wojtyła, *Osoba i czyn oraz inne studia*, s. 85.

with everything that it contains, reflecting and experiencing”²⁵. Thanks to self-knowledge consciousness reflects the actions and their relation to their true “self”; taking this fact into account is of prime significance for it has an effect on the character of “self” and opposes the idealistic standpoint which does not sufficiently take into consideration that way of existence, in consciousness, of everything that is found within it²⁶. Without self-knowledge “consciousness would be deprived of the meaning contents that refer to the true »self« of the man who occurs as the object of direct cognition; it would somehow be found in a vacuum. Such a state is called for by idealists as, in it, consciousness can be recognized as the subject creating its contents irrespective of any factor lying beyond it. A question, justified in an idealistic manner of thinking, arises if consciousness itself can be recognized as a real subject or if it is only its very own creation”²⁷. A deepened analysis of the data and the manner of their being stuck in consciousness, as a point of departure so characteristic of the philosophy of consciousness, leads to different from idealistic trends conclusions concerned with the consciousness character of “self”²⁸. Thanks to self-knowledge, the true “self” of the acting subject is cognitively captured as the object and, as a result, both the person and the action connected with that person are, in consciousness, of the objective meaning. The conscious reflection, which is something subjective and serves as the basis for subjectification, cannot bear the objective meaning of its true “self” and its actions since it continuously draws on it from self-knowledge. Self-knowledge coherence with consciousness constitutes a fundamental factor of a balance in the person’s inner life: “the man is the object for himself as for the subject, and in the conscious reflection he does not lose any objective meaning”²⁹. The author of *The Acting Person* expressed the opinion that in that respect self-knowledge is earlier than consciousness because it provides a meaning relation towards its true “self” as well as its actions³⁰. Furthermore, self-knowledge constitutes the border for consciousness beyond which the process of conscious subjectification cannot go. Consciousness itself becomes the object for self-knowledge since the objectivizing turn of self-knowledge towards its true “self” and actions connected with it concerns consciousness too. The interpretation of the fact of the man possessing “consciousness” of his acting can be encountered here. If the man “knows that he acts” then “knows that he acts consciously”;

25 S. Grygiel, “Hermeneutika czynu”, p. 148.

26 Cf. M. Jaworski, “Koncepcja antropologii”, p. 101.

27 K. Wojtyła, *Osoba i czyn oraz inne studia*, p. 85.

28 Cf. M. Jaworski, “Koncepcja antropologii”, p. 101.

29 K. Wojtyła, *Osoba i czyn oraz inne studia*, p. 85.

30 Ibidem, p. 86, S. Grygiel writes that self-knowledge, earlier than consciousness, serves as “the meaning basis for the content of consciousness, not allowing it, at the same time, to tear away from the being” (S. Grygiel, “Hermeneutika czynu”, p. 148).

he knows that he is conscious and that he acts consciously. "The object of self-knowledge is not only the person and the actions but also consciousness of the person and consciousness of the actions. (...) The man has self-knowledge of his consciousness and, in that way, he is conscious of consciousness of his being and his acting in the actions"³¹. The "work" of self-knowledge is that not only its true "self" and the actions connected with it but also even consciousness itself of those actions, in their relation to the true "self", can be realized. To have consciousness of the action means that through the act of self-knowledge I objectivize my action in relation to myself; it is a true action of myself and not something that only takes place within me; that acting is conscious and as fulfilled in an appropriate manner to the will, it has a positive or a negative moral value, it is good or evil. The entire content of the action, objectivized through the act of self-knowledge becomes the content of consciousness; thanks to that objectivization one can speak of consciousness in the objective meaning, that is of the relation of consciousness with the objective world and especially with one's true "self", its being and function, consciousness owes the set of meanings, in this case, to self-knowledge though. Thanks to that set of meanings, consciousness deserves the term "self-consciousness"³².

Self-knowledge opposes such philosophical presentation of consciousness in which it would appear as a "pure self" – the subject – and has nothing in common with cognition in which one would mean the abstracted and generalized "self". "The object of self-knowledge is the specific, »true« »self«; (...) self-knowledge stops by its true »self« and remains in individual cognitive intention – for in its true »self« it constantly meets yet new resources of contents. The old *adagium* says: *individuum est ineffabile*"³³.

Karol Wojtyła thought that the analysis of self-knowledge allows to better understand the two functions of consciousness, both in an unintentional manner. The first of them is the reflection function. Consciousness is not limited here to a simple reflection of everything that constitutes both the object of understanding and knowledge but, in a peculiar way, illuminates all that and, in such illumination, reflects. Objectiveness and, also, subjectiveness of the man are decisive factors in solving the problem: "consciousness-self-knowledge". "Consciousness is this »area« where the true »self«, appearing in its characteristic objectiveness (right as the object of self-knowledge), at the same time experiences fully appropriate for it, subjectiveness"³⁴. In this way, the second function of consciousness which

31 K. Wojtyła, *Osoba i czyn oraz inne studia*, p. 86; cf. S. Grygiel, "Hermeneutyka czynu", p. 148.

32 K. Wojtyła, *Osoba i czyn oraz inne studia*, p. 87.

33 Ibidem, p. 88 ff.; cf. M. Jaworski, "Koncepcja antropologii", p. 101 ff.

34 K. Wojtyła, *Osoba i czyn oraz inne studia*, p. 89 ff.; cf. S. Grygiel, "Hermeneutyka czynu", p. 147.

complements the function of the illuminating reflection and grants consciousness *raison d'être* in the structure of the person and the action: experience shaping is that function of consciousness, which allows the man to experience, in a peculiar way, his true subjectiveness, emerges. Consciousness, then, is not depleted in the function of reflecting the action in its relation to its true "self" (which takes place somehow from outside) but introduces us even further into the interior of the actions and their relations with their true "self"; consciousness allows not only to watch our actions internally and their dependence on their true "self" but also to experience those actions as own³⁵.

The man owes to consciousness subjectification of what is objective with subjectification being, to a certain extent, associated with experience. The person and the action become, thanks to consciousness, "subjectified" insofar as consciousness conditions the experience of the action fulfilled by the person, that is the experience of the person in his dynamic causative reference to the action. In the same way, everything that constitutes the intentional "world of the person", which can be analysed in its objective content as well as on conscious reflection grounds, becomes "subjectified" alike. At the same time, that world, by becoming the content of experience, enters the circle of its own subjectiveness of every human "self"³⁶.

Karol Wojtyła discerned in consciousness the feature which he described as "reflexive" (that is consciousness "reflexiveness"); it is a natural mental turn of consciousness towards the subject to which we owe – together with experience – a particular emphasis of subjectiveness of the survivorship "self". That is why we define such constitutive function of consciousness as "reflexive", that is turning everything to the subject³⁷. That function of consciousness is something different from reflection, in which (thanks to self-knowledge) the man, being the subject and constituting his true "self", appears still as the object. "The reflexive turn of consciousness causes that that object, just because ontologically it is the subject,

35 K. Wojtyła, *Osoba i czyn oraz inne studia*, p. 91.

36 Ibidem, p. 91; cf. T. Styczeń, "O metodzie antropologii filozoficznej. Na marginesie Osoby i czynu K. Wojtyły" and "Książeczki o człowieku R. Ingardena", RF 19(1973), book 2, pp. 106-114.

37 Ibidem, p. 92. In that meaning consciousness is "reflexive", and not only "reflective", which is characteristic of the human mind in its cognitive acts. Reflection assumes intentionality of those acts, that is their cognitive turn towards the object (we are talking here about a fuller presentation of the objective content of the act previously accomplished). Reflective thinking occupies an important place in the process of any understanding and knowledge, including the knowledge of the self, that is self-knowledge. Reflection indeed goes hand in hand with consciousness, serving it but it does not suffice to the constitution of experience. A turn towards the subject, which is accomplished thanks to the "reflexive" function of consciousness, is needed (see ibidem; cf. also: M. Jaworski, "Koncepcja antropologii...", p. 102.).

experiencing its true »self«, experiences itself, at the same time, as the subject”³⁸. Reflexiveness constitutes a specific moment of consciousness, perceptible when one sees consciousness in a strict, organic connection with the “being”, that is the man who acts. Only then, one can notice that it is one thing to be the subject, and the other – to be recognized as the subject and, finally, yet something other – to experience oneself as the subject of one’s acts and experiences, which is accomplished thanks to the reflexive function of consciousness³⁹.

