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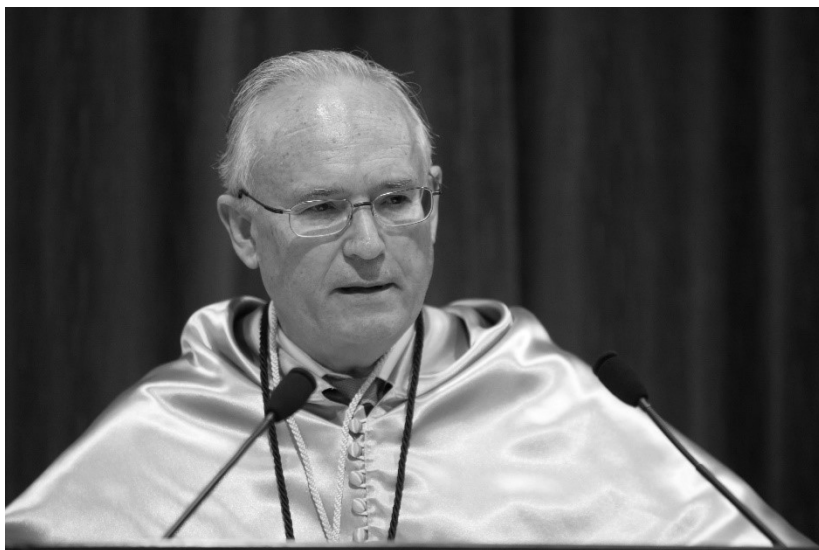
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Angel Luis González, Professor of Metaphysics at the University of Navarra, died suddenly but peacefully this last April 16, 2016. He was one of the principal promoters of the research and publications of Leonardo Polo's thought. Until his passing he was Editor-in-Chief on the Board of the *Complete Works* of Leonardo Polo and of *Studia Poliana*, the philosophical Journal on Polo's thought published yearly since 1999 by the University of Navarra. In a conference after receiving an Honorary Doctorate by the Panamerican University (Mexico), he said that Polo was the "university professor that I principally admired." He dedicated a good part of his life transmitting a passionate spirit for the truth in the university and fostered an unlimited search for truth. This issue is dedicated to his memory. May he rest in peace.

# Coexistence and Family Character of the Person

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**ABSTRACT:** Polo's incipient reflection on the family is explained from the notion of person as coexistence. First the filiation relation and the dual conception of the person are discussed, according to the author's explanation. Then a possible development of the spousal relationship and of the man-woman difference, beyond what Prof. Polo said, are presented. Polo. Finally some long-standing stereotypes on the issue are mentioned, seeking to overcome them.

**KEYWORDS:** Coexistence, Family, Filiation, Spousal relationship, Man-woman difference, Stereotypes.



In this paper I will present the issue at hand around Leonardo Polo's thought, whom I recognize as one of my masters. I had the opportunity to talk with him and check points many times and it is surprising how often he gave me the answers I did not find in any book! His high open-mindedness and intellectual humility made of him a respectful interlocutor who always broadened horizons. I will start with an excellent text of the author, with the title *El hombre como hijo*, (Man as Child), published in a volume on Metaphysics of Family, also co-authored by me.<sup>1</sup>

The first headings of this paper are designed as a short but necessary runway where, after the initial approach, I first review the main streams regarding the man-society relationship, and then I put forward some features of co-existence, to the extent they form the basis for linking the former to the family. Third, I start from the main opinion presented by Polo in the cited article, in a field that specialists on Polo know well. Fourth, I set out that person is more than being son or daughter, explaining a theory that, in my opinion, is already present in Mr Polo, but that he did not fully develop. Someone may not agree, but, as I said, I hold that there is clear evidence of this theory in his work. And the fifth heading reads: "Beyond Polo." I discuss there an issue not dealt with by the master, and in this regard I would like to recall a brief conversation I had with him. It took place in the 90's, when in the European and North American scene and ideology that later came to be called "gender ideology" had already reached its peak. As a first measure, this ideology questions the importance and meaning of the male-female difference, which, among other things, is crucial for the marital structure that originates a new family. In this context I told Mr Polo that I knew he was working on a dual anthropology and I suggested to him to deal with this duality, which is original, unquestionable, increasingly important, and that, if he should deal with it, next generation would be very grateful. He said that he had not thought about it, that now he had not enough time. After enumerating some of his pending works, he concluded: "You can do that."

Since the matter was urgent, I had no other choice but trying to do it. From the basis provided by Polo I studied several authors, particularly Karol Wojtyła, who had indeed thought about the issue. As I made progress I saw that Wojtyła's thinking could be founded on

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<sup>1</sup> POLO, L., *El hombre como hijo*, in CRUZ, J. (ed.): "Metafísica de la familia," Colección Filosófica nº 99, Eunsa, Pamplona (1995) (2nd ed. 2010), 319-327.



Polo's work, developing itself in its turn in a *crescendo* that reached far beyond. So I formulated my own proposal. Maybe it is not in the right track, in any case probably it is not a Polian one, because he did not say it, but I consider it Polian to some extent: I have followed in his steps and I acted as he wanted his disciples to act, thinking freely from the foundations he had laid. Therefore, the theories I am going to set out are both Polian and Wojtylian. I find myself, therefore, standing on giant shoulders', since without them I would not have been able to formulate what I have written.

## 1. FAMILY CHARACTER OF THE PERSON

Leonardo Polo, following a realist approach to issues based on a descriptive method, presents a first approach to the family character of the person starting from the corporeity. Max Scheler was the one who proposed that anthropology should start from the body, since it is its visible and undeniable dimension –surpassing this way old rationalist spiritualisms–, so as to access from it to its deepest dimensions. As it is known, his proposal is to start from the life itself in order to arrive through it to the world of spirit, truly the dimension where man distinguishes himself from animals. He considers that the ultimate background of the real consists of two basic elements of cosmos: *vitality* and *spirituality*, and man takes part in both. Man is *person* because he takes part in the spirit, since he possesses “the center of action in which spirit appears within a finite mode of being.”<sup>2</sup> Karol Wojtyla's anthropology places itself also in corporeity as a starting point, in his great work on the theology of the body.<sup>3</sup>

In this line Polo starts from the systemic character of the human body. His biped condition, which distinguishes him from animals, is correlative with having hands, spine, a face and a large brain mass with

<sup>2</sup> SCHELER, M., *Die Stellung des Menschen im Kosmos*, 1928. Eng. trans.: Max Scheler, *Man's Place in Nature*, trans. Hans Meyerhoff (New York: Noonday Press, 1961), 36-37. As Miguel Morey states: “In a first moment, in the so-called 'phenomenologic phase' of his thought, the world of life is analysed taking the *corporeity* as original, in an attempt to deny any dualism and transcendent materialistic and idealist points of view”: MOREY, M., *El hombre como argumento*, ed. Anthropos, Barcelona 1987, p. 94.

