



Are We Free? The Personal Identity of K. Wojtyla in the Face of Hume's Empiricism

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Abstract

This article questions the basis of the actions of the human being to address the question: are we free or is freedom a simple illusion? For this purpose we elaborate a comparison of the concept of "experience" between Hume and Wojtyla; two currents that, starting from the same fact, experience, bring to the stage two very different types of human subject: while one understands their actions determined by motivation mechanisms, as a mere product of conditioning, whether external or internal, the Polish philosopher defends the person as the active principle of his acts. The key to the difference is in what is meant by *experience*. Wojtyla's proposal of *integral experience* reconciles the dynamism of human subjectivity, sensitive and affective, with an interiority not only exposed to stimuli but, fundamentally, as a personal interiority anchored in a structure of self-determination.

Keywords: Experience; Action; Consciousness; Freedom; Reality

Introduction

Contemporary philosophy is marked by the claim of hermeneutics when it warns, in the words of Gadamer, "the phenomenological urgency of trying to see things themselves."¹ Gadamer wants to make philosophy a bridge to and from human experience: "Philosophical discourse should emerge from the very conditions of human practice."² It is a reflection that does not seek to objectify the world and limit itself to its conceptual categorization but, rather, wants to see the human being immersed in this reality.

In 1923 the Vienna Circle was founded as an echo of the scientific paradigm that had been gaining strength and reducing the field of philosophical reason to logic and experimental verificationism. But around this new philosophical orientations also arise that want to recover the specificity of the human sciences and do so through the human experience as a field of study.³ To do this, philosophers such as Ortega y Gasset, Heidegger, Gadamer, Habermas and Zubiri propose relaborating the role of reason. Personalism also joins this current with Mounier, Levinas and Wojtyla,

1 Domingo A (1991) El arte de poder no tener razón. La hermenéutica dialógica de H. G. Gadamer, Salamanca: Publicaciones Universidad Pontificia de Salamanca, p.164.

2 Ibid., p.37.

3 Levinas affirms regarding contemporary philosophy that "no philosophical movement has highlighted better than contemporary phenomenology the transcendental function of all the concrete thickness of our bodily, technical, social and political existence" (Levinas E (2006) Humanismo del otro hombre, Madrid: Siglo XXI, Trad. Ricardo Ehrenberg, p.37).

apart from humanist proposals such as Arendt's.

It is not by chance that these philosophies converge with scientific advances and the progressive mastery of technique and productivism, since they want to recover the person and their existence as the center of philosophical problems and as the criterion of all human praxis. Wojtyła's project, although he doesn't elaborate it in a systematically way, coincides with the philosophy that raises a vital proposal of rationality. Wojtyła wants to give voice to the inner, personal experience, where the objective truth of the subjectivity, longed for by Modernity, can be seen and lived in its eagerness to rescue the conscience and the "I", end up deriving in depersonalizing idealisms.

Wojtyła participates, then, in this interest of hermeneutics in interpreting human praxis from a renewed language where concepts abandon the purely logical sphere to be faithful transmitters of reality in its breadth and depth. It is, therefore, to recover the concept of experience as a source of understanding. Experience will be the category that will enable Karol Wojtyła to enter the "elusive world" of subjectivity. Having been the reason for a skeptical and relativistic mentality, the experience is now a way of recovering the fundamental and exclusive value of the person in his subjectivity, a value that had been hidden in the functionality of the instrumental paradigm and its program aimed at a productivism where the person seems to be diluted in the results of his action.

These analyzes not only start from the action but also have strong repercussions on human praxis. Specifically, the educational proposals depend directly on the various anthropological paradigms and, depending on how human action is understood, a mechanistic (behavioral) way of proceeding will be proposed, or else a model for preparing the educational scenario as an accompaniment and relationship on a path traveled by the learner himself. Whatever the way of "stimulating" the learner, today we find many innovative proposals that follow the mechanistic trail in which it is expected to introduce content into the learner and extract certain results from it.

These and other questions (moral, political, religious, etc.) require an anthropological analysis from which to understand human freedom: does it exist? And, if it is real, what does it consist of? Next, we address these questions by bringing up Hume's empiricism to better understand the type of human experience that Wojtyła warns of in his comprehensive vision of personal reality. From the criticism and the distance that Wojtyła assumes regarding the empiricist position, which defines freedom as a spontaneous response regarding material and sensible goods, it is also noted his distance from the rationalist proposal of "freedom",

which it condemns the person to dualism, separating the purpose of the action from the process felt, lived and wanted by the person.