The man, as the subject of his existence and acting, in traditional ontology is referred to as *suppositum*; that word is used for the objective denotation of the subject, without taking into account the existential aspect of that subjectiveness in which the index subject is presented to itself as its true “self”. The term *suppositum* abstracts, therefore, from the aspect of consciousness, thanks to which “the specific man – the object being the subject – experiences himself as the subject, experiencing, thus, his subjectiveness and that experience serves as the basis for his definition with the help of the pronoun »I«”⁴⁰. The expression “self” contains within itself more than the *suppositum* word for it links the moment of experienced subjectiveness with ontic subjectiveness while *suppositum* speaks only of ontic subjectiveness, that is of the being as the subjective base for existence and acting⁴¹. Such an interpretation of the term “self” presupposes the reflexive dimension of consciousness and its relation to the man as the real subject; the separation from the real subject (which is that “self”) the experience one’s true subjectiveness (which gives the right to define as “self”) would cause that the index survivorship “self” would present only the content of consciousness. Meanwhile, the reflexive turn of consciousness towards the real subject makes that “self” become a real subject experiencing its subjectiveness, that is constituted in the

38 K. Wojtyła, *Osoba i czyn oraz inne studia*, p. 92.

39 The approximation and understanding of the entire dynamic reality of the person and the action has to take into account also that subjectiveness which is given to us in our existence (see *ibidem*, p. 93).

40 *Ibidem*. The personal pronoun “I”, as it is commonly known, always points out a specific person.

41 Cardinal Wojtyła explained in the footnote (*ibidem*) that any experience of the man (as an outer experience) allows us (to some extent) to establish that it is the subject of existence and acting (*suppositum*), yet the experience of one’s true “self”, however, (and at the same time, an inner experience) gives obviousness to that belief and determines its new dimension which is the dimension of experienced subjectiveness.

consciousness dimension⁴².

Every man in a comprehensive experience is brought as an individual real being, as the subject of being and acting, that is *suppositum*. At the same time, each one of them is brought to each other as the specific “self”, both through self-consciousness and self-knowledge which states that the being being objectively myself subjectively constitutes also my “self” since I experience in it my subjectiveness. On the basis of self-knowledge then, I have consciousness of my true “self” and, more than that, thanks to reflexive consciousness I experience my “self”, that is I experience myself as a specific subject in its subjectiveness. Consciousness is not only an aspect but also an essential and a real dimension of that being which “myself” is since it constitutes its subjectiveness in a survivorship meaning. If that being, in traditional philosophy, corresponds to *suppositum*, then, without consciousness *suppositum* could not constitute itself as “self”; consciousness enters into a real constitution of that being which is the man, emphasizing his subjectiveness thanks to which every specific man is an individual and unique “self”⁴³.

M. Jaworski thinks that the above means of reasoning “moves us one big step forward in relation to the previous statements in which Cardinal Wojtyła questioned, above all, the standpoint of subjectivism or idealism on the subject – consciousness part. What we have here is the relation shown between the subjective experience of the subject and ontological *suppositum*, thanks to the reflexive character of consciousness. This also points out, as Cardinal Wojtyła saw it, ontological implications contained in experience. We have the experience of ourselves as the being being the subject of existence and acting”⁴⁴.

Consciousness then constitutes a peculiar dimension of that individual real being, which is the specific man; consciousness neither veils that being nor absorbs it in itself as it could turn out from a fundamental premise of idealistic thinking according to which *esse = percipi* (that is, “to be” is the same as “to constitute the content of consciousness” and, at the same time, one does not accept any other way of being except consciousness)⁴⁵. Karol Wojtyła captured those issues in a different manner claiming that consciousness, combined with being and acting

42 Ibidem, p. 94. M. Jaworski, analysing the reflexive feature of consciousness according to Karol Wojtyła, says that it is based on a mental turn towards the subject as such and thanks to it the object which, ontologically, is the subject, experiences itself as the subject, that is experiences its true “self”. We, thus, speak here of the “subjective experience of *suppositum* subject which, in ontology, is of purely objective character, abstracting from the experience aspect” (M. Jaworski, “Koncepcja antropologii”, p. 102).

43 K. Wojtyła, *Osoba i czyn oraz inne studia*, p. 95.

44 M. Jaworski, “Koncepcja antropologii”, p. 102.

45 Cf. K. Wojtyła, *Osoba i czyn oraz inne studia*, p. 95; see M. Jaworski, “Koncepcja antropologii”, p. 102.

of the specific man-person neither veils that being (as a dynamic reality) nor absorbs it in itself but reveals it “to inside”, that is in its peculiar difference and the most unique concreteness (this is what the reflexive function of consciousness is about). Thanks to that function of consciousness, the man exists “to inside” (and in the full dimension of his mental rational being) which goes hand on hand with experience and identifies with it. But experience, according to this presentation, does not constitute some reflex which shows up at the surface of the man’s being and acting; on the contrary, it “constitutes that figure that is appropriate for the actualization of the human subject that the man owes just to consciousness”⁴⁶. Thanks to consciousness, therefore, real and subjective energies contained within the man as the being actualize also in a real and subjective manner in the man as the subjectiveness person, finding their subjective finish in experience⁴⁷.