<sup>3</sup> Karol Wojtyla had already written his *Theology of the Body* before his elevation to the Chair of Peter, but he set it out throughout 139 Wednesday Audiences, between years 1979-1984. In his last English version: JOHN PAUL II, *Man and woman He Created Them. A Theology of the Body*, ed. Pauline, Boston, 2006, it was announced the discovery of an original Polish text, written before 1978.

the accompanying strong development of the nervous system. All these characteristics lead him straight to the family. With his own words: "We should not go too fast through these issues. We must become aware of the systemic character of man. Human brain cannot be understood without the hands, or the hands without the face, the shape of the skull and the spin. These are just some features, to which we should add many more: all of them make family possible, and *vice versa*. When we consider them in-depth, we realize that their systemic character is not just individual in nature. There are a number of linked features that make man naturally a family being, and that, without the family, hominization is not possible."<sup>4</sup>

From this premise, Polo analyzes some features of the hominization that show that "family starts with man, and man with family"<sup>5</sup>; it is an anthropological evidence. The hands and the arms, for example, make it possible not just to work, but to gather food, a thing that other quadrupeds do not do. Family presents itself also as a systemic reality. Thus, the fact that it takes many years for the human being to be viable – because he is born premature from the biological point of view –, explains other aspects of the reality of the family, such as the stability of the marriage bond.

From this we can draw a first conclusion: man is a being of family nature,<sup>6</sup> which leads to a second one: man is also culturally familiar, among other things because moral reasons add to biology, by reason of his systemic character. Hence, he states: "In evolution, the distinctive trait of humans is the family. But family is not a mere fact, but a correlation of factors. Without the family, history is not possible, or human traditions and classifications, or suprafamily organizational forms, or the differentiation of jobs (...), a whole range of elements that are mutually dependent. None of them has sense without the others."<sup>7</sup>

As a conclusion, he states that "the consideration of the anatomic structure of man allows us to realize that he or she is a family being. Family is a unity strong enough to be regarded as what we call an *institution*,"<sup>8</sup> that later will originate the society, and institutions other than the family, since man is also naturally social beyond the family.

<sup>4</sup> POLO, L., *¿Quién es el hombre? Un espíritu en el tiempo*, 3rd ed. Rialp, Madrid, pp. 71-72.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 72.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. *Ibidem*, p. 73.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 74.

This Polian starting point of the family character of the person is very relevant, considering the profound unity of human being. If, as we will see, what is most radical in man is being a person, that inner nucleus manifests itself in its more visible aspects, i.e., in its corporeal and psychic nature, which, in turn, is intrinsically cultural.

But, before proceeding, let us emphasize an unexceptionable assertion made by Polo, when distinguishing the social dimension of the family from the civil society. In his exposition what gives consistency to the social unity is the valuation and a normative ethical system, without which society disintegrates. Ethics, as well as valuation, is inherent to man. Nevertheless, “family is ethical without needing to produce a valuation system; it itself is intrinsically valuing. Valuation of the child is included in his or her mum’s love. Is that an ethical value? It is something more, also fundamental as regards ethics, but so inherent to man that it only disappears if he is denaturalized. It is only natural that a mother loves her child; there is no need for an invented valuation; the (family) valuation is the very theme of the relation,” and concludes stating that “family belongs to an ontological order; civil society is ethical.”<sup>9</sup>

From this ontological level where Polo places the family we can gather several assertions on its differentiation with regards to civil society. Let us highlight the following ones: “Family is a solid enough system (...), since it is based on very strong and innate radicals. (...) Family society has enough consistency (...) It is an institution or system of human relations with enough foundation. It would be nonsense to ignore it, since a good deal of human features are inseparable from family.”<sup>10</sup> (...) I insist, family has a *a priori* consistency; civil society has not.”<sup>11</sup>

In the context of the opinion I am going to hold in this paper, it is important to distinguish between the order where family is located and that where civil society is located. The latter is constituted through val-

<sup>9</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 79.

<sup>10</sup> Among these human features Polo places the social survival of the dead. Family is the institution where the dead man lives on. While the riddle of death as compared with that of immortality is impossible to solve on a sociological level, it is family who experiences and acknowledges that the loved ones do not just disappear. Cf. *Ibidem*, p. 203.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 95-96.

uation and ethics, that is, through action. Civil society is based on family, that belongs to other, deeper order than that of action, to an ontological order, to the order of being –therefore, beyond the action.

## 2. HUMAN BEING AS A SOCIAL BEING

We learned from Aristotle that man is social by nature. Centuries later human thinking found that man is more than an individual of a species: for that reason the notion of person –discovered in the 4th century of Christian era, in the theological sphere–, was soon applied to the human being, in order to show that person is the noblest creature in Nature.<sup>12</sup> Nevertheless, the winding *iter* of this notion is well known: the person, described as "*relational subsistent*"<sup>13</sup> when applied to God, loses both features, subsistence and relationality, in the famous Boethian definition,<sup>14</sup> as well as the analogy between the human and the divine person, which is an essential issue to develop the revealed doctrine about God's image in the human being.

After the recovery for the person of the transcendental level –of the being–, and, to some extent, of the analogy, thanks to Aquinas description of person as a "spiritual subsistent,"<sup>15</sup> futile debates of late Scholasticism, looking for the "formal" constituent of the person, ended up sterilizing said notion. In fact, it faded away in favor of the notion of individual, while the term nature came to a head confronted with that of freedom. The theory of society as a covenant and modernity's theory on politics, which fluctuates between individualism and collectivism, are based on the notion of free individual –who stands alone before the State. Polo asserts the following: "The human being is not an individual –someone undivided–, but an extremely complex reality, that calls for an inquiry on his hidden aspects, that is, on the connection of his faculties, which can fit or work loose (...); the latter occurs whenever a man reduces the scope of his interests, and this reduction is unavoidable in the isolation that entails seeking to live as a mere individual,

<sup>12</sup> Aquinas, I, q. 29, a. 3: "Persona significat *id quod est perfectissimum in tota natura*, scilicet subsistens in rationali natura."

<sup>13</sup> Cf. Aquinas, S. Th. I, q. 29, aa. 3 and 4.

<sup>14</sup> Boethius, *De duabus naturis*, 3, PL 64, 1343 C: "Individual substance of rational nature" / "individua substantia rationalis naturae."

<sup>15</sup> Aquinas, *De Pot.*, 9, a.4, c: Person is a "different subsistent of spiritual nature."

who just maintains relations with others in order to exchange resources.”<sup>16</sup>

After the violations of human dignity that occurred during the two world wars, in the twentieth century there was a bloom of studies looking to return to the person, in search of his radical dignity. However, more metaphysical philosophers have considered that personalists lack a solid foundation for the human experiences they describe in a phenomenological way. This is not the case of the philosopher we are talking about today. He is not the only one that has looked for and found a solid foundation for the person (in the being). We should mention here, among others, to Karol Wojtyła, and, firstly, to Xavier Zubiri. Let us say that this authors thought about the being not in an abstract or monolithic way, but as an open being, that already from Heidegger’s work started to be described as being-with<sup>17</sup>. Consider, for example, Buber, Marcel, Lévinas or Zubiri. I quote by way of example a short text by Zubiri: “Now, to exist is to exist ‘with’—with things, with others, with ourselves. This ‘with’ pertains to the very being of man; it is not something added to him. In existence everything else is enfolded with this peculiar form of ‘with.’”<sup>18</sup>

From this point of view we obtain, beyond the old Aristotle, a first illuminating conclusion: human being is social not only by nature, which is true, but more deeply can be said that he is social for being a person, because, as Mr Polo would said once and again, a person cannot be by himself, rather he says from himself at least another one. The fact is that a person is much more than an individual. After a painstaking historical study, Zubiri finds that the Middle Ages made the best achievements regarding the person, which later were spoiled, and he sums up saying that “in this articulation between *intimacy*, *origination*

<sup>16</sup> POLO, L., *El hombre como hijo*, p. 321.

<sup>17</sup> As it is known, the expression comes from Heidegger. When he was working out an analysis of the “Dasein,” he was seeking to overcome the isolation where the self had been left in Western philosophy, even in the thinking of his master Husserl, in spite of the efforts of his Fifth Cartesian Meditation. The title of the IV chap. of *Being and Time* is: *Being-in-the-World as Being-with and Being a Self*. He understands the “Dasein” as “Mit-sein”. The *Da-sein* is always a being-with-others. Cf. Heidegger, M., (1889-1976), *Sein und Zeit*, Neomarius Verlag, Tübingen 1927. Eng. trans.: *Ser y Tiempo*, FCE, Buenos Aires 1987, cap. IV, pp. 133-142. Eng. trans. used here: *Being and Time*, Joan Stambaugh, State University of New York Press, Albany, 1996.

<sup>18</sup> ZUBIRI, X., *Naturaleza, Historia y Dios*, p. 429., Eng. trans: Thomas B. Fowler, p. 320.

and *communication* lies the ultimate metaphysical structure of the [personal] being”.<sup>19</sup> It is in these parameters, as we will see, that the radicalism of the family character of the person can be discovered.

### 3. PERSON AS CO-EXISTENCE.

Polo’s anthropology, that he calls transcendental, starts from the rediscovery of the Thomist distinction between essence and act of being as two different but inseparable co-principles of every being. After an expansion of ontology distinguishing “metaphysics from anthropology on a transcendental level” –that is, distinguishing between the universe’s act of being and the man’s act of being, since “the being of man is not the being that metaphysics deals with (...), which does not include freedom,”<sup>20</sup>– Polo applies this distinction to anthropology, arriving to the belief that the person, as something different from the human psychosomatic composition transmitted by parents, is precisely the act of being, given by God to every man, that constitutes him as a gift, even for himself.

Following this line of thinking, Leonardo Polo incorporates into a single notion –*co-existence*–, the two intrinsic and inseparable aspects of person included in the medieval description of person as “relational subsistence.” On the one hand, person has value by himself –in a sense an absolute value–, because he is anchored in the being or transcendental level, and, on the other hand, a relational openness is constitutive for him. These two dimensions, that have received different names (Karol Wojtyla terms them “loneliness moment” and “communion moment” in his analysis of Genesis 2), describe the dual structure of the intimacy of the human person, which culminates in Wojtyla’s development of the “unity of the two,” created not only to live with one another, but to live “for” the other, with mutual reciprocity and responsibility for each other.

These two dimensions of the person –that belong to the human act of being– we are discussing about cannot be separated, neither are they temporal moments (the same occurs with essence and act of being). They structure, we were saying, personal intimacy as co-existence, for since his very existence everybody is ontologically opened to another:

<sup>19</sup> ZUBIRI, X., *Naturaleza, historia y Dios*, Alianza editorial, Madrid 1987 (1ª 1944), p. 475., Eng. trans. p. 367.

<sup>20</sup> POLO, L., *Why a Transcendental Anthropology?*, Leonardo Polo Institute of Philosophy Press, South Bend, Indiana (USA), 2014, p. 2.

that is the meaning of the “co-.” For this reason Polo states that coexistence does not mean that first one is oneself and then he has relations with others; coexistence means that person is dialogical, not monological in character. Person is radically open to other persons and, in the end, he or she is open to a personal God. That is why intersubjectivity is original, primordial, non-deducible; no person is what he is, by himself, he is instead originally and constitutively co-existent, open and, therefore, dual. With Polo’s words: “Contrary to Plato’s thinking, dyad has transcendental value, and as such is a gain: it is superior to *monon*. Monism is a burden to metaphysics, and in anthropology it is necessary to control it. Only then can the transcendental anthropology begin. Coexistence implies duality. If, from the point of view of monism, the prestige of the single being is admitted, then duality appears as an imperfection. And this duality must then be derived from the *monon*. For Plotinus plurality is something like decompression, or dissipation, of the one.”<sup>21</sup>

Leonardo Polo explains that it is not just that we are many, but that a single person is a “complete absurdity”<sup>22</sup>; not a contradiction, but something impossible. “A sole person would be an absolute disgrace,”<sup>23</sup> because he would have nobody to communicate with, to whom giving of himself,<sup>24</sup> to whom destine himself. Indeed, “a sole person is nonsensical. Persons are irreducible; but the irreducibility of the person (...) is not isolating,”<sup>25</sup> and that is why he maintains that person is ontologically *co-existence*.<sup>26</sup> Man’s act of being is not simply to be, but TO-BE-WITH, or rather, a “being-for” –in Lévinas’ elaboration–,<sup>27</sup> so that the relational openness places itself in the very same

<sup>21</sup> POLO, L., *Presente y futuro del hombre*, Rialp, Madrid 1993, p. 161. (Man’s Present and Future).

<sup>22</sup> POLO, L., *La coexistencia del hombre*, 1991 p. 33.

<sup>23</sup> POLO, L., *Presente y futuro del hombre*, p. 161.

<sup>24</sup> Cf. POLO, L., *Libertas transcendentalis*, in “Anuario Filosófico” 26 (1993/3) p. 714.

<sup>25</sup> POLO, L., *Presente y futuro del hombre*, p. 161.

<sup>26</sup> Cf. POLO, L., *La coexistencia del hombre*, in *Actas de las XXV Reuniones Filosóficas de la Universidad de Navarra*, vol. I, Pamplona, 1991, pp. 33-48. Elsewhere named “además” (Translator’s note: this Spanish adverb is a technical term in Polo’s philosophy and can be translated as ‘in addition,’ ‘moreover,’ or ‘additionally’): cfr. *Presente y futuro del hombre*, Rialp, Madrid 1993, pp. 197-203.

<sup>27</sup> Cf. LEVINAS, E., (1906-1995), *Totalité et infini. Essai sur l’extériorité*, M. Nijhoff, La Haye, 1961. *Ensayo sobre la exterioridad*, ed. *Humanisme de l’autre homme*. Fata Morgana, 1972. Ed. de poche; *Autrement qu’être ou Au-delà de l’essence*, Martinus Nijhoff / La Haye / 1974.

personal act of BEING. Therefore, there was never, not even at the beginning of Creation, a lone person on his own. According to the current exegesis, the lonely 'Adam of Genesis 2 is a generic. The concrete man was always, from the beginning, sexed and dual –male and female, as Genesis' first account of creation says (Gen 1:26-27). In this line, anthropology finds that a person always requires a plurality of persons, at least another person.

Whilst Kantian lucid statement that every person is an end in himself and can never be treated as a means is true, from a relational point of view this can be completed by saying that the person, as much as he is himself an end, is not an end for himself. The end of a person is always another person, that is why a person cannot just be a sole person, there must be at least two of them.

#### 4. FATHER, MOTHER, SON, PERSON NAMES

Going more deeply into the family character, the first Polian approach to this issue from the person is the filiation. Filiation configures personal identity, therefore, it is a feature that has a direct bearing on the person. Filiation is a type of openness that evidences a relation of origin. This points out another important difference between the notion of individual and that of person. The latter, since he says from himself a relation of origin, includes indissolubly in himself person and society, person and family. Therefore, a later voluntary covenant is not necessary to constitute society. Person is born (there is no self-generation) in a family, which is the nuclear society.