Freedom vs. Nature?

The recovery of human subjectivity by modern thought meant recovering the empiricism discredited by the continental intellectualist tendency. Let us make an analysis, specifically, of Hume's proposal, which is the background that also supports Kant's rationalism. For both, the phenomenal reality is perceived from a consciousness that reflects and objectifies the other-than-me, which becomes part of the subjective experience and mobilizes sensitivity. Such dynamism will be, for the empiricists, the source of human action and, for the rationalists, the limit for free and rational action, which is why it requires its separation from volitional dynamism.

Next, we confront this proposal with the concept of "experience" more typical of realistic phenomenology to delve into the concept of "action" proposed by Wojtyła. When the latter, akin to the empirical (not empiricist) proposal, warns that it is the experience that reveals the condition of the person, he also states that "it is convenient to better specify what experience is involved. As we know, the notion of experience is not strictly univocal."⁴

Consciousness: Reflection or Self-possession? Solipsism or Opening?

According to Hume, the human being experiences the world and himself insofar as he perceives stimulations: "When I direct my reflection on myself I can never perceive this self without one or more perceptions, nor can I perceive anything other than these perceptions. Thus, it is the composition of these that constitutes the self."⁵ The human being is, for empiricist anthropology, an accumulation of lived experiences or, rather, suffered. Personal identity does not seem to have a foundation outside of consciousness; the unity of that "link or collection of different perceptions that succeed one another with inconceivable rapidity and that are in perpetual flux and motion"⁶ comes from memory: "Memory [...] must be considered, for this reason capitally, as the source of personal identity."⁷

4 Wojtyła K (1997) *Mi visión del hombre*, Madrid: Palabra, Pilar Ferrer (trad.), p. 322.

5 Hume D (2001) *Tratado de la naturaleza humana*. Albacete: Biblioteca de Autores Clásicos, Vicente Viqueira (trad.), p.443, Edición Electrónica: www.dipualba.es/publicaciones, dispuesto el 18/04/2015.

6 *Ibíd.*, p.191.

7 *Ibíd.*, p.197.

For the clarification of what is and is not, properly speaking, “experience”, Wojtyła elaborates an analysis of consciousness given that, he explains, “consciousness has an essential meaning to affirm the subjectivity of man, since it is consciousness that allows man experiences himself as a subject.”⁸ Through the analysis of consciousness, what is proper to personal experience is unraveled so that action can be better understood.⁹

According to Hume’s approach, man perceives his subjectivity to the extent that he is aware of the experiences he undergoes: “Our notion of personal identity proceeds entirely from the smooth and uninterrupted progress of thought along the series of ideas linked.”¹⁰ For Wojtyła, subjective experiences, indeed, “are linked to the reflection function of consciousness [...] it depends, to a greater extent, on concrete bodily sensations.”¹¹ Consciousness, thus, shows the human being as a subject of psychosomatic experiences. However, for Hume, consciousness “is nothing more than a thought or a reflexive perception.”¹² “Reflexive” means here (in a very different sense from the one Wojtyła will deal with), the pure reflect of emotion.

In the process of self-awareness, the human being becomes aware of his own subjectivity. However, in Wojtyła’s philosophy, “person” is not only that subject who perceives and lives, but is perceived and lived by himself in all his experiences thanks to another function that also notices in consciousness different from the role of “reflex”, like a mirror. This is what he calls the “reflexive” function, the action of coming up to ourselves.

The function of reflect the experiences refers only to the body and the psyche, which feel affected. At the level of consciousness as a reflexion, not reflect, self-knowledge takes place, “the *ego* of the acting subject is cognitively perceived as an object”¹³ so that the person is aware of what he experiences. So that, in a pure level of reproducing, “the objective meaning of the subject is maintained [...] but it does not configure its *ego*.”¹⁴ One’s own experiences can be the object of knowledge for oneself, but this does not imply the capacity for self-knowledge itself, because the person

still does not have himself but has what happens to him.

We can establish a comparison of this difference between reflection and reflexivity of consciousness with Freudian psychoanalysis and Viktor Frankl’s existential analysis, respectively. While, for Freud, the work of introspection consists in making the patient aware of his impulsiveness, for Frankl, the essence of consciousness is the experience of the “I” itself: “What here, in the existential analysis, seems to me to me consciously it is not an impulsive something, relative to the id, but my own ego; [...] it is the self that becomes aware of itself: it comes to be aware of itself, it comes... to itself.”¹⁵

These are two perspectives consistent with his anthropological approach: Freud’s impulsive human being versus Frankl’s responsible human being. Such approaches are similar to the anthropological proposal of Hume’s empiricism and Wojtyła’s personalism, respectively, and depend on what each one understands as fundamental in the personal being, namely: the psychosomatic and passive experiences of subjectivity or the experience of the “I” from its transcendent structure.