Karol Wojtyła analysed then, in that context, the problem of consciousness of the action and its experience in the dimension of moral values. The man experiences (and owes that experience to the reflexive function of consciousness) his actions within his own subject; experiences his action as acting which they are the subjective agent of and which expresses and reveals what his true “self” simply is.

The man distinguishes his acting from everything that in his “self” only “happens”; that distinction between *actio* and *passio* is the work of self-knowledge. It constitutes the function of consciousness: reflection, but also experience, thanks to which the man experiences his acting as something different from what happens in him. Because of acting-action, the man experiences also moral values: “good” and “evil”; he is not only conscious of the morality of his actions

46 K. Wojtyła, *Osoba i czyn oraz inne studia*, p. 95. S. Grygiel, analysing that point of view of the Cardinal, says that one has to differentiate between three kinds of acts: the acts of knowledge, self-knowledge and the acts of consciousness. The first two are of intentional cognitive structure while the third does not have such a structure at all. The cognitive function of the acts of consciousness comes down to unintentional reflection and to the reflexive experiencing connecting ontologically *suppositum* with the conscious “self” of the subject but it is a way of being “to the inside”, a way of realizing one’s being. S. Grygiel asks, because of the above, what the relation of self-knowledge and knowledge with consciousness which remains in relation with the ontological “self” (to *suppositum* and its acting) by way of what about that “self” self-knowledge speaks is. In this situation, there must have been earlier, with regard to consciousness, the understanding of “self” in its causative relation with a given action and, similarly, knowledge data. The reflection of consciousness would come down only to the “storage” of the content of self-knowledge and knowledge and then, at some appropriate moment, the intellect would perform some speculative operations without a direct reference to appropriate, specific objects. This could be the return to the so-called theory of passive reason from his *species impressa* and *expressa* (cf. S. Grygiel, *Hermeneutyka czynu*, p. 149).

47 See K. Wojtyła, *Osoba i czyn oraz inne studia*, pp. 95–96; cf. M. Jaworski, “Koncepcja antropologii”, pp. 102–103.

but experiences it, on more than one occasion – very deeply indeed.

The action and moral values – the Cardinal claimed – objectively belong to the real subject which, as their agent, the man is; at the same time, however, they “function” subjectively in experience which consciousness not only reflects but also conditions through its reflexive function. Both those functions of consciousness participate in “a peculiar drama of the human interior, which the drama of good and evil that takes place in the actions, and through the actions in the person, is”⁴⁸. The functions of consciousness cause that both the action and moral values: good or evil, become “a full subjective reality” in the man and the man, then, experiences good or evil in his true “self”. What is more, he experiences himself as either the one that is good or evil; “the full dimension of morality as a subjective and personal reality”⁴⁹ is included in it, too.

The whole emotional life of the man is of great significance in the development of human actions; one means here a particular range of human vitality coming from the emotive element of his psyche. The author of *The Acting Person* defined, significant for the actions activity of the will, as *voluntarium*, which implies free will participation in acting, which, at the same time, is conscious acting. The influence of the emotive element on consciousness of acting (which is of significance for the entire dynamism of the person, for conscious acting, that is the action) has been called the emotionalization of consciousness⁵⁰. Emotions, emotive facts – stirring up in the man as the subject – have their reflection in consciousness and influence (in their own characteristic way) conscious reflection of different objects, starting from the true “self” and the actions. Feelings of different kind emotionalize consciousness that is join their reflective and reflexive functions, modifying slightly their character visible first in conscious reflection which loses its distance in relation to emotions and objects covered by it. Consciousness owes this distance to self-knowledge which has the ability to objectivize emotions and feelings alike; thanks to that consciousness possesses the meaning of emotive facts that take place in the subject. The man is conscious of them (emotions “happen” in him) and through consciousness he has control over them, which is important for interior integration. “Conscious” control over emotions is accomplished with the help of will and just because of that moral value can be shaped. “Conscious control over spontaneous emotive dynamism which conditions *voluntarium* – acting characteristic of the will – is, at the same

48 K. Wojtyła, *Osoba i czyn oraz inne studia*, p. 98.

49 Ibidem; cf. K. Tarnowski, “Metafizyka osoby i wartości. Sesja naukowa poświęcona myśli Jana Pawła II. Kraków 16-17 listopada 1984”, *Znak* 38 (1986), No. 1 (374), pp. 117-132.