An attentive reading of Polo's article mentioned at the beginning confirms that, when he speaks of filiation, he refers *in recto* to divine filiation, and this for a philosophic conviction, since if the person is a unique and unrepeatable act of being, that donation comes directly from God. With his words: "Human fatherhood is not the primary one, but God's creative fatherhood. According to that fatherhood, the first man is fundamentally son, as can be seen in Jesus' genealogy according to Luke, which finishes in Adam, who springs from God (Luke 3:34). Man's fatherhood, in its highest sense, is attributable to God. This obviously implies that man is not entirely son of his parents, or not in all his dimensions. The spiritual character itself of every man does not come from his human parents but from God."<sup>28</sup>

<sup>28</sup> POLO, L., *El hombre como hijo*, p. 322.



We are also children of our parents, but our personal being is not given by them: parents transmit the nature, but the human being is much more than an individual of a species: this psychosomatic nature that each one of us is, is possessed by “someone” personal, someone who must be discovered by the parents because they do not know who she or he is. Polo’s thinking in this regard is illuminating.

Now, in which sense and how are we children of our parents? Or, put another way, what exactly is human fatherhood and motherhood and what relation do father and mother have with the child’s person they begot? When a mother gives birth to a child, is she just mother of his body and his psyche? No. Even though the person does not come from her or from the father, they are parents of the person being born. And the clearest and most evident example is Mary’s divine motherhood.

That is why Polo states that “‘father,’ ‘mother,’ ‘son’ are person names (...) albeit human person is not trinitarian. Human person can be designated as dual (...). The transcendental duality is to love-to accept (...); the third member of the giving structure —the gift, love— is not a transcendental of the human person.”<sup>29</sup>

A first consequence of what has been said is that father or mother are person names, because human fatherhood and motherhood, even though they are not the origin of the new person, their child, “say” a direct relation to the person of their child. In this regard let me bring up a text of John Paul’s II Letter to Families. There, based on Ef 3, 14-15, he explains that “in the light of the New Testament it is possible to discern how *the primordial model of the family is to be sought in God himself*, in the Trinitarian mystery of his life. “The divine ‘We’ is the eternal pattern of the human ‘we’, especially of that ‘we’ formed by the man and the woman created in the divine image and likeness.”<sup>30</sup> Hence –he goes on–, “human fatherhood and motherhood, while remaining biologically similar to that of other living beings in nature, contain in an essential and unique way a “likeness” to God which is the basis of the family as a community of human life, as a community of persons united in love (*communio personarum*).”<sup>31</sup>

<sup>29</sup> POLO, L., *Antropología trascendental II. La esencia de la persona humana*, ed. Eunsá, Pamplona, 2003, pp. 14 and 23.

<sup>30</sup> JOHN PAUL II, *Letter to Families*, 1994, n. 6.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibidem*.

If I allow myself to alternate –without mixing–, some theological reflections with philosophical ones, it is because I have learned it, among others, from Mr Polo. Philosophy and Theology are two different knowledges, but Polo, who was a creative mind, was convinced that the revealed data pose the biggest challenge to human intelligence, and that in the effort to understand them Philosophy has made the most significant achievements and advances –as is the case with the notion of person, or of creation–, that later add to mankind's wisdom heritage. These “theological” references are made with good reason, above all if we consider that we are dealing with an unexplored issue, which is only in its early stages, as is the case with the reflection on the family.

Every person, unique and unrepeatable, with an own act of being but open to other person/s, is first of all a child. There is no self-generation. This is an unquestionable fact. In any case, the first conclusion regarding the family character of the person has to do with the filiation. Filiation is a first evidence that the person cannot be by himself; he would not be a person without other persons, without at least other person. Let us say it with Polo's words: “What is man without others? Nothing. Man is a radically family-oriented personal being. For this reason, in this order of considerations, I say that freedom is filial and is destinal. If it were not, then the idea of ontological degradation would be unavoidable: the person would find himself only with that which is inferior to himself. If he does not find that which is 'equal' to himself, he is not a person.”<sup>32</sup>

## 5. HUMAN PERSON IS MORE THAN A CHILD

Now, the person is more than a child. Another unquestionable fact –because it is original, non-deducible– is that the child is man or woman (who in their maturity can be father or mother and whose love is, in any case, paternal or maternal). Certainly, the anthropology we are used to see so far considers topics in a general or asexual way, there is little or no thought about the man-woman difference. It is a forgotten fact.

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<sup>32</sup> L. POLO, *Libertas transcendentalis*, “Anuario Filosófico,” Pamplona 26-3 (1993) 714-15.

a) *The man-woman difference*

For want of philosophical arguments let us turn to information from the theological field. I will refer now to two texts of the Church's Magisterium. The first one, of 1976, states that sexual human diversity "determines the identity proper to the person," and that "the difference of sex" "is directly ordained both for the communion of persons and for the generation of human beings."<sup>33</sup> It seems therefore to indicate that being man and being woman has to do with personal intimacy and with the way of loving the others, that is to say, it has to do with the person and with interpersonal relations. In this line John Paul II continues making proposals and he goes so far as to say that sex "is in a sense, "a constituent part of the person" (not just "an attribute of the person")," and "proves how deeply man (...), with the never to be repeated uniqueness of his person, is constituted by the body as "he" or "she.""<sup>34</sup>

Polo approaches to this issue –but he did not develop it– when he points out that the person, more than other realities, puts before the eyes the obvious fact that a person cannot be a sole person. It is narrated in the book of Genesis, with words put in the mouth of the Creator: "It is not good that man should be alone" (Gen 2:18).<sup>35</sup> Well then, when the Creator adds: "I will make him a helper comparable to him," the Hebrew text literally reads : "I will make him someone as in front of him."

Thus, if the two main dimensions of human intimacy –the personal identity and the relationality– derive from the description of the person as co-existence, it seems that being man and being woman has to do with both features, since that condition is inseparable from each one's personal identity and, at the same time, that condition is shown in the way of having relations with others, especially in the fact of being in front of the other sex.

<sup>33</sup> Cf. CONGREGATION FOR THE DOCTRINE OF THE FAITH, *The Role Of Women In Modern Society And The Church*, n. 5.

<sup>34</sup> WOJTYLA, K., en *Varón y mujer. Teología del cuerpo*, ed. Palabra, Madrid 1995, p. 78. (English version: *The Redemption of the Body and Sacramentality of Marriage (Theology of the Body) – From the Weekly Audiences of His Holiness September 5, 1979 – November 28, 1984*, p. 27 (corresponds to Audience November 21, 1979)).

<sup>35</sup> Cf. POLO, L., *Planteamiento de la antropología transcendental*, in FALGUERAS, I., GARCÍA, J., (Coords.), *Antropología y transcendencia*, Universidad de Málaga 2008, p. 29. Also in *Miscelánea poliana*, n. 4.

Julián Marías shows, with the metaphor of the hands, that to be man or to be woman is all about “an *intrinsic mutual reference*: being a man is to be related to a woman, and being a woman is to be related to a man,”<sup>36</sup> so the difference between them is relational, like that of the right hand with regards to the left hand. Were there but left hands, they would not be left hands, because the condition of being left is given by the right hand.<sup>37</sup> Being man and being woman means to be one in front of the other, the difference of sexes allowing that, like the hands, we can knot together as in a hug.

On several occasions I have discussed these issues with Polians, who place the difference just in the sphere of the essence. But the Magisterium, and personal experience too, lead us to the need of thinking the duality within the person. Even though he did not develop this theme –he told me he had not thought about it and that now he did not have enough time to do it–, I find in Polian thought some indications for this development.

