

## PERSON AS CO-EXISTENCE

### An Approach to Leonardo Polo's Transcendental Anthropology

Leonardo Polo distinguishes the being of the human person from the being of the physical universe and the being of the divine person, and characterizes it as co-existence because "the co-existence designates man's being as a being that cannot be reduced to existence."<sup>1</sup> He expresses this in a linguistically different way with the adverb: *additionally*. According to him, the person is *additionally*.

Polo also characterizes personal being as *co-being*, *co-existence*, which refers to the character of *additionally*.

a) With regard to knowledge, person implies an intellectual, knowing co-existence with the being of the universe.

b) Intimacy is an inner co-existence by which the person is accompanied.

c) Freedom of destination, co-existence with other persons and in God.

d) Freedom as a natural disposition refers to co-existence with one's own potency. Thus, the person is neither her intelligence nor her will, but is with them.

This presentation addresses each of these dimensions of the human person's co-existence. In other words, I will look for 'verbs' that accompany *additionally*, the adverb Polo uses to characterize the person.

#### 1. Co-existence with the universe

Cognitive openness to being, which can also be called the innate habit of the first principles, can be described as *being additionally to objectifying*. Thus, Polo states: "*Additionally* indicates the pure non-exhaustion in operational knowledge."<sup>2</sup>

This statement responds to the deep understanding that capturing being as act is not objectifying; it is not 'having the concept of being', among other reasons, because it is not possible to abstract the act of being as a universal. To advert the real as real is neither an abstraction nor a judgment: it is the intellect's innate disposition. This innate disposition or habit does not rest on intellectual potency, which is *tabula rasa*. Rather, it rests on the active intellect or agent intellect or, as Polo refers to it: the intellect *ut co-actus*.

The importance Polo gives to dealing with the innate habits is fully justified by his attempt to deepen the Thomistic distinction between essence and act of being at the anthropological level. This is precisely because these habits, these innate dispositions, are the channels through which we grasp the being of the physical universe, of God as its Origin and of the person. Without delving into these habits, we cannot go beyond considering things at the level of essence, forms, and those captured abstractively.

The habit that captures the persistence of the universe as non-contradictory and dependent on the Origin cannot have reason's potentiality as its subject. This is because

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<sup>1</sup> *Presente y futuro [Present and future]*, 158.

<sup>2</sup> *Antropología [Anthropology]*, I. 114.

capturing the extra-mental being is a previous *requirement*, and is concomitant to all actualization of intellectual potency. Hence, its subject must be the agent intellect. In other words, *the agent intellect is the light that captures being* and, *thanks to this*, the intellectual potency *can capture* forms and essence as distinct from the act of being.

This is a fundamental clarification because it is not enough to admit that the intellect as act adverts being while potential intelligence discovers the entity's essence and other determinations. The intellect in act puts forth *more effort* in all knowledge of reason. In other words: it is necessary that the *personal advertence of being accompany all of reason's processes, without confusing it with them*. Otherwise, rational knowledge would not be knowledge *of the real*.

Referring to the habit of first principles, Polo says: "the truth of persistence rests on said habit."<sup>3</sup> Persistence is non-contradiction, and the person 'sees', adverts, non-contradiction, and, therefore, its truth.

Personal being co-exists with the universe in virtue of the extra-mental *knowledge of being* and its truth. "The human being's duality with the being of the universe is the habit of first principles."<sup>4</sup> However, it is not its ground.

Professor González García explains this in presenting Polo's thought: "to be a person is not to establish, cause or start; it is to be free. And freedom is not opposed to being –to the ground– nor does it replace it, because it cannot be reduced to a principle (of conduct, for example). Freedom does reach the principles, but it does so by releasing itself from them and from the depths of the personal being. This, therefore, involves a second sense of being added to the fundamental. The personal being is being *additionally*; this *plus*, which is the person, is freely added to the extra-mental being, and as a complete novelty."<sup>5</sup> Thus, knowing is a complete novelty, always a new discovery.