Wojtyła makes heard that other fundamental function of consciousness that expresses the transcendence of man, that which “allows him to experience his own subjectivity in a special way.”¹⁶ Through consciousness, the human being takes place as a *person*: “The person is capable of perceiving the peculiarity of his dynamisms thanks to the consciousness [...] in which the subject gives himself as ‘I’.”¹⁷ The subject, thus, has experience of his subjectivity in a special way: coming from his structure of self-control and self-possession, an experience that “allows him to designate himself through the pronoun *I*.”¹⁸ The identity takes shape and “in this manifestation consists precisely the reflexive function of consciousness.”¹⁹ Through reflexion, the person is not only aware of his own experiences, but has himself in such experiences, that is, as an agent subject capable of action.

Thus, reflexive consciousness, returning to the subject, gives it a properly personal character:

Consciousness, insofar as it merely reproduces and is nothing more than a reflected image, remains objectively remote from the ego; however, when it becomes the basis of experience, when experience is constituted thanks to

8 Wojtyła K (1982) *Persona y acción*, Madrid: Ed. Biblioteca de Autores Cristianos, Jesús Fernández Zulaica (trad.), p.70.

9 “En este estudio la vía de acceso a la conciencia se basa en la experiencia, que hace posible la objetivación de todo el dinamismo humano.” (Wojtyła, K. 1982, op.cit., p.52).

10 Hume D (2001) op.cit., p.196.

11 Wojtyła K. (1982) op.cit., p.63.

12 Hume D (2001) op.cit., p.444.

13 Wojtyła K (1982) op.cit., p. 46.

14 *Ibid.*, p.58.

15 Frankl V (1977) *La presencia ignorada de Dios. Psicoterapia y religión*, Barcelona: Herder, J. M. López Castro (trad.), p.20.

16 Wojtyła K (1982) op.cit., p.52.

17 *Ibid.*, 55.

18 Wojtyła K (1982) op.cit., p.55.

19 *Ibid.*, pp. 57-58.

its reflexivity, the objective detachment disappears and consciousness penetrates the subject.²⁰

Reflexion makes it possible to turn mere experiences into experiences in an intimate relationship with one's own being. Through this function of consciousness, the person has his own subjectivity as available to himself. The person experiences his own "I" as a real and concrete subject. And this identity is no longer based on the reflection of the experiences suffered, but on the transcendence from which the person experiences himself. In this way, consciousness provides the subject with a specific type of relationship with himself and with what surrounds him.

All relationship with the world and with oneself originates, in this way, in self-awareness and self-possession. Joseph Pieper explains this when he states that the characteristic of the person's relationship with the world is that it is accompanied by "a maximum capacity to inhabit oneself, to be-in-oneself, to be independent, to be autonomous."²¹ Without a person who has and relates to himself, what remains is a dis-related being, focused on contact with things reduced to stimulation, a subject whose dynamism consists in the psychosomatic reaction to all stimulation; "That is why the reflexive function has a fundamental importance turning consciousness on the real subject"²²; "the consequence of this reflexive turn of consciousness is that this object [...] also has the experience of itself as a subject."²³

What it comes to say, in short, is that consciousness is more than the meeting place of perceptions and thoughts, it does not imply the closure of the subject to his world as a mental and solipsistic reality. Since "this sensory reflection in the psyche is essentially distinguished from the reflexive function of consciousness"²⁴, we can say that consciousness participates in the experience of the real being that is the person in its structure of self-mastery and self-possession.

We also find this distinction in the function of consciousness indicated in the fundamental difference between the experience of acting and that of suffering something; It is about two modalities of human experience corresponding to the different dynamisms that make up the person and that it synthesizes (analytically) into two types: the dynamism of subjectivity proper to the body and the psyche and the dynamism of efficacy, belonging to language

of the human will and intelligence.

In light of Wojtyła's approach, "a sensation psychically 'happens' within the human *ego* [...] in this way subjectivity is revealed to consciousness."²⁵ The subjective dynamism expresses the experience of the "happening" of internal experiences. This is what Hume gives an account of when he says that, in directing his reflection on himself, "I can never perceive [...] anything more than these perceptions."²⁶ The experience, for Hume, depends on the presence of a specific object that causes an experience originating in perception. Hume is speaking, then, of experiences in which *something happens* in the human being, when "it is not the human being, but the 'something' that is presented as an agent, while the man is no more than a passive subject. It passively experiences its own dynamism."²⁷

When the human being experiences the emotion of having been affected by something in the form of a "pleasant" or "unpleasant" experience, provoking the psychosomatic movement and activation, the person is aware that he is not acting but that something *happens* in her. Limited to this way of understanding action, what is proposed is a determinism. According to Wojtyła's thesis, it is "a fundamental simplification that reduces the experience of the person"²⁸ since it does not differentiate the condition that moves the will from the will of the person as the principle of action. *Action*, in the sense that Wojtyła defends, reflects the effectiveness of the person.

We could say, then, that the reflection of psychosomatic experiences does not seem to be enough for action. Wojtyła explains that it is not a question of a simple awareness of what our psyche and our body suffers, but of the self-possession of ourselves so that we are not only the object of knowledge for ourselves, but we become agents of action. In this way, everything that occurs in the psycho-corporality enters into interaction with the will and the meaning that the person himself gives it.

The "having oneself" of the transcendent subjectivity of this way to understand the human being, is also expressed in Crosby, and it means being present to oneself: *self-presence*. This includes and exceeds cognitive intentionality. Moreover, self-presence is the condition for the existence of human intentionality, properly human knowledge, since it allows any gesture of transcendence; "My self-presence does not compete with my transcendence towards the object, rather,

20 Wojtyła K (1982) op.cit., p.58.

21 Pieper J (1983) *El ocio y la vida intelectual*. Madrid: Rialp, Alberto Pérez, Manuel Salcedo, Lucio García y Ramón Cercós (Trad.), p.114.

22 Wojtyła K (1982) op.cit., p. 56.

23 *Ibíd.*, p. 54-55.

24 *Ibíd.*, p. 267.

25 Wojtyła K (1982) op.cit., p. 269.

26 Hume D (2001) op.cit., p.443

27 Wojtyła K (1982) op.cit., p.283.

28 *Ibíd.*, p. 156.

it makes it possible and perfects it.”²⁹

Crosby, who develops an integral anthropology based on the reading of Wojtyła, explains that, through reflexive consciousness, the person does not “lose” himself externally, but his attention is also a relationship thanks to remaining, at the same time, in itself: “I who address the object am present to myself when addressing it. However, this self-presence, far from being lost in the object of my act, never completely disappears; my being-aware of something else never cancels that self-presence.”³⁰

Compared to Wojtyła’s proposal, Hume is limited to reflecting subjectivity as a recipient of experiences and the person as aware and corroborating of such experiences. Thus, it synthesizes subjectivity, in the contents of the psychosomatic reflected in consciousness. In this way, “the possibility of elaborating a certain unitary and integral conception of experience, also operative in the field of ethics [...] seems impossible within the radical ‘empiricist’ position.”³¹

In short, according to Wojtyła’s philosophy, it is possible for the person to live as “interiority”, in his capacity to say “I”. It is about “an ‘I’ differentiated from the so-called states of mind [...] that arbitrarily intervenes in them [...] that such ‘I’ is fictitious.”³² Wojtyła picks up from Modern Philosophy the perspective of subjectivity, the look at the inner reality of the human being, but finds, in it, the gateway to an anthropological metaphysics that speaks of the human being as a person. Therefore, it collects, while it goes beyond, the ontological foundation of the classics and speaks of the person as an objective condition in which the human being exists as a being that belongs to himself.

Now, doesn’t this commitment to self-determination have a certain naive character? The projection freely thought and wanted by one is often colored by unconscious conditioning. In fact, Hume will affirm that freedom is nothing more than an illusion, since there is always a fundamental determination, whether or not it is explicit.