#### *b) Human person as dual*

Let us go back to the text where Polo states that, even though “father,” “mother,” “son” are person names (...), the human person is not trinitarian. He can be designated as dual.<sup>38</sup> As it can be noticed, family is a triadic reality: father, mother and child. The same happens with love. The structure of giving is also triadic: giving, accepting, gift.<sup>39</sup> However, in the human being the three is not transcendental. In the first case, in man only the male and the female are original and simultaneous; they become father and mother thanks to the child, but parents do not give their child his personal character; the child comes later and he or she is, in turn, a man or a woman.

In the case of love, Polo explains clearly that giving and accepting have the same category: “accepting is not less than giving” and “giving and accepting imply the gift. This means, in the end, that the structure of giving is triune and not dual. However, since human person is dual

<sup>36</sup> MARÍAS, J., *La mujer y su sombra*, Madrid, Alianza Editorial, 1987, p. 54.

<sup>37</sup> Cfr. also MARÍAS, J., *La mujer en el siglo XX*, Madrid, Alianza Editorial, 1980.

<sup>38</sup> POLO, L., *Antropología trascendental II. La esencia de la persona humana*, ed. Eunsa, Pamplona, 2003, pp. 14 and 23.

<sup>39</sup> Cf. POLO, L., *Antropología trascendental I. La persona humana*, ed. Eunsa, Pamplona, 1999, pp. 217-228.

or co-existent, but in no way triune, man needs his essence to complete the gifting structure. Man can only give gifts through his essence.”<sup>40</sup>

For Polo it is clear that “in transcendental Anthropology we attain the giving and accepting duality, a giving and an accepting characteristic of the human personal co-existing. However, if gift is to be understood as transcendental, we must admit a third element, so that duality is transcended. Thus, the fact that gift is personal is above the human accepting and giving. Person openness is the mentioned duality. However, created person is not capable of communicating to his own gift a personal character. Therefore, in man the gift must be understood as an operative expression or manifestation (...), that is, on the essence level.”<sup>41</sup>

Indeed, this assertion that human person is not capable of communicating to his own gift a personal character is consistent with the previous explanation that parents only transmit the nature to the child, whereas the gift that renders the child a person is given by God.

In this regard, Polo’s remarks on giving and accepting were developed in the sense that God is the one who gives –and later accepts– to the man, and the man is the one who accepts God’s gift and later on he or she delivers it to God. Now, appropriate as this may be, Polian anthropology appears to be lacking a deeper discussion on dual transcendentality at anthropological level, that is, in the relationships between human persons<sup>42</sup>.

This development is found in Karol Wojtyła’s thinking, that agrees with Polo’s initial approach and develops at the same time new aspects of it. Thus, both agree to clearly assert that giving and accepting have the same status, since, as Polo states, to accept is not less than to give. And Wojtyła teaches: “The giving and the accepting of the gift interpenetrate, so that the giving itself becomes accepting, and the acceptance is transformed into giving.”<sup>43</sup> Their approaches also agree in that person is a God’s gifting creation, since “every creature bears

<sup>40</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 220-221.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 223.

<sup>42</sup> I have further delved into this issue in “Amor donal y transcendencia,” in *Miscelánea Poliana*, 56 (2017). It will be published also as «Love as donation and transcendence,» in *Journal of Polian Studies* extraordinary number (2016) ISSN 2375-7329 (in press).

<sup>43</sup> JOHN PAUL II, The Redemption of the Body and Sacramentality of Marriage. (Theology of the Body) From the Weekly Audiences of His Holiness September 5, 1979 – November 28, 1984, p. 45.

within it the sign of the original and fundamental gift. (...) The concept of 'giving' (...) indicates the one who gives and the one who receives the gift, and also the relationship that is established between them. (...) In the narrative of the creation of the visible world, the giving has a meaning only with regard to man (...): *Creation is a gift, because man appears in it. As the "image of God," man is capable of understanding the meaning of gift in the call from nothingness to existence.*<sup>44</sup>

c) *The transcendental duality*

Now, from these common premises, we discover in Wojtyła an extension of the meaning of received gift. Should we ask which is God's gift for man, the answer would be longer. God first creates each person: that is the first gift, but another gift is additionally bestowed on man: the visible world, that has been created 'for him': "Man appears in creation as the one who received the world as a gift, and it can also be said that the world received man as a gift,"<sup>45</sup> since it would not have sense without him. But there is even more, there is still another gift –indispensable for the development of a gifting anthropology–, since when we analyze creation, man appears "as the one who, in the midst of the 'world,' received the other man as a gift."<sup>46</sup> Indeed, man is co-existent from the beginning, there are two from the beginning, man and woman.<sup>47</sup>

John Paul II emphasizes that, in order to understand the meaning itself of the gift in the human field, we must consider that human being does not live alone, but with someone, since, for man, human relationships and communion are fundamental and constitutive. In this sense his development –not found in Polo, although it is implicit in the

<sup>44</sup> JOHN PAUL II, *The Redemption of the Body and Sacramentality of Marriage*. (Theology of the Body) Audience 13th on 2.I.1980, p. 35.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>47</sup> As already known, there are two accounts of Creation in Genesis, and in the second one Adam appears to come into existence before Eve. However, current exegesis, proposed by John Paul II, reads Genesis 2 in the light of Genesis 1:26-27, where both male and female come into existence together. So Genesis 2 is a symbolic text that should be read without contradicting the previous passage. Cf. my work: CASTILLA DE CORTÁZAR, Bl., *¿Fue creado el varón antes que la mujer? Reflexiones en torno a la Antropología de la Creación*, Rialp, Madrid 2005. Also in *Annales Theologici*, Edizioni Ares, Roma, vol. 6 (1992/2) 319-366.

meaning he gives to co-existence– that man receives woman from the beginning, and she receives him, clarifies much: “The communion of persons means existing in a mutual ‘for,’ in a relationship of mutual gift.”<sup>48</sup>

Thus, he states several times that woman ‘is given’ to man by the Creator, and welcomed, that is to say, accepted, by him as a gift. Acceptance of the woman by the man, and the same way of accepting her –as the Creator wished, i.e., “by herself,” turn to be a first donation, so that the woman, in giving herself, “discovers” herself. When the whole dignity of the gift is ensured in this acceptance through the offer of what she is in the whole truth of her humanity, she reaches the inner depth of her person and full possession of herself.<sup>49</sup>

It is undeniable that, at the beginning of Creation, God creates a man and makes him dual, male and female (Gen 1:27). John Paul II added, referring to this: “‘He created’ means, in this case, even more, since it means that He gave mutually one to the other. He gave to the man the femininity of that human being similar to him, He made her his help and, at the same time, gave the man to the woman. Therefore, from the very beginning the man is given by God to other. (...) Woman is given to man so that he can understand himself, and *vice versa*, man is given to woman with the same aim. They must confirm their humanity to each other, getting amazed at their double richness.”<sup>50</sup>

On the basis that, at the beginning of Creation, God created man male and female, we could intuitively state that, when creating in the image of Himself, God, who is one in nature and Triune in persons, created a nature –the human nature–, dual in persons. This intuition is contained, moreover, in the Church’s Magisterium, it is the well-known “unity of the two” that John Paul II talked about, in the image of the “unity of the three.”<sup>51</sup> Polo describes human person as dual, and

<sup>48</sup> JOHN PAUL II, *The Redemption of the Body and Sacramentality of Marriage*. (Theology of the Body) Audience 13th on 9.I.1980, p. 36.

<sup>49</sup> Cf. JOHN PAUL II, *The Redemption of the Body and Sacramentality of Marriage*. (Theology of the Body) Audience 13th on 6.II.1980, p. 45.

<sup>50</sup> JUAN PABLO II, “*El don desinteresado*,” previously unpublished, now readable in LEONARDI, Mauro, *Come Gesù*, Ed. Ares, Milano 2014. Span. trans.: *Como Jesús*, ed. Palabra 2015, p. 265. Polish text in AAS, 98, t. III (2006, 628-638).

<sup>51</sup> Cf. JOHN PAUL II, *Apostolic Letter Mulieris Dignitatem*, 1988, nn. 6-7.

John Paul II adds that he is uni-dual, in the sense that there is an original and non-deducible difference with the characteristic of forming a peculiar unity. *Unity of the two*, male and female, that overcomes, as Scola explains, well-known bans of the past,<sup>52</sup> while demanding, in addition, an expansion of the Judeo-Christian teaching on the image of God.<sup>53</sup>

If we were to take the terms “father” and “mother” in a non-biological sense –it is also obvious that human fatherhood and motherhood are above all spiritual–, we would see they give shape to two ways of loving, as well as to two ways to look at reality or to transform it. Thus, if human person, individually considered, is always a child and this constitutes him,<sup>54</sup> he is in addition and disjunctively a man or a woman, and this constitutes himself or herself too. Every human person is a child and never ceases to be so: he has on one side a filial way of loving. But, furthermore, man’s way of loving is paternal and woman’s way of loving is maternal. Hence the fact that the three possible ways of ternary love contract to two in the human person, where, in addition, they are dual, since man can love as son and father, and woman as daughter and mother.

This means that, beyond the higher dualities that Polo has developed and Juan García masterfully explains,<sup>55</sup> there seems to be a new duality –the transcendental dyad–,<sup>56</sup> more radical than the former ones, that would affect to the very nucleus of the person and would fully confirm the Polian assertion that what is transcendental in man is the difference and, specifically, the duality.<sup>57</sup> I believe this intuition

<sup>52</sup> He refers, for example, to SAINT AUGUSTIN, *De Trinitate*, 12, 5, 5; and to AQUINAS, *Summa Theológica*, I, q. 93, a. 6.

<sup>53</sup> Cf. SCOLA, A., *L’esperienza elementare. La vena profonda del magistero di Giovanni Paolo II*, ed. Marietti, Milano 2003. Spanish trans.: *La experiencia humana elemental. La veta profunda del magisterio de Juan Pablo II*, ed. Encuentro, 2005, p. 36.

<sup>54</sup> POLO, L., *El hombre como hijo*, p. 325.

<sup>55</sup> Cf. GARCÍA GONZÁLEZ, J.A., “Las dualidades superiores de la persona humana”, in VV.AA. *La antropología transcendental de Leonardo Polo*, Unión Editorial, Madrid 2009, pp. 35-58.

<sup>56</sup> Cf. CASTILLA DE CORTÁZAR, Bl., *En torno a la díada transcendental*, in “Anuario Filosófico” 29 (1996/2), volume about Leonardo Polo’s thought, pp. 397-414.

<sup>57</sup> Cf. CASTILLA DE CORTÁZAR, Bl., *Consideraciones en torno a la diferencia en el orden transcendental*, in “Anales del Seminario de Historia de la Filosofía”, Universidad Complutense, special issue in memoriam of prof. Adolfo Arias Muñoz, Madrid 1996, pp. 463-483.



is crucial in Polo's thought, it is in the background of his repeated assertion, in opposition to Plato, that the dyad is richness; although he did not develop it, it is the underlying reason of assertions such as: "I hold that the *monon* cannot be a transcendental of the person. The personal transcendental is the difference."<sup>58</sup> Indeed he verbally stated so at different moments, saying that, in his opinion, given the fact that in God the three is transcendental, similarly in the human being the two is transcendental. Well then, analogously, it could be said that if in God the difference is personal and there are three different persons, in the human being the most radical and dual difference would be a difference in the person.

On the occasions I raised this issue to Mr Polo, he would answer: if every person is different, what greater difference can we ask for? But this question could be replied using Hannah Arendt's words: this amounts to a 'plurality of unrepeatables,' this means 'to be many,' but this does not explain why human person is transcendentially dual, by analogy with how God is transcendentially Triune. Now, transcendental duality does not annul the unrepeatability peculiar to every person. The fact that the man-woman difference is a transcendental one and that there is a son-daughter difference (which is obvious) does not exclude that each person, when created by God as unique and unrepeatable, is in other sense different to the others. Indeed no two men or two women are the same. The 'who' that each of us is has no double, so it can be said without a doubt that every person is different from the others.

## 6. BEYOND POLO: THE MYSTERY OF SPOUSAL RELATIONSHIP

In order to arrive to the end of the family character of the person, we should remember another fact, that the family is founded on the love of a man and a woman. Marriage is not yet the family but it is its basis. At the same time, the condition of possibility for marriage to exist is that there are men and women, with a complementary way of loving.

This is the mystery of the marital relationship, which, present in the Biblical poetry and texts, is claiming for an ontological development strongly linked to the reflection on the person. Nevertheless, the marital relationship is not to be identified with the conjugal relationship,

<sup>58</sup> Cf. POLO, L., *Libertas transcendentalis*, in "Anuario Filosófico" 26 (1993/3) p. 714.

even if it is its condition of possibility, in the same way that marriage is not the only type of complementarity between man and woman.

Let us start now an approach to a possible integration of the sexed condition with the person, in order to explain that in the human being the sex is a constituent part of the person and not just an attribute of his. The explanation can be found, above all, in the relational dimension. Every person, in order to love, is an opening of himself, but he can open himself or herself in a different and complementary way. This is what apparently occurs between man and woman.

We ask ourselves, what can the spousal character mean within an anthropological development –yet to be done–, more specifically, within a transcendental anthropology? How to go more deeply into this different openness? There is no other way than the phenomenological description that can be found in texts, especially in poetry. One poet describes as follows what is motherhood, putting in the mouth of a mother, who speaks to her son, these words:

«Don't go. And if you go, remember that you remain within me. In me, all who go remain. And all who go on their way will find their place in me; not a fleeting stop but rather a stable place. In me lives a love stronger than loneliness (...). I am not the light of those on whom I shine; I am rather the shadow in which they repose. A mother should be shadow for her children. The father knows that he is in them: he wants to be in them, and fulfills himself in them. I, on the other hand, don't know if I am in them; I only feel them when they are in me»<sup>59</sup>. One can see that this relation of the mother with the son extends to the relation with all the other persons, when she says: "*In me, all who go remain. And all who go on their way will find their place in me; not a fleeting stop but rather a stable place.*"

How can we progress in this different way of openness that man and woman have, between them and to the others? In a first approach, the two relational modalities of openness would be: the man opens to the others outwards, going out of himself, and the woman inwards, without going out of herself. In this sense, the way of procreating, although undoubtedly is not the only way of loving or the most important, shows in an expressive way what I mean. When man gives

<sup>59</sup> WOJTYLA, K., *Esplendor de paternidad*, ed. BAC, Madrid, 1990 pp. 171-172. (Original title: *Promieniowanie ojcostwa*. Text translated into English from the Spanish version. There is at least one English translation, *Radiation of Fatherhood*, by Boleslaw Taborski).

himself he goes out of himself. By going out of himself he gives himself up to the woman and stays in her. Woman gives herself but without going out of herself. She is openness, but receiving in her. Her way of giving herself is different to that of man, and complementary at the same time, since she takes in the man, his love and his gift. Without the woman, man would have nowhere to go: he would be lost. Without the man, woman would not have whom to take in: she would be like an empty home. Feminine loneliness would take a peculiar turn, because ontologically she is like the embroidery canvas where interpersonal communion is woven and settles. She is the one that unites, the center around which the others meet.

