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Sofía Victoria Abarca Arias December 6, 2024

The Orchestral Human: Perspectives on Human Nature from Latin American Philosophy

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Abstract

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Though a discipline inherently tied with its region's colonial history and thus the people that from these origins arose, Latin American philosophy has hardly been surveyed as a field with important contributions to the philosophy of human nature. This is a product of both the subfield's scarcity of works which directly engage with this subject matter, as well as its ongoing preoccupation with the social and political dimensions of life in the region. Amongst this apparent scarcity, however, Risieri Frondizi, José Vasconcelos, and Francisco Romero stand out as figures of mid-20th century Latin American philