

Commitment.

The Native Linking of Human Person
to Transcendence, According to
Leonardo Polo's Transcendental Anthropology

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“The created person, as such is immediately open to donate himself”
Leonardo Polo.

1. APPROACH

The original *way of being* of every human being is in the first place, following the thoughts of our author, to be a *binding being* with the personal divine being, and secondly, with the others created. The binding activity of the human person is native, as a single person, unrelated to others, would not exist as a person, nor could live a human life. Unitive activity is characteristic of the binding being, so being a person is what Polo called *coexistence* or *co-be with*. Coexistence is understood as a native openness to the relational being.

The native linking of the human person to God is *natural*. Therefore to be a *created* human person, it is to be bind as a *creature*. Such native ontological opening is of such ontological intensity that enables the integration of the person and the personality, as well as the structuring of interpersonal relationships in order to its growth and vital projection. It is the vital activity of the human person, by being created, without which we couldn't even think of human life. Such linkage is the primary reference for native openness to transcendence actively projected into human life: natural, biological and psychological openness to God and to the relationship with other personal beings. Hence comes its vital force, understood as the movement of co-existential character that natively activates in the human person a transcendental bonding.

Such thesis is observable in the development of human life from the moment of conception, as the viability of life arises from the binding activity of the personal whose root comes from the divine creation. The human person is at the beginning of human life, because human life depends on a personal origin as a creature. If there is no creator, no one is created. Along with the divine creation of the person, there is a human parental. From birth we are integrated into the natural dynamics of a family or a substitute family, which receives, responds and is

responsible to meet the vital needs of affection and preservation of life to the point that the continuity of life itself would be affected if there were no families. The family link is a necessary ambit of human beings, but it is not enough. What really realizes and enables any connection is *the binding nature itself of the human creature*. Such link is dynamically a donation "movement" whose active characteristics could be summarized -following the anthropological view of our author-, in what might be called *transcendental openness* as personalization human condition.

We note, from the transcendental anthropology of Leonardo Polo, the distinction between two areas of linkages: a lower area manifested in terms of the *nature and human essence*, and a higher one which lies in the level of personal *intimacy* or *act of being*. Very close to the integration of such personal connection lies the personal fidelity which adds to the native disposition the donation and the acceptance of love. The personal root of the human bond is of such transcendence that activates in humans the ability to make decisions that commit the person in the present and in the future and remain integrally along the biographical life transcending the categories of time and space. Fidelity and commitment as a manifestation at the level of human nature and essence of personal intimacy reveal the nature and depth of the person as relationship.

2. PERSONAL AND CURRENT MANIFESTATIVE DISENGAGEMENT

The situation present in our time, as a sign of a truly complex and problematic postmodernity is that human manifestations in both personal dimensions- the native binding and acquired fidelity- come into crisis inside the person, forging serious consequences for the individual and social behavior, especially in the key area of the family. If we start from the premise that every person is born in a particular family, affected the personal sense of relationships, the consequent depersonalization of interpersonal relations in all areas becomes a serious and widespread problem and dramatic consequences, both personally and

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in all social relations. The progressive loss of the binding character of the person dissociates its unit and opening and projects in key areas of the social organization: first of all, in the family, and secondarily, in other basic social institutions of our time such as the university and the enterprise. Those three areas are referred –according to Polo-, as the central axes of human development in our society.

Individualism, moral relativism and massification, make up the paradigm of relationships that break any possibility of personal bond, leading to important observable psychological and social consequences. The lack of integration of the personality is expressed in various psychological symptomatology such as "the nightmare of loneliness", the lack of confidence, or exclusive self-confidence in the search for results, the lack of commitment, the frequent breakdown of stability and permanence of the marital and family relations, psychological instability, affecting the sense of unity, continuity and future projection of both nuclear and social commitments. The incidence of this problem in the structuring of interpersonal relationships is also relevant because dissociates the unity -at psychological and personal level the human relations in general and, in particular, the male-female relationship in different dimensions and social fields in which it develops: friendship, work, family, education, politics, human rights, economy etc.

In the family, which is undisputedly the founding social sphere of manifestative interpersonal relationships, lack of personal connection affects the free development of the spousal dimension of the human person, whose unitive relationship is love, with the consequent demonstration in the mode of communication, to love each other and commit one another.

Human persons, with their male and female essential types, are binding beings from the very beginning of its existence, in its *act of personal being*. That native openness is the unitive activity that at core level in both male and females realizes -at human essence level-, the unitive duality of conjugality, the unitive duality of fatherhood and sonship; the duality of filiation and fraternity; as well as dual unitive

activities in friendship, inter- subjective relationships, social activities, etc.

The binding sense of donal love favors the social meaning of human life, otherness, love of neighbor, and even the care of nature, other living beings and physical reality.

3. THE COGNITIVE METHOD OF PERSONAL BONDING.

Polo was a thinker whose life and work is understood not only by his vast intellectual and academic training, but also by the profound cognitive capacity arising from the unrestricted opening to the light of knowledge that it comes from reality of God.

The *opening* to the encounter with the truth attracts to the pursuit of knowledge moving from their usual paths to look beyond what is already known, and thus face problems and challenges presented to knowledge. In the words of Polo, "if (one) has discovered (the truth) must announce it freely. Implicit truth are as many as my life, so that the existence is the procedure to get them to light. It is the truth that handles the task; and nous starts with the task of articulating the living according to the truth". Indeed, it is the light of truth which calls the philosopher and urges him to take care of the questions that reality presents to him and activate *personal* resources that allow its knowledge.

The relevance that philosophical thought historically granted to abstract knowledge is significant for the influence in the various philosophical modern currents, whose principal authors Polo had studied in depth. The question he poses is whether abstraction is always the prerequisite for any human to know or if it is possible to follow other ways of knowing without abstraction. His thought focuses on continuing the Thomist findings that indicate abstract knowledge the correct way of knowledge to meet the material realities, "not for those which transcend physical reality, such as human knowledge in itself, the will,

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the soul, the so called the intellect agent, the so called separate substances and God, simply because these realities are not material and therefore makes no sense to try to know them by abstraction".

This is the center around which the discovered *method* by Polo focuses to access the real central issues (the *act of being* and the *essence* of the universe, the *act of being* and the human *essence*) method, which he calls *abandonment of the mental limit*. Polo means by *mental limit* the operational knowledge of reason, ie, that way of knowing that proceeds according to *immanent operations*, which, by knowing form a *thought object*. Immanent operation is *limited* knowledge, precisely because knows only the abstract object and does not *inquiries* into the reality of where that object is abstracted. It is then a closed knowledge because to form or present the object means presenting the reality and, therefore, stops the advance of knowledge. Polo calls the immanent operations with the term *presence* because they light or form the object in *the present*; also calls them with the term *to have* (from the Latin "habere 'have), because such operations are possessive object of thought; objects formed by them are the present, what a person *has* (to have).

It is important to stop and think about the scope of this proposal that provides access to a real distinctive knowledge of man. Operating or abstractive knowledge is commonly used by men in their ordinary life; which we use in practical life, for without it would exist the culture; it is knowledge, we need to interact as humans and act in the usual life. It is the first act of reason that refers to the real (the intentional thought object to the reality) of which it has been taken. The point where we want to stop -because refers to the study of the native opening and knowledge is the property of abstract knowledge, for which the object is exempted from the spatiotemporal conditions, and because the very act of thinking and the thought object do not involve time. This knowledge is higher than sensible knowledge, so one can know the material reality and intervene in it; one can know the physical time and change the temporal processes of physical reality. If one is in such noetic level you are not facing time and physical space, but exceed them, so when we exercise ways of knowing above this level, we can note that

there are human dimensions unaffected by the spatio-temporal constraints, such as *the personal intimacy open to transcendence*, and as they jump over them, can not be subject to those conditions.

The nature of human personal openness to divine transcendence and intimacy of others can not be known with objective knowledge, because it is spiritual and therefore can not be known by abstraction: the spiritual is not able to be abstracted. So we have to find other higher levels of human knowledge and detect which of them reaches the personal reality. It is a knowledge tied to personal knowledge, but that is not rational, but superior to reason. It is often said that abstractive knowledge is first in the reason, but if intelligence is natively passive, how is it possible that abstraction process starts?

It is clear that there is a difference between knowledge at the level of man or human nature, knowledge of the self (which Polo called human essence) and that of the person or personal intimacy (which he calls the act of being), because at the level of man we only capture one universal idea of man valid for all men. Instead, in the essence that community is reduced, because this level belongs to the acquired personality, and it is clear that not all men have the same personality, instead we, psychologists speak of 'types'. Indeed, at intimate or personal level there are not two people alike, but each is unique, new. Therefore knowledge levels should be separate.