Corporality and Freedom. From the Rationalist Opposition to the Personalist Integration

Far away is Wojtyła’s personalist proposal of contrasting freedom with the presence of conditions, whether external

or internal. Being an agent of one’s own actions does not occur outside the psychosomatic experience of subjectivity. What Wojtyła affirms is the interaction between the two dynamisms at the moment of action: “It is undeniable that human acts are accompanied – precisely [...] by the good or evil contained in them – by a fairly deep emotional experience.”³³

Empiricism starts from the experience of the force exerted by material values on oneself, Wojtyła explains it by pointing out that “the human being feels in a more intense and direct way what is material, what falls under the senses and satisfies them.”³⁴ That is why Hume, giving voice to this experience, proposes hedonistic ethics: “Nothing can be more real or interest us more than our own feelings of pleasure and pain, and if these are favorable to virtue and unfavorable to vice, they cannot be required nothing else for the regulation of our conduct and life.”³⁵

In the light, solely, of the emotional impact, Wojtyła understands that not only self-knowledge but also the capacity for self-determination is truncated by the “mental objects” that are presented to consciousness and that spontaneously arouse pleasure or pain. Wojtyła interprets that human experience, limited to the aspect expressed by Hume, is the result of an “emotionalization of consciousness”, which consists of “a limiting phenomenon [...] the human being lives absorbed in his emotion, excitement or passion.”³⁶ But even it’s possible to be limited by that situation, it doesn’t mean it’s the only way to experience the pleasure or the pain aroused by a value.

Scheler’s phenomenology accounts for this way of living “affected” by the world around us, but not as “objects” for reason, nor as “stimuli” for the organism, but as “values” for human sensitivity. A sensibility that Zubiri qualifies as “intelligent” since it does not occur outside of properly human rationality prepared for the confrontation of the reality as real. From this expansion of the behaviorist approach, we speak at the phenomenological level of significant situations as an interpretive key to actions and ways of life. This experiential perspective notices a fundamental difference between animal and human behavior: while animals interact with the environment, human beings establish a relationship with their world.

In this regard, Julián Marías points out that not even the psycho-organic dispositions of human beings are resources

29 Wojtyła K (1982) op.cit., p. 116.

30 Crosby JF (2007) op.cit., p.114.

31 Wojtyła K (1997) op.cit., p.323.

32 Scheler M (2010) “Fenomenología y metafísica de la libertad” en Amor y conocimiento y otros escritos, Madrid: Palabra, Sergio Sánchez-Migallón (Trad.), p.303.

33 Wojtyła K (1982) op.cit, p. 350

34 Wojtyła K (1982) op.cit, p. 80.

35 Hume D (2001) op.cit., p. 339.

36 Wojtyła K (1982) op.cit., p. 287.

that are used in the same way as in animals. The dynamism of the person, he says, is “elastic”, that is, it goes beyond the limits of the somatic. A person, for example, is capable, freely, of breaking their family ties, choosing their relationships, exposing themselves to danger, giving up food or celebrating something around the table and a long etcetera of actions that express a human world made up of meanings that do not seem to be explained, solely, from a stimulus mechanism, not even imaginative, since the symbolic imagination itself cannot be generated from merely receptive mental levels.

Thus, an insurmountable distance between people and animals is defended and is manifested in the fact that human life is a “biographical life that can be told, can be narrated.”³⁷ Human behavior exceeds the limits of the “surrounding world”, an expression that Joseph Pieper de von Uexküll picks up, and means “reality cut delimited by the vital purpose of the individual or the species.”³⁸ People do not have a world limited by the “species” and its psycho-physical determinations; people have a world of realities: the facts are not neutral data or subjected to an interpretation of biological purpose, but are loaded with meaning and existential sense, by which the person understands himself and configures his life in the form of “draft”. This is the “world” that opens to the eyes of the human being and for which Zubiri (1998) will express it as an *animal of realities*.

The relationship with reality is, for realistic phenomenology, a response to reality as it is presented to the human being from his sentient intelligence. Zubiri explains that this reality is shown as multidimensional, so that the person awakens a “multiple” activity: the various dynamisms participate, that is, the psychosomatic or volitional-intellectual language, with a symbolic tint. The level of influence of one or another dynamism varies in action, but such diversity does not deny its integrity, what it shows is its complexity:

In all his vital phases, then, humans has only one and the same psycho-organic activity with variable dominance of passivity and actionality in some notes as opposed to others. There is no action of the psyche ‘on’ the organism, nor of the latter on the former, nor is there a parallelism between the two, because what there is, is not that ‘both’. What there is, is a single psycho-organic structure whose unitary activity unfolds variably throughout life.³⁹

The different moments or languages of the structure

37 Marías J (1986) “La cuestión radical de la antropología. Hombre y vida humana”, ¿Qué es el hombre?, Ciencias del hombre, n^o7, Madrid: Instituto de Ciencias del Hombre, p.10.