Polo also explains this by recurring to the dual and hierarchical structure he discovers in the entire scope of what is human. Thus, in relation to the universe, man is dual in two ways:

First, the person is dual with the universe because it "is not a replica of man, nor vice versa."<sup>6</sup> Rather, personal being is superior to the being of the universe, and enters into duality with it through knowledge. In Polo, this duality is the habit of the first principles.<sup>7</sup>

One of Polo's criticisms of modern thought is precisely the loss of this duality in attempting to replace being with the subject. This 'symmetrization' –as Polo refers to it– is the modern mistake of acknowledging reality's foundation as the subject, rather than as being.

Man is dual with the universe in another way: "perfecting it through his practical activity."<sup>8</sup> This duality is not transcendental, but is at the level of both man's and universe's essence. Indeed, through his transitive work, man can facilitate that causes coincide.

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<sup>3</sup> *Antropología [Anthropology]*, I, 199.

<sup>4</sup> *Antropología [Anthropology]*, I, 199.

<sup>5</sup> GONZÁLEZ GARCÍA, J., *Y además. Escritos sobre la antropología trascendental de Leonardo Polo [And additionally. Writings on Polo's transcendental anthropology]*, 120.

<sup>6</sup> *Antropología [Anthropology]*, I, 166.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. *Antropología [Anthropology]*, I, 166.

<sup>8</sup> *Antropología [Anthropology]*, I, 171.

However, vigor, the person's activity as knowing *ut actus* (agent intellect), does not end by illuminating this rational task: it is *additionally* to it.

Indeed, human co-existence is not exhausted in duality with the universe: the human being does not *consist* of knowing or perfecting the universe. Moreover, this person-world duality is not radical, because "the habit of first principles is, in turn, dual with a superior habit –the habit of wisdom–,"<sup>9</sup> according to which man transcends his co-existence with the being of the universe."<sup>10</sup>

## 2. Co-existence in God

The title of this sub-section describes the person as co-existence *in* God. It seems more accurate to use the preposition *in* instead of *with* because personal existence (the personal act of being) is dependence on God, and thus does not exist outside of this dependence, but *in* it.

One could argue that the universe is also dependence, and it is. However, it is a dependence that begins and follows, but does not grow, nor seek, nor attain. The person does, and thus her dependence grows, because it is knowing and loving, and therefore freedom.<sup>11</sup> It is more appropriate, then, to refer to the person as *co-existence in God as the culmination*, and to the universe as *persistence from God as origin*.

One's own personal intimacy is not known in a rational way, through a process of abstraction, judgment and reasoning, but in another way: every person innately knows herself, concomitant to one's very existence, and as intellect. This way of knowing is the habit of wisdom.

In other words, in her intimacy, the person attains herself, knows herself as intellectual light. However, this light cannot fully clarify who she is and for whom she is. As Polo would say: it's methodical value does not attain it. Thus, another method, another person must be the light that penetrates the light of one's personal intellect.

Polo distinguishes between the *search for other* and the *search for a similar*. The person is a search in both meanings, and he makes it clear that 'other' is relative to love; 'similar' is relative to knowledge.<sup>12</sup> With regard to the search for the similar: "if the person does not find a personal replica, she becomes an enigma to herself. Otherwise, she would reveal her self to herself. However, in order to reveal herself the revelation must also be a person. Otherwise, the person remains unknown forever, which is a transcendently absurd situation."<sup>13</sup> The person is the search for a similar, that is, for someone who fully and radically knows her, of an intellect that totally elucidates her being.

Let us further delve into this topic. The habit of wisdom is a disposition of the agent intellect by which it *reveals itself*: it allows itself to be seen as intellect. Not in one

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<sup>9</sup> I discuss Polo's proposal regarding this innate habit later in this work.

<sup>10</sup> *Antropología [Anthropology]*, I, 166.

<sup>11</sup> It is clear that the agent intellect is freedom. Not only because without the agent intellect there is no freedom, but because "the personal act of being is intellectual in act and radically free... Thus, these two are characterizations of the personal act of being... The consideration of gift as transcendental is also personal." *La esencia del hombre [The essence of man]*, 160. Also see: *Ibid.*, 136.

<sup>12</sup> Indeed, love seeks the other because it is the other: it does not yearn to be the other, or for the other to cease being itself. However, in knowing one seeks to see itself reflected in the one it knows

<sup>13</sup> *Persona y libertad [Person and freedom]*, 253.

fell swoop, in a fixed way, but co-existing with the habit. Thus, the agent intellect is light, that *allows itself to be seen* in a habitual and innate way; *it reveals itself as light*.<sup>14</sup>

The light metaphor has been used classically to discuss the agent intellect, and is very appropriate: the light is not fixed, but spreads as it illuminates. However, it does not illuminate itself, but something else. At the same time, it is transparent. The intellect as act illuminates what is external to itself, but it also reveals its own interiority: it becomes visible for the one Who is able to see it, which is not itself, nor the other similar to itself, but God.

The person is also the search for other. Thus, Polo describes this as *transcendental loving*.<sup>15</sup> Co-existence is perhaps most clearly seen from loving, because loving sees the other as other, while the intellect seeks to find itself in the similar. Thus it is clear that loving cannot culminate in itself, but in *the other as the other*: in the beloved as different from the self. The person, then, is openness, gift-co-existence, because she gives and because she accepts, as we will discuss further on.

In short: the person, in her intimacy, is the search for the similar and the search for the other. In other words, it is a free intimacy that searches freely.

This approach is completely different from that of freedom as indeterminacy. Indeed, “if human freedom can be converted with other anthropological transcendentals, it cannot be included in mere indeterminacy. Although created freedom is not infinite, its condition of possibility *in God* is, and it is in an entirely positive way. In line with this approach, it is even clearer that arbitrariness is not a characteristic of freedom.”<sup>16</sup>

Freedom is not pure possibility; it is a search. But it is a search that does not end with an *attainment* (because its end is not produced by it), or with *fruition* (because it is not a tendency that culminates in satiating a need<sup>17</sup>). Rather, it can be described as a *search for an understanding of oneself* that cannot be found in itself because it is received, not originating, freedom. And it is a *search for meaning*<sup>18</sup> that cannot be anything other than the response of the other person, nor of another created<sup>19</sup> person because no created person radically knows the other, as we will discuss later.

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<sup>14</sup> “Transparency should not be confused with glass’ diaphaneity, which is physical. The diaphanous is rather passive with respect to the light that passes through it, and therefore lacks what we call transparency’s intensity. Transparency’s intensity is the inward intellectual light, because the inside is light.” *Antropología [Anthropology]*, I, 191.

<sup>15</sup> Not as willful loving.

<sup>16</sup> *Epistemología [Epistemology]*, 75.

<sup>17</sup> In short, because neither knowledge nor love can be satisfied.

<sup>18</sup> Viktor Frankl, the father of the ‘Third Viennese School of Psychotherapy’, included the following term in *Psychology: search for meaning*. He distinguishes between “the meaning that logotherapy instantly deals with (which) is a particular meaning, a meaning that is here and now (...) There is also a general meaning, an ultimate meaning. A meta-meaning, as I refer to it (...). It is a meta-meaning because it goes beyond our ability for purely rational apprehension.” FRANKL, V., *En el principio era el sentido. Reflexiones en torno al ser humano [In the beginning there was meaning. Reflections on the human being]*, 53. For Frankl, the search for meaning is possible because of man’s transcendence. “In reality, what is essential to the human condition is self-transcendence, that there is more to one’s life than oneself... Something or someone.” *Ibid*.

<sup>19</sup> In a theological context, and written with stylistic evocative beauty, Romano Guardini expresses a similar idea, shared with other authors such as Ebner: “He created me by calling me to be his. However, the response to the call requires that I be the one He called me to be, and that I live my life by carrying out the role of ‘you’ with respect to Him... This relationship constitutes the truth of my being, as well as my reality’s ground.” *La existencia del cristiano [Christian existence]*, 179, 467, quoted by LÓPEZ QUINTÁS, A., “La antropología relacional dialógica de Romano Guardini” [“Romano Guardini’s relational dialogic anthropology”] in SELLÉS, J.F. (editor), *Propuestas antropológicas del siglo XX [Twentieth century anthropological proposals]*, Vol. I, 165.