Woman takes in the fruit of the contribution of both of them and keeps it until it germinates and develops. All this process, although he plays a central role too, takes place out of the man and within the woman. Later she is openness for giving birth to a being who will have life on his own. Through the woman and in the woman, the man is in the son or daughter, too. The man is in the woman and in the son or daughter, but as out of him. Woman, however, is seat, home. Woman is in the child, too, but, above all, *they* are in her.

Well then, if metaphysics deals with substances and anthropology declines personal pronouns, the sexed condition within the person can only be expressed through PREPOSITIONS, the grammatical elements that describe relations. The preposition FROM would correspond to man, since he leaves himself to give himself to the others. This is precisely the preposition that the liturgy and the Church's teaching use to describe the first person of the Trinity: the Father. The preposition IN would correspond to woman, since she opens herself receiving in herself. It is the preposition that describes the third person of the Trinity, the Holy Spirit, who is a bond between the Father and the Son<sup>60</sup>.

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<sup>60</sup> We started stating that Polo did not think thoroughly on the issue and not even intended to do it, since, as he admitted, he had not enough time left. Nevertheless he raised objections to the proposals that were being made. In this sense he says: "For Blanca Castilla the Holy Spirit assimilates with the maternal function. I disagree, because I do not think it right to extend the difference between the sexes to God. It is more appropriate to hold that if the Father is generator, the Holy Spirit is elevator of the being": L. POLO: from his book *Epistemología, creación y divinidad*, Eunsá, Pamplona 2014, p. 268, note 53. Nevertheless, the authoress' approach is not to apply the difference between the sexes to God, but just the other way around: to regard this human difference as an image of his creator, in whom the only difference is the difference

The male person could be thus described as BEING-WITH-FROM, or COEXISTENCE-FROM, and the woman as BEING-WITH-IN, or COEXISTENCE-IN. The human person would then be, disjunctively, either BEING-WITH-FROM or BEING-WITH-IN. The main difference between man and woman would lie in this, in the fact of being two types of different persons, who open themselves to each other in a mutual way, different and complementary, in the image of the relational differences of the divine persons. In this regard the human Being would be richer than the Cosmos' Being, where the transcendental *par excellence* would be a unity without internal transcendental difference. This would not be the case in the human being, where the Being would transcendently take in the difference of the TWO, and the divine BEING of the THREE.

This difference of the sexed condition based on the openness constitutive dimension that belongs to the person could be classified as two ways of being person: the feminine person and the masculine person, terminology used for the first time by Julián Marías. And they could be philosophically classified as two anthropological transcendentals. They would be disjunctive transcendentals<sup>61</sup> that would mark a real difference –not just notional– within the personal human being, because the person can only be man or woman. The sexed difference would then be a difference in the very inside of the BEING. And taking into account that the human being is personal, it would be a difference right in the bosom of the person. Indeed, what is different to the person but is in his same level, must have the same rank, it cannot be, therefore, but other person. To state that the man-woman difference is a difference in the person amounts to fixing the difference definitively in equality. Man and woman are each a person. They have the same

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between persons. On the other hand, human person is always a child, be it man or woman, so both have an image of God the Son. This does not prevent the difference between both of them from meaning that, in man, there is an image of God the Father apart from that of the Son, and likewise, in woman there is an image of the Holy Spirit, apart from that of the Son.

<sup>61</sup> Duns Scotus spoke of the disjunctive transcendentals, and Xavier Zubiri adopted this terminology; both philosophers use them in a different sense than the one it has here, but the terminology is very appropriate. Cf. CASTILLA DE CORTÁZAR, BL., *Noción de persona en Xavier Zubiri*, Rialp, Madrid 1996, pp. 309-318 and 422-425.

category: the difference between them has the same ontological rank. Difference does not break equality<sup>62</sup>.

In short, if we asked ourselves who is the woman as woman or who is the man as man, we could answer by saying that the woman is a kind of human person, who opens to the world and to the other in a peculiar way, inwards, and that special characteristic can only be described with a preposition: the preposition IN. By contrast, the man opens himself outwards, from himself towards the other, and can be described with the preposition: FROM.

In this same line of thought, an important feature of relationality is that it has no sense without the opposite referent. In the present case, either of the two –the woman or the man– is already talking from himself of the other: since to be man has no sense if there is not a woman, and to be woman has no sense if there is not a man. Each one of them, in his or her difference, is the assertion of the other, as the book of Ecclesiastes says when praising God's works: "All things exist in pairs, one opposite the other, and he made nothing that was incomplete. One confirms the good things of the other." (Sirach 42:24-25)

For this reason, even though each one of them has value in himself or herself, as person, since the person is ontologically relational, the force of the sexed difference lies in what John Paul II explained in the Apostolic Letter *Mulieris Dignitatem* –going beyond well-known negotiations in the past– that the "unity of the two" is the fulfillment of

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<sup>62</sup> To suggest that man and woman are transcendently different can pose the doubt whether said difference would imply a hierarchy between them. Given that created real distinctions are always real, it seems it should be held that, natively, either men are superior to women, or women to men. Certainly a hierarchical difference can be clearly seen in some metaphysical levels: substance and accidents, matter and form, potency and act, essence and act of being. But if we are to take seriously that transcendental unity cannot be monolithic, as Polo pointed out in other places, this means that there exists a difference within the transcendental order— be it created or not—, and that there is no reason for the difference within that order to be hierarchical. Even though divine Persons are not created, analogically with regard to human persons we could use a similar argument: the Persons in God are not only several but different, so one should be superior to the other, which contradicts the Church's Magisterium: *nihil maius aut minus, nihil prius aut posterius*. In this regard Scola states, and I agree with him, that Revelation has unveiled within God a difference that does not modify equality, and only the acknowledgement of a difference like that permits to recognize the originality of the diversity of human condition. Cf. SCOLA, Angelo, *L'esperienza elementare. La vena profonda del magistero di Giovanni Paolo II* ["Elementary experience. The deep vein of the magisterium of John Paul II"], Marietti, 2003, translated into Spanish as "El hombre-mujer," in *La experiencia humana elemental. La veta profunda del magisterio de Juan Pablo II*, ed. Encuentro, Madrid 2005, p. 135.

God's image in the human being. And in the year 95, with a new twist, as it were, he said that it is a "complementary relational uni-duality." In other words, in the ontological field of personal rank, the Unity is not undifferentiated, on the contrary, without ceasing to be Unity, it takes in it the personal difference. And these differences do not hinder the unity for being relational, rather they make it possible.