38 Pieper J (1983) op.cit., p.106.

39 Zubiri X (1998) Sobre el hombre, Madrid: Alianza Editorial, p. 494.

preserve integrity in action because they are an intrinsic part of the reality of the person, who is one. That is to say, it is a “structural system” that acts according to the reality of the person, of this being “himself”: “In his very structuring, person is a substantivity that is only viable because it is open.”⁴⁰ So, this openness to reality as reality is what is characteristic of the type of substantivity that the person is. Its multiple dynamism is “open”: “The structural system of human notes is such that, by its structuring, the totality of notes [...] is determined [...] only inconclusively.”⁴¹

The inconclusiveness of the notes explains that the organs are not determined to move, grasp or understand based on the instincts and their role in satisfying the needs. The “biological weakness” of the human being, as has been said so many times from the natural sciences, could be said, from the personalist philosophy, which is rather, the opening of the corporeality to reality. The indeterminacy of the notes, both organic and psychic, is determination to reality itself. That is why Zubiri affirms that man is an “animal of realities”.

In short, the corporeal condition of the human being consists, in his case, in a condition of openness, of “unfinished impulses” (indeterminate), receptive to the real and not only to the immanence of his needs. Wojtyla expresses something similar when he says that “in the field of activity [...] the spontaneous tension to value is linked in the process of the will [...] to the specific ‘need’ of choice”, a need that “is not opposed to freedom, rather, on the contrary, it consists properly in freedom.”⁴²

Wojtyla wants to make the full dynamism of the human being heard and finds the fact that he is a “person”. The subjective psychosomatic dynamism now does not seem to be the enemy of the *noumenon* since it is no longer a matter of two parallel worlds, but of a structure expressing itself as effective dynamism, a personal reality capable of carrying out actions. There is a clear extension of empiricism, from which the rationalist proposal itself starts, with the philosophical proposal of integral experience. That is why Levinas will affirm that No philosophical movement has highlighted better than contemporary phenomenology the transcendental function of all the concrete thickness of our bodily, technical, social and political existence but, for that very reason, the interference in the ‘fundamental historicity’.⁴³

All personalist proposals start from the historicity, or

40 Ibíd., p. 75.

41 Ibíd.

42 Wojtyla K (1998) op.cit., p. 139.

43 Levinas E (2006) “La significación y el sentido”, en Humanismo del otro hombre, op.cit., p.37.

worldliness, of the human person whose circumstances cannot be ignored due to the very force that the concept of “corporality” acquires. Wojtyła’s thesis is concentrated in the following words: “It is one thing to be the subject, another is to be known (that is, objectified) as a subject and another to experience one’s own self as the subject of one’s own acts and experiences.” On the foundation of an ontic reality that is a reality of subjective and transcendent structure, it is possible to know oneself but, in addition, to have oneself as an active principle of actions that are, to this extent, personal. From this perspective of being a person, the foundation of free actions, we expose the subjectivist perspective of freedom, analyzing the problems of this proposal of de-substantiated freedom.

A Subject without Reality. The Trap of Subjectivism

Hume speaks only of a conscience that is limited to reflecting the activations of the psychosomatic dynamism of the subject. That experience does not cease to be true, however, “when consciousness is made absolute [in this function], at the same moment it ceases to explain the subjectivity of humans [...] with this approach, experiences and values lose their condition of reality.”⁴⁴ Limited to a consciousness in its function of reflection, as Hume does, “this experiential ego would not represent more than a content of consciousness.”⁴⁵ Hence his empiricism and his idealistic empiricism.

For his part, Wojtyła’s consciousness concept “does not absorb into itself or obscure this being, its dynamic reality, but, on the contrary, discovers it ‘inward’, and, therefore, reveals it in its difference specific and singular correction.”⁴⁶ The human being has the experience of being a person, of being an “I”. On the contrary, a sense of experience that does not overcome its subjectivist trait shows the subject not being “itself”, but exposed, defenseless, a state of *alienation*.

The consequences that our author finds for the concept of freedom that emerges from the subjectivism of Hume are big: “Freedom as an attribute of the person, as a quality of the will, vanishes in this subjectivist conception of the person”, since it has as a more specific characteristic “the absolutization of the subjective moment, of lived experience and of consciousness as its constant components.”⁴⁷ The presentation of the object and the response mechanism that the object provokes in the subject take the leading role,

“in this way we go from understanding motivation as will to understanding it as instinct.”⁴⁸ The personal peculiarity of the human being is trivialized, he is at the service of the product. The echo of this concept of freedom can still be heard in contemporary culture:

It is often considered that the only authentic exercise of freedom consists in choosing from among different possibilities the one that suits us best; so that, the greater the range of possibilities, the freer we will be. The measure of our freedom would be proportional to the number of possible options.⁴⁹

Philippe speaks of the difference typical of the philosophical tradition between “external freedom” and “internal freedom”. While the first “consists in being able to act without impediments, in the absence of external coercion” and “must have a source prior to said exteriority and different from it”⁵⁰, internal freedom “means that our will and action are not determined, not even from within, due to factors outside the will [...] that our action has no other origin than what our will decides for itself.”⁵¹

It is a concept of freedom that contains not only intentionality, a desire for certain purposes, but also and first of all the purpose over his own will, his own will as a task that draws a project for his own existence. This supposes what Crosby explains: “In performing that act I am not only referred to the good or bad thing to which I intentionally refer, but I also find myself referred to.”⁵² Therefore, the person himself is the cause of his action:

It is not the direction towards a value as such, but the direction of oneself, which is appropriate to the volition, to the active commitment of the subject. With this we touch the root of the experiential difference between the performance of man and what simply happens in man. The will is the root of acting, of action. The remarkable thing is that [...] it shows us the person as a person.⁵³

The action shows, then, in general terms, the structure of self-mastery and self-possession typical of human transcendence. On the contrary, freedom understood solely as freedom turned to the outside, with the ability to act without any impediment, supposes finding the end in the

44 Wojtyła K (1982) op.cit., pp. 171-172.

45 *Ibid.*, p. 56.

46 *Ibid.*, pp. 57-58.

47 Wojtyła K (1997) op.cit., p. 311.

48 Navarro JI, Martín C (Eds.) (2010) *Psicología de la educación para docentes*. Madrid: Pirámide, p.134.

49 Philippe J (2011) *La libertad interior*, Madrid: Rialp, p. 27.

50 Amengual G (2007) op.cit., pp.259-260.

51 *Ibid.*, p.260

52 Crosby JF (2007) op.cit., p. 119.

53 Wojtyła K (1982) op.cit., p.149.

fact of exercising freedom, in the ability to choose and not in the person himself. In this way, even when it seems that someone is free by avoiding limits and obstacles, remains in a relationship of dependence on these external limits to its own person, both in the negative sense, and in the positive sense of the objects and purposes to which he can aspire depending on what the circumstances present him. Wojtyła qualifies this state as “alienation”.

Subjectivism falls, therefore, into the paradox of mortgaging the subject in the state of “outside himself”, sold to the objects on which all experience, both internal and external, will depend, immersed in that empiricist reality that “impacts” on one without leaving a trace of sense and significance. In Scheler’s opinion, a will limited to the choice of objects, “could only be -since it has been deprived of all previous intuition, and even of the possibility of an intuition, that is, the possibility of meaning of its acts- the purest arbitrariness.”⁵⁴

The uprooting of the relationship of the human being with a founding reality, and with his own being as reality, is also the uprooting of any meaning that transcends the immanence of the facts, so that, searching for subjectivity, the subject is lost. It is about the danger that Mounier explains: the experience of being the product of a life “overloaded with external solicitations, one would have to say with Valéry: ‘We are locked away from ourselves.’”⁵⁵

Even when that subjective and subject world, interior, “inalienable” is affirmed, the experience limited to the reflection of interior experiences, manifests an alienation of human being, an inauthentic life: he lives the absence of his own “I” and limits himself to being “individual” in the sense explained by Wojtyła. It is not without reason that Skinner’s behaviorism and its practical consequences present in social engineering have been so successful. And it is that freedom is certainly understood as an illusion when the human being lives outwards, moved by the determinations of reinforcements and stimuli. As Ruiz de la Peña points out, citing the novel *Walden Dos*, “members of this society are always doing what they want – what they ‘choose’ to do – but we make them want to do precisely what is best for themselves and the community. Their conduct is determined, and yet they are free’, that is, ‘they feel (or believe) free.’”⁵⁶

The anthropological models of genetic or cybernetic

engineering, which determine human behavior to biological factors or to conditional schemes reproducible in a robot, have in view this reality of the human being dispossessed of himself, dominated by the emotionalization of consciousness (in Wojtylian terminology), limited to the basic experiences that the amygdala is capable of remembering, experiences of physiological and emotional pleasure or unpleasantness. Freedom determined and limited to the response of stimuli, in effect, is an illusion of freedom. The depersonalized human being is an easy target for political or ideological manipulation.