Transcendental freedom, or person as freedom, does not simply seek the truth and stop there. Rather, the encounter with the truth ‘triggers’ a search. “The person’s freedom, without ending, begins as *it is added to the truth*. I refer to this inspired addition as: ‘character of additionally’. To be *additionally* is equivalent to being a person. Personal freedom is *additionally*, and it distinguishes itself from freedom as an attribute of the practical will.”<sup>20</sup> It is not only light that understands the truth and sees the good: it is an insistent light that searches for more. It searches for another light that illuminates it in order to fully know its own being. This is the agent intellect’s *theme*: to know itself as God knows it.

Thus, in the search for the verb to accompany the personal *additionally*, one could say that while co-existing in God, the human person is *additionally to illuminating*.

### 3. Co-existence with other created persons

To summarize what we have already said: the person co-exists with the universe and co-exists in her intimacy. But she does not find a response, a ‘replica’ as Polo says, in either one of these dimensions: the material world cannot respond to personal knowing or loving. One is not a replica of herself. Thus, if there were no other persons, the person would be meaningless.

“A person by herself would be tragic, precisely because she would lack a replica. Therefore, man’s co-existence with the universe would be frustrating if it were the only duality, because the universe is not a person.”<sup>21</sup> One might object that the person finds the response in God. But without other human beings, her existence in the world would be meaningless, as we just read in the previously cited text.<sup>22</sup>

It is obvious (and this is how Polo describes it) that man co-exists in society, satisfying his own needs and those of others. “Although certainly necessity is inferior to the person, satisfying one’s needs marks a level of co-existence: the bestowment and acceptance of man’s actions must intertwine for necessity to be satisfied.”<sup>23</sup> Life in

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<sup>20</sup> *La verdad como inspiración [Truth as inspiration]*, 2.

<sup>21</sup> *Antropología [Anthropology]*, I, 167. Similar statements can be found in the works of other personalist authors. For example, in Guardini: “Truly, the person is not only dynamis but also being; not only act but also form (Gestalt). She does not appear in the encounter, but actualizes herself in it. It certainly depends on the fact that other persons exist. It only makes sense if there are other persons one can encounter. Whether the encounter actually happens is another question (...). This refers to the ontological fact that, according to principle, the person does not exist alone. We can express this objective data by saying that man is essentially in dialogue. His spiritual life is oriented to be shared.” GUARDINI, R., “Mundo y persona” [“World and person”] *Encuentro*, Madrid, 2000, 116-117, cited by LÓPEZ QUINTÁS, A., “La antropología relacional dialógica de Romano Guardini” [“Romano Guardini’s relational dialogic anthropology”] in SELLÉS, J.F. (editor), *Propuestas antropológicas del siglo XX [Twentieth century anthropological proposals]*, Vol. I, 159. Although the conclusion is similar to Polo’s, the method used to reach it is distinct. Like other personalist thinkers, Guardini utilizes a primarily phenomenological method. We find something similar in Nédoncelle’s personalism, derived from the concept of being as relation: “Relation indicates tendency, openness and transcendence, fundamentally between persons and themselves or the human person and God. At her most intimate core, the person is oriented towards others, God, and even physical things. However, we can only speak of her reference to them by analogy to what is true relation, which is established between free, spiritual beings whether they are divine or human persons.” VÁZQUEZ BORAU, J.L., “La Antropología de Maurice Nédoncelle” [“Maurice Nédoncelle’s Anthropology”] in SELLÉS, J.F. (editor), *Propuestas antropológicas del siglo XX [Twentieth century anthropological proposals]*, Vol. I, 352.

<sup>22</sup> Also see: *Persona y libertad [Person and freedom]*, 143-144.

<sup>23</sup> *Antropología [Anthropology]*, I, 199.

society, and the culture it produces, is a relationship at the level of acquired habits, of virtue. Therefore, it pertains to the field of ethics. However, it is not a realm of transcendental freedom.

The question is: can we also describe the person as transcendental co-existence with other persons? To clarify, we should return to our starting point: the person is co-existence in as much as she is a knower. Therefore, we must ask: how does the person know other persons? Clearly, she knows actions, languages, and, through these, she captures *how the person is*. However, this is not knowledge at the transcendental level but at the level of human *essence*: to know *how* someone is is not the same as knowing *who* she is. Knowing who she is implies knowing her as *person*, knowing her as personal '*actus essendi*', knowing her in her radicality, novelty and uniqueness.