50 Ibidem, p. 101; cf. A. Półtawski, “Czyn a świadomość”, in: K. Kłósak (ed.), *Logos i ethos*, Kraków 1971, pp. 83-113.

time, conditioned by the will”⁵¹. In the situation when the emotionalization of consciousness begins (the meaning of emotive facts and objects disappears with feelings rising above their actual understanding), self-knowledge takes over the entire efficiency side of consciousness and should not allow for the emotionalization of consciousness so that consciousness is not deprived of the objectivized relation in respect of the entirety of emotive facts and does not lose the meaning side of those facts⁵².

Karol Wojtyła in the context of analysed functions of consciousness stated that it is thanks to consciousness indeed that the man experiences himself as the subject and on those grounds a dynamic relation between the person and the action is realized. The fact that the man is the subject and experiences himself as the subject allows to confirm the subjectivity⁵³ of the man-person; it is thanks to consciousness that the man experiences himself as the subject in an experiential sense. The man experiences his actions as acting and he, as a person, is the agent. This agency becomes obvious owing to the experience and as such appears in the consciousness aspect. It is important then to get closer to the experience and to subjectivity of the man in order to capture agency of the fact fully experienced. A possible full presentation of the subjectivity of the man allows to see, in an appropriate manner, the dynamic relation between the person and the action, the definitive subjective figure of which is shaped thanks to consciousness. “It is, namely, the person of causative experience (...) of the relation of the person with the action, the experience of a moral value which, in such a dynamic system, germinates. These all are objective facts that possess their objectivity and reality only exclusively in the subjectivity of the man”⁵⁴.

Consciousness, as long as it is understood as an aspect serves only fuller understanding of the subjectivity of the man, especially in his internal relation to his own actions. As soon as consciousness ceases to be understood as an aspect, however, it ceases to explain the subjectivity, that is the subjectiveness of the man and his actions and becomes the subject substitute itself. Consciousness then is the subject of experiences and (moral) values which, in such a stance of thinking cease to be something real; they remain only the content of consciousness: *esse*

51 Ibidem, p. 102; cf. J. Tischner, “L’aspetto metodologico dell’opera ‘Persona e Atto’”, trans. R. Bottiglione, in: R. Bottiglione et al., *La Filosofia di Karol Wojtyła*, Bologna 1983, pp. 101-106.

52 Ibidem, p. 103; cf. A. Półtawski, “Człowiek, czyn a świadomość – według Karola Wojtyły”, *Więź* 22 (1979), No. 2-3 (250-251), pp. 44-53.

53 Subjectivity and not subjectivism in the meaning of a certain stance of thinking! In order to determine the subjectivity of the man, of a fundamental importance is the consciousness aspect (cf. ibidem, p. 105).

54 Ibidem, p. 106; cf. A. Półtawski, “Człowiek a świadomość (w związku z książką Kardynała Karola Wojtyły *Osoba i czyn*)”, *Analecta Cracoviensia* V-VI (1973-1974), pp. 159-175.

= *percipi*. Finally, consciousness itself has to stop being something real and becomes a well-thought-out subject of content; “the way of subjectivism has its end in idealism”⁵⁵. Consciousness is the key to the subjectivity of the man because it conditions the experience in which the human “self” reveals directly (empirically) as the subject.

In the field of consciousness an essential moment of a dynamic arising of the action out of the person – agency gets realized and pervades it to the full. Consciousness is present in the actions of the person and plays a specific role in shaping the person’s subjectivity from which, out of the causative power, the action comes into being. Both consciousness then and agency, in a way typical of each other, determine the person and the action.

A characteristic feature of the model of consciousness proposed by Cardinal Wojtyła is an aspect of existence requiring explication, which in traditional philosophy was “implied” by rationality (*animal rationale*), and in ethics – by freedom of an action. The author of *The Acting Person* (*Osoba i Czyn*) thought that consciousness, despite its intellectual nature, does not have an intentional structure. While understanding and knowledge contribute to shaping an object in an intentional way, consciousness limits itself to reflecting everything that is already known. Consciousness of an action is one of many reflections making up the material entirety of consciousness of a person; this reflection itself is of a conscious nature and does not consist in active objectivization of an action or a person, although it contains an image of an action and a person as faithfully as possible. Consciousness cooperates with the entire human cognition: a capability and mental fitness of active understanding; therefore, consciousness is conditioned by this capability and mental fitness, that is the entire cognitive potentiality, which constitutes, according to the Western philosophical tradition, the fundamental characteristic of a human person. Consciousness receives meanings of things “from outside” as a fruit of knowledge resulting from active understanding of objective reality, acquired by a human in different ways and at different levels, marking also a different level of consciousness. There is quite a significant difference between knowledge and consciousness in terms of intellectual and cognitive development.

From all forms and kinds of knowledge acquired and possessed by a human, the Cardinal distinguished self-knowledge, that is to say self-understanding. Self-knowledge occurs when a human, in an intentional way, intellectually directs towards one’s “self”; it differs from knowledge in that its object is not in the

55 Ibidem, p. 107; cf. W. Półtawska, “Koncepcja samoposiadania – podstawą psychoterapii obiektywizującej (w świetle książki Kardynała Karola Wojtyły *Osoba i czyn*)”, *Analecta Cracoviensia* V–VI (1973–1974), p. 228.

nature of generality, whereas an object of knowledge is in such nature. Due to self-knowledge, consciousness reflects actions and their relation to one's "self"; taking this fact into consideration is of great importance as it has an effect on the nature of "self" and contradicts an idealistic position, which does not sufficiently consider this way of existence in consciousness of everything it contains.

Karol Wojtyła thought that the analysis of self-knowledge allows to better understand two functions of consciousness, both in an unintentional way. First of them is a function of reflection. Another function of consciousness, completing a function of illuminating reflection and giving consciousness *raison d'être* in a structure of a person and an action, is shaping the experience, which allows a human to experience their subjectivity in a special way. Thus, consciousness constitutes a characteristic dimension of an individual real being, which is a particular human, and it does not veil or absorb it as it could arise from the basic premise of idealistic thinking, stating that *esse = percipi*. Due to consciousness, real and objective energies contained in a human as a being, also actualize in a real and objective way in a human as a person of subjectivity, finding its subjective completion in an experience. A human experiences (and owes this experience to a function of reflexive consciousness) their actions within their own subject; experiences their action as acting of which they are a subjective agent and which constitutes a manifestation and unfolding which their "self" simply is.

Shaping of human actions is hugely influenced by the entire emotional life of a human. The author of *The Acting Person* described the crucial for actions activity of will as *voluntarium*, which means participation of free will in acting, being, at the same time, conscious acting. The influence of an emotive element on consciousness of acting has been called as emotionalization of consciousness. Emotions have their reflection in consciousness and influence conscious reflection of various objects, starting from one's "self" and actions.

In the context of functions of consciousness being analyzed, Wojtyła claimed that due to consciousness, a human experiences oneself as a subject and on this ground the dynamic relation between a person and an action is taking place. The fact of a human being a subject and experiencing oneself as a subject allows to confirm the subjectivity of a human-person; it is due to consciousness that a human experiences oneself as a subject in an empirical way. A human experiences his or her actions as acting, of which he or she, as a person, is an agent. This agency becomes obvious due to experience and as such it appears in the aspect of consciousness. Thus, it is important to get closer to the experience and subjectivity of a human so as to capture the agency as a fully empirical fact. Encompassing the subjectivity of a human as completely as possible allows to see to the full the dynamic relation between a human and an action, of which

the fundamental and subjective form is being shaped due to consciousness. For as long as it is understood as an aspect, it only serves for a more complete understanding of subjectivity of a human, especially in its internal relation to one's own actions. However, when it is no longer understood as an aspect, it no longer explains subjectivity of a human and of their actions, it itself becomes a substitute of a subject. Consciousness is then a subject of experiences as well as moral values, which with that mental attitude are no longer something real; they remain merely the content of consciousness. Finally, consciousness itself is no longer something real and it becomes a thought subject of the content; "a road of subjectivism finds its end in idealism". Consciousness is a key to subjectivity of a human because of the fact that it conditions an experience in which a human "self" manifests directly (empirically) as a subject. In the field of consciousness a significant moment of dynamic arising of an action from a person, that is agency, is being realized and it is completely permeated by consciousness. Consciousness is present in actions of a person and plays a specific role in shaping subjectivity of a person, from which subjectivity, by the power of agency, an action emerges. Thus, both consciousness and agency, in their own specific ways, determine a person and an action.

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