Following Wojtyła’s criticism of Hume, the human being is uprooted from his reality, which is the fact of being a “person”. Hume reflects the subjective dynamism of human nature but, not having a container and transcendent agent that gathers the movements of such dynamism from the possession of oneself, “there is no performance, there are no actions, but only [...] ‘activations’ ”.⁵⁷ This is, Wojtyła points out, the dividing line between the world of persons and the world of individuals; the action” is constituted as an *actus personae* –act of the person–, which we have clearly distinguished from [...] *individuum in actu*.⁵⁸

Therefore, “being free and being self-efficacious are one and the same thing! Since this self only exists in its efficacy and in the connection of its acts.”⁵⁹ Personalism harbors, therefore, a revolutionary attitude. Social reality is not all there is; it is a cry for true freedom. It is certainly possible to limit oneself to living based on what “happens” around himself, that is, it is possible to live letting oneself be carried away by ideals that are no more than inert mental stereotypes, before which one “complies”, running the risk of lose his own being in such objectifications.

The person, while being sensitive and receptive to the stimuli that surround him and to the influence exerted on him by culture, society, family, diverse experiences and his social environment in general, also has experience of his *ego*, capable of reflexivity, that is to say, he has freedom of self-possession from which it is possible to reject or make his own certain beliefs, desires, actions, etc., although they come to him, in some way, “given” in his experience. But such a primary “situation” does not take away rather, it sustains their possibility of living an authentic life, given that the transcendent –effective– structure of the person allows for a “connection of meaning [...] the totality of experiences and

54 Scheler M (2010) “Fenomenología y metafísica de la libertad”, op.cit., p.291.

55 Mounier E (1992) *El pequeño miedo del siglo XX*. Obras I, Salamanca: Sígueme, p.491.

56 Ruiz De La Peña JL (2011) *Imagen de Dios*. Antropología teológica fundamental, Santander: Sal Terrae, p.195.

57 Wojtyła K (1997) op.cit., p. 136.

58 Wojtyła K (1982) op.cit., p. 140.

59 Scheler M (2010) “Fenomenología y metafísica de la libertad”, op.cit., p.302.

series of experiences of which those [actions] form part"⁶⁰, as Scheler explains.

The person is not determined by emotional responses or limited to acting "reactively", but, having expanded his "inner world" to a "personal world" by transcendent and effective freedom, he opens himself to a search for a truth from which he is not an author, he opens himself to the relationship with the-other-than-me and, especially, with the "personal others" that questions and conform in a special way the experience of oneself and of the world.

As Frankl explains, "man will only exist in an authentic way when he is not a product of his impulses but, rather, someone who is responsible."⁶¹ In this manifestation of the authenticity and responsibility of the person consists the analysis of the action in Wojtyła.

Conclusion

A multiplicity of thinkers brought up converge in the same language: that of the person in his action, in his free dynamism. The physiological structures are traversed by the spiritual or transcendent dynamism by which the person does not "have" a corporality as an added, accidental or alien reality; the unitary reality of his condition (personal, free, open) allows the human being to experience his unitary reality, developing as a project and becoming an identity, that is, as the "I" that he is.

Comprehensive complexity, according to the phenomenological realism of personalisms, is what we see expressed in the human "acting" that will not be limited, then, to a simple stimulus-response mechanism, no matter how sophisticated such a mechanism may be understood. The many factors that can influence each human response, whether or not it is visible, are not exempt from fundamental human dynamism, namely, the will and intelligence, capable of interpreting and projecting their experiences, giving them a certain meaning.

In short, Wojtyła's comprehensive experience, collected in various ways by other personalist authors, supposes an overcoming of anthropological materialism through the warning of the transcendent dynamism. It is understood as a dynamism that integrates, from the unity of personal reality, all the languages and dynamisms that make up the human experience in action, a unitary but complex experience. It is, thus, separated from the anthropological reductions of

Hume's empiricism and its repercussions both in rationalist dualism and in relativistic emotivism. For Wojtyła, only an integral analysis of action respects the most complete (and therefore correct) form of personal experience. It is this comprehensive, not partial, analysis of human actions that can reflect the free condition of the human being and, to this extent, serve as a guide for all human praxis, for example, moral or educational.

Starting from this philosophical analysis, we open the work to future analyzes in which we find it pertinent to understand the educational consequences of one and another type of anthropological model. The question about freedom has strong repercussions on the way of understanding and developing education and leads to mechanistic proposals that, in their various variants, annul the horizon that gives true meaning to education: the freedom of the learner.

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60 *Ibíd.*, p.278.

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