The mystery of this unity is that it places both of them in a higher ontological plane than that of a sole isolated person. This is shown in the action when each of them contributes his or her specificity and places it at the service of the other. When masculinity and femininity combine their resources with a common goal, they boost each other; between the two of them they are able to achieve what they cannot make separately. Not just in the family, this happens also in art, sports, culture, work, the media, in the construction of history. Take as an expressive and enlightening example the pairs figure skating: how, apart from the synchronization doing the same exercise, if they bring their specificity into bear –he strength, she flexibility–, they are able to amaze with their achievements.

Indeed, there are just two kind of different persons in the human being, the man and the woman (each one a child, who can in turn be a father or a mother); and their fruit, the child, the three, will also be a man or a woman.<sup>63</sup> Thus man is not triune transcendental but transcendently dual<sup>64</sup>.

## 7. REFUTING LONG-STANDING STEREOTYPES

The above-mentioned approach, which regards the difference between man and woman –basis of the family character of the person– as two different ways of loving that configure two kind of different persons who confirm each other, being able to attain a uni-duality, might be mixed up with long-standing stereotypes.

Certainly, as it happens in all mythologies –behind which there is always a bit of truth–, a mix of truth and errors can be found in the archetypes of the collective unconscious, first talked about by Jung. It

<sup>63</sup> Cf. CASTILLA Y CORTÁZAR, BL., *Persona femenina, persona masculina*, 2nd ed. Rialp, Madrid 2004; *Persona y género. Ser varón, ser mujer*, ed. Universitarias Internacionales, Barcelona 1997.

<sup>64</sup> These theories are more developed in CASTILLA Y CORTÁZAR, BL., "La radicalidad de la condición sexuada," in *Acta Philosophica* 25 (1916/II) 207-228.

is philosophy's task to perform, through an appropriate rationalization, a hermeneutics as close to reality as possible, that separates the wheat from the chaff.

That is why the former approach, however seemingly dependent on old stereotypes, separates deliberately itself from some of them, once a comparison with reality disregards them as false. We could point out at least the following:

1. The first fallacy that still prevails in the collective unconscious is to consider that the difference of woman with regards to man is synonym for subordination, an issue defended by age-old androcentricity and that post-igualitarism continues to hold, with Simone de Beauvoir in the lead. That is why the so-called "gender ideology" has decided to root out the difference. However, here we affirm difference and we hold it is relational.

2. The second specter that looms over this difference is the prejudice of a supposed passivity of woman, in contrast with man, who is regarded as representative of activity. This concept has prevailed from Aristotle to Hegel, throughout Aquinas and unto Freud. Scientific evidence that refutes this assertion has not been assumed by a systematic anthropology. Well then, I hold here that femininity is another way of activity, not only as valid as masculine, but its condition of possibility.

3. Third, here I reject –as Polo did many times– the myth of the androgyne, according to which mankind, initially one, was divided as a punishment of the gods, and man and woman are now each a part of the whole. This myth has determined more than it should the interpretation of the Biblical passage of Genesis 2. Consequently, to defend the "unity of the two" according to Karol Wojtyła's exegesis, where both man and woman are, above all, persons, and each of them possesses value in himself or herself, in a certain way independent, free and with personal responsibility, this is precisely the opposite theory. If the androgyne is "one that becomes two," this interpretation finds that in actual fact they are "two who become one."

4. In contrast with the theory that woman is the complement of man, here it is held that man is in his turn the complement of woman. Both are mutually complementary, since what is mutual is precisely this complementarity.

5. Finally, guided by Leonardo Polo's big contribution to the transcendental of Unity –the necessity of its ontological expansion–, we

reject here the monolithic conception of unity. Unity cannot be monolithic, said Mr Polo once and again, and this issue is indispensable to develop anthropology, in particular the co-existence issue. This means to reject the old sophism of self-sufficiency as a model of excellence. Human fulfillment does not cloister itself in an isolated being, the height of perfection, according to Nietzsche's theory, rather it is found in the gift of self to the loved one, whose good is sought in preference to one's own.

## 8. CONCLUDING

This new vision of sexed duality is enabling anthropological advances, since those that so far saw it as an expression of the creaturely contingency turn now to value it as something positive, even recognizing in it a hallmark of the absolute, in the image of God, in Whom, supreme perfection, each Person does not monopolize his nature.

If we return now to Polo's statement in the first heading, that family belongs to an ontological order and, therefore, it belongs to a more profound order than that of action, to the order of being, then we will be in a better position to understand why the difference between man and woman, basis of the family institution, can be on the order of being too, without prejudice to the fact that this difference is present in the natural, cultural or essential dimensions of human life. Family is not about an institution being born in the level of action, even though its fulfilling entails multiple actions. Polo sees in the family a different character, more profound than that of society, because it is constitutive: he states that family is consistent *a priori*, before the action and the ethical ought, the latter, in his view, being the ground for the social order.

Just for the sake of comparison with other realities that Polo placed on the transcendental order –an issue now more commonly accepted, at least by those who have studied his thought in depth–, think of freedom, for example, which is constitutive of some human acts, the most important ones: free decisions. But it is not just that. Freedom is not reduced to free will, to the choice between good and evil. It is more than that. It is ability for self-determination and it is affirmation of what is good. And it is so because the received gift of person is donated for it to be the property of the person, who becomes responsible for himself. Polo asserts that “freedom must be placed on the transcendental level, (...) since to be free it is necessary not to be preceded by a



deeper or more radical entity, and, therefore, not to be grounded.”<sup>65</sup> Then, it is the person himself –who is act of being– that is free. The human act of being is constitutively free.

Something similar can be said about love. Of course, love is a human act, but it is more than that. In Polian anthropology love is an anthropological transcendental intrinsically united to the person; therefore, it belongs, beyond the level of action, to the ontological plane of being. This is how Polo puts it: “In human person to love is in the order of act of being and, therefore, it is higher than the desire-love or its sentimental version. Loving as personal transcendental is also superior to the transcendental good.”<sup>66</sup>

Now, the same can be said of the sexed condition. It is present in the body, it is present in the psyche and in all aspects of the action. Its transversality is an indication that the radicalism of its location is set not just in nature or in essence, but in the very personal being. Further, if the sexed condition is a condition for the family, and the latter is an *a-priori*, because it is an institution with enough foundation, the sexed condition will also be an *a-priori*. This would serve as a profound reason for Polo’s repeated statement that man is radically a dual being, that in man the difference is transcendental, manifested itself above all in the transcendental of love: in the ontological giving and accepting.

In short, according to Polian thought, if man is transcendentially dual, it is plausible that the dual difference between man and woman –indispensable for co-existence to exist– belongs to the transcendental level; this is not so with the child, who completes the gift structure, through the essence.

And, in order to finish with Polo’s theological remark at the end of the article that serves as initial inspiration for this study, we could say that, certainly, the image and likeness of God in man assimilates, inasmuch as he or she is a child, to being image of the eternal Son.<sup>67</sup> But, moreover, the man-woman difference (which enables fatherhood and motherhood, that are distinct from filiation) appears to need an expansion of the *imago Dei* as it has been developed so far in the Judeo-Christian tradition. This extension should look not only at their equality (the filiation) but also at their personal difference as man (father)

<sup>65</sup> POLO, L., *Why a Transcendental Anthropology?*, pp. 2-3.

<sup>66</sup> POLO, L., *Antropología trascendental I. La persona humana*, p. 221.

<sup>67</sup> Cf. POLO, L., *El hombre como hijo*, p. 327.

or woman (mother), which in turn presupposes to rethink the Trinitarian mystery, as the ecumenical question has already been demanding for a millennium now.