At least two authors claim they have not found a response to how to know another person as a person in Polo's thought.<sup>24</sup> However, in *Antropología trascendental* [*Transcendental anthropology*] Polo specifically says: "a human person's intimacy is not knowable by another, but only manifests itself in accordance with its essence."<sup>25</sup> Thus, we find it unnecessary to search his work for another answer.

Indeed, it simply is not possible. The person's radicality is not persistence like the universe, but free actuality. It clearly cannot be known as simply non-contradictory, as a first principle, because it is not. Then, how can it be known? One might think that the habit of wisdom, which 'attains' its own being by accompanying it, might be the way to access others' personal being. But it is clearly not possible to *accompany* the other's being. It is not possible *to be in an intimacy* other than one's own.

"The character of additionally, as insisting on inward openness, is thematically equivalent to transparency. In this sense we refer to the method and subject's solidarity. The third dimension of the abandonment of the mental limit is not a method directed by a theme, but by insistent intellectual light, which attains transparency as its theme."<sup>26</sup> From this perspective, one's own being does not reveal itself to a personal human intellect distinct from its own.

The knowledge of the other as person must be *in God*. This does not mean that by knowing the personal God as creator one knows the other in her radicality. Rather, I suggest that such access to the other's being is only possible when we find our replica in God. This is also consistent with stating that the knowledge of my own being is a never-ending search. This is because the person only finds the replica in the knowledge that God has of her, not in the knowledge that the person has of herself (because no person is an identity), nor in the knowledge another person may have.

Thus, personal co-existence with other persons cannot be in the dimension of radical knowledge. Is a non-cognitive co-existence in the order of personal loving possible? If the answer is yes, this implies loving (giving and accepting) not preceded by knowledge at the same level. In other words, to personally give oneself and accept the personal gift of the other without knowing the other in her most radical transcendental intimacy.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> Cf. FANTINI, L., *La conoscenza di se in Leonardo Polo* [*Self-knowledge in Leonardo Polo*], 82, and PIÁ, S., *El hombre como ser dual* [*Man as dual being*], 263-265.

<sup>25</sup> *Antropología* [*Anthropology*], I, 203.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, 175.

<sup>27</sup> We find a similar intuition in Blondel when he refers to the heart as a way of knowing one's beloved: "Eager and needy love becomes an organ of knowledge because any subject can only be known as such to the extent that it is loved." BLONDEL, M., *La acción* [*Action*], 292, quoted by IZQUIERDO, C., "El hombre a la espera del don de Dios. La antropología de Maurice Blondel." ["Man awaiting God's gift. Maurice Blondel's anthropology"]. In SELLÉS, J.F. (editor), *Propuestas antropológicas del siglo XX* [*Twentieth century anthropological proposals*], Vol. I, 240. However, as we know, Blondel does not

This is not absurd, even within Polo's vision of the person, as personal loving is superior to personal knowing, especially if one recognizes that personal loving does not imply "giving" being (neither one's own nor that of the other) because this is only possible for the Creator. To love is to give, however gift is not an act of being, but essential acts of the will, of the body, of reason.

To summarize, complete knowledge is not required in order to completely love. Here, freedom to love comes into play; which, in fact, also refers to God, and is a search without a fixed end. In light of this, one might think that knowing another person in her most radical intimacy is also a search and that it will be attained in so far as it 'advances' the encounter of the response to my own being. That is, knowing myself as God knows me.<sup>28</sup> Moreover, the total gift of one's own person to another is not possible, but to the extent that it grows in search of divine acceptance to one's own gift, an increasing gift and acceptance is, even when full acceptance by the other is not given.

The radical knowledge of the other's intimacy is not possible in this life, and co-existence with other persons is gift co-existence, but not radically intellectual. Thus, it is not a distinct dimension from co-existence, but somewhat of a branch of co-existence in God.

#### 4. Co-being as intimacy

According to what we have outlined up to this point, the person knows herself as person thanks to an innate, intellectual '*habilitas*', the habit of wisdom, superior to knowing the existence of the entire universe. This is another aspect of personal co-existence: intimacy.

Knowing oneself is neither an operation nor an acquired habit. Rather, it is an innate disposition of the '*intellectus ut actus*', that is, of the agent intellect, of the personal intellectual light.

What does this habit know, and how does it know? It knows who I am, and knows it by 'accompanying me'. This is *intimacy*. Now, the person knows herself but cannot be reduced to knowing herself. She is not *solely* self-knowledge. Moreover, self-knowledge is not something attained: it accompanies, it is an intimacy that flows with existence: "To be additionally is to intimately open oneself to more, to attain oneself: more than to persist, it means to accompany, intimacy, co-being, co-existence."<sup>29</sup>

Let us return to García González, as he very clearly expresses Polo's thought on this topic: "The human person is founded on the radical duality that, oddly enough, is the thematic methodical duality. The person as theme, and the person as method that knows of said theme: the person as a being who knows herself."<sup>30</sup>

When Polo refers to the personal act of being, co-existence, as the radical anthropological transcendental, he explains: "note that radical is not tantamount to first:

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sufficiently systematize the cognitive method he proposes: the methodical immanence, interiority as method.

<sup>28</sup> Perhaps this is why humility is coexistence's first virtue: "humility illuminates willpower's limit and only then is inter-subjectivity possible." *Antropología [Anthropology]*, II, 239, note 312.

<sup>29</sup> *Antropología [Anthropology]*, I, 137.

<sup>30</sup> GARCÍA GONZÁLEZ, J. A., *Y además [And additionally]*, 90. Cf. from the same author: "Leonardo Polo: la persona humana como ser libre" ["Leonardo Polo: the human person as a free being"]. *Thémata*, (2007) 223-228. This is a short and very clear explanation of this point in Polo's anthropology.

the act of being is first as a first principle, not as co-existence; co-existence is the second act of being.<sup>31</sup>

*The second act of being* means *radical duality*, and we should not ignore this if we want to understand Polo's proposal and this paper's objective: to clarify freedom.

Among human dualities, not all are radical. The radical duality Polo speaks of is "the double methodical and thematic value of the character of additionally."<sup>32</sup> In other words, the person is, on the one hand, the known (*theme*) by his habit; and on the other, the search (*method*) for knowledge greater than herself. She is intimacy that is reached in intimacy and transcends from her intimacy.

This is what Polo describes as *interior openness* and *inward openness*, intimate duality. "*Interior openness* is the discovery of what I refer to as *lack of replica*, and it dualizes *with inward openness*, or the discovery that this deficiency cannot be definitive."<sup>33</sup>

Intimacy as lack of replica refers to intimacy as a free activity, it dualizes with it. In other words, it is attained as freedom in knowing<sup>34</sup> its own intimacy as distinct and superior to the universe (precisely because it knows it) and to its own human potencies' activity (rational knowledge and the unfolding of its voluntary action) which are not its radical intimacy. To put it in simpler terms: each person captures herself (attains herself) as freedom to the extent that she does not find a similar response to herself in the universe or in her own humanity. She captures herself as 'beyond' the external and the internal.

However, personal intimacy does not 'end' here, but discovers within itself that this lack of response cannot be definitive (otherwise, intimacy would be destroyed). Thus, it transcends itself: it searches beyond itself.

##### 5. Co-existence as freedom

Polo refers to the relationship between intimacy as not finding a 'response' in the universe and free transcendence as *the duality between the discovery of the lack of replica and attaining the active value of co-existence*. In this second dimension, freedom *motivates* the search for response, although "search corresponds to the *intellectus ut co-actus* and gift-love."<sup>35</sup> We will discuss this later.

This discovered intimacy transforms into a search of who will respond. Thus, we find *inward openness*: the search. This search is both intellectual and gift. Therefore, it refers to "the intellectual transparency and the gift structure in which intimacy is reduced to inward openness"<sup>36</sup> as a search for replica and acceptance.

Intellect and freedom's conditions both appear in this description of the person as intimacy: "the personal act of being is intellectual in act and radically free."<sup>37</sup> Not only are they inseparable, but they become each other through conversion proper to the transcendentals.

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<sup>31</sup> *Antropología [Anthropology]*, I, 195.

<sup>32</sup> *Antropología [Anthropology]*, I, 196.

<sup>33</sup> *Antropología [Anthropology]*, I, 196.