We all speak in the first person in singular and say "I". So common sense tells us that we can say "I". But in that talk we must distinguish that refer to the speaker. The speaker is the *person*; what the speaker refers with 'I' is not the person or its intimacy, but those dimensions of self to manifest itself out. This leads us to distinguish between *intimacy* and the *self*. The person is one; it is radical in us, and unites all human dimensions we have. But the person is neither one nor all of these dimensions she has, because the person is *being*, not *having* or his belongings. Intimacy is the *person*; the person activates the *self*, that is, sets up one type or another of *personality* over biographical time. Therefore, we will have to find their own cognitive levels in the com-

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mitment-intimacy relationship; or commitment-I relationship and inquire into the study of commitment-fidelity duality. In the first mentioned, such level should be the personal level; on the other, it should be the level of knowledge of self, in which Polo distinguishes two dimensions: to *see-me* and to *want-I*; and find out if fidelity stays at personal level and activates the linking capacity of the human commitment or it is simply at the level of the self as a virtue that consolidates the unitive linking commitment through time.

In any case, to learn the practical issues that transcend life and temporality, it is necessary to detect the limit of rational knowledge in conditions to leave it and thus access through other levels of knowledge to human realities not sensible. If the mental limit of reason is detected, it is because the immanent operation is known by another noetic level above it; therefore, it can no longer be argued that abstraction is the highest level of knowledge, but there are other higher ways. Polo explains that, the habitual knowledge allows to detect and abandon such cognitive limit, and access to human realities through cognitive habits, of two types: the acquired *habits of reason* and *innate habits* above reason, which are the following three: *synderesis*, the *habit of first principles* and the *habit of wisdom*.

4. THE ALWAYS MORE IS BINDING.

The character of the *always more* is the *method* and the *subject*. This discovery by Leonardo Polo allows to reach the deep understanding of the human person. Now it should be noted that the character of *always more* is *binding*. According to the above, it is clear that, being a person is to be in a relationship, a very particular kind of relationship for Polo, which is not exactly causally; it is a relationship, that can be called *bonding*: the relationship of terms that can support symmetry. *Linking* at personal level reveals a relationship whose dynamic is, above all, a personal binding activity; this indicates openness and coexistence. Such openness is in connection with the activity of freedom, which exists actively linked to *openness to coexistence* and openness

to the rise of personal radicals to know and to love. From this perspective we can say that the human person, act of being or intimacy -terms used by Polo to refer to the personal core - configure a linking unit of the highest level of intensity because it shows its character of being always more due to be donal and contributor coexistence. There are hierarchical levels of intensity in the binding activity, so that could be indicated that the contributor means creaturely activity; and donal being is a transcendental unitive binding activity. Now, who contributes?, what does he contribute?, how does it contribute? What is the purpose? Answer of these questions exhaustively exceeds the present work but we can point out some items that may give some answers and summarize this study: 1) In the creaturely origin of the personal being lies transcendental activity of being. This activity is spiritual and binding. 2) The link with God is the nucleus from which derives the native linking of the human person to transcendence. 3) Being always more indicates the donal sense of the self, and as Polo says that giving is its offer to God not only of being, but the offer of works, "if I offer my work and God accepts them, gives them a divine value, which, I enter the glory not only in my being, but with my works". Therefore, the personal link is for the human being, a vital commitment that is the unity of life.

5. CONCLUSION

The anthropological root of commitment and fidelity from the transcendental anthropology of Leonardo Polo, is linking creaturely¹⁷ from which derives the native linking of the human person to transcendence. Such linkage is the core activity of the personal self, the sense of being personal, and to put it another way, its vital principle. While the commitment and fidelity are manifested in concrete actions and decisions on human behavior, we can say from the above, that its activity is not in the self and the human essence but in the unitive binding activity of the personal act of being, that effectively activates human essence. Personal activity and dynamics of the self that makes a

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commitment, that is a decision freely accepted, realized during the biographical time, by personal delivery that adds fidelity to commitment. Fidelity at the level of the self manifests -in the commitment- greater donal intensity; and at the level of intimacy, we think that fidelity could be the term to call the native link of the human person with God.