<sup>34</sup> The term "intellectually" does not mean 'with intelligence' as cognitive potency, but by the intellect as act.

<sup>35</sup> *Antropología [Anthropology]*, I, 226.

<sup>36</sup> *Antropología [Anthropology]*, I, 197.

<sup>37</sup> *La esencia del hombre [The essence of man]*, 160.

Polo makes a very lucid distinction between the mode of the metaphysical and personal transcendentals' conversions. First, that they become each other means that "we distinguish them notionally, but they are not distinguished."<sup>38</sup> However, among the metaphysical transcendentals (being, true and good) there is an order, "and they can be converted through the order."<sup>39</sup>

However, "it is not so in the personal human act of being."<sup>40</sup> In other words, the personal transcendentals do not require an order: their conversion is clearer. "Conversion, really, is an expression of fullness,"<sup>41</sup> states Polo. This indication is particularly enlightening because it suggests that personal intimacy is freedom because it is intellectual light, and vice versa; it is gift-intimacy because it is free, and vice versa; it is intellectual light because it is gift and acceptance, and vice versa. We must think about this carefully, as Polo warns us.

For now, and to summarize, the person is –because she knows– not only outward openness, but *interior openness*, precisely because to know is to open one's interiority in order to fit what is external to it. To open one's interiority is to be free, and to know is to fit the external in it: freedom and knowledge are interiority's openness.

But the person is also *inward openness*, that is, a venture into one's intimacy, growing *in* it and *with* it. This means *the person's knowledge is openness* not only to what is external to it, but to herself; and that she *is freedom* because she is neither determined nor detained in this inner search that does not end and transcends herself. I say that in searching the person transcends herself because this consists in accepting that the answer to her search *cannot be found in herself*.

Taking into account these initial considerations, freedom appears superior to classical philosophy's willfulness and very distinct from modernity's indeterminacy<sup>42</sup> because it appears as intimacy open to the inside, as personal being.<sup>43</sup> "Freedom is intimately freedom, not originally freedom... Intimacy means giving, it is being as gift: *donatio essendi*."<sup>44</sup> From this perspective, creation is understood as *donatio essendi*, which is much more than causality.

God is originating intimacy that *gives* intimacy: this gift is the creation of each person. The gift is this intimacy. We can better understand this in the following manner: the act of being is the most intimate act. In fact, it is more intimate to the creature than herself. In the personal creature, this is true in an eminent way, more so than in the

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<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>42</sup> Yepes Stork, one of Polo's close followers, writes: "All anthropology changes when it takes personal being's latent dimension into account: intimacy. If omitted or forgotten an objectivist and analytical vision, external to human realities, occurs. Certainly then, the personal dimension of these realities is left unknown since intimacy is the core from which one's own depth, permanent deposit, is assisted or not. Only then can one live an authentic existence, with one's actions and operations. But we must not forget that intimacy is being." YEPES STORK, R., "Persona, intimidad, don y libertad. Hacia una antropología de los trascendentales personales" ["Person, intimacy, gift and freedom. An anthropology of personal transcendentals"], *Anuario Filosófico*, XXIX/2 (1996) 1082.

<sup>43</sup> Intimacy is not synonymous with immanence. Immanence occurs in all non-transitive operations, and is typical of any kind of life. And very much so in knowledge. It is the living thing's outward openness to seize the external and bring it inward. Intimacy is more than this: it is inward openness.

<sup>44</sup> *Persona y libertad [Person and freedom]*, 152. Elsewhere, Polo directly states: "the expression 'man is person' is equivalent to 'man is born of God'. This means that man is the son of God... Born of God, man's personal being is relationship in the order of Origin." "La persona humana como relación en el orden del Origen" ["The human person as relationship in the order of Origin"], *Studia Poliana*, 14 (2012), 27.

universe. Thus, knowledge of one's intimacy becomes a way to know God, distinct but not opposed to metaphysics' way.<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> Cf. LOMBO, J. A., "Lo trascendental antropológico en Tomás de Aquino. Las raíces clásicas de la propuesta de Leonardo Polo" ["The anthropological transcendental in Thomas Aquinas. Classical roots of Leonardo Polo's proposal"], *Studia Poliana*, 6 (2004) 181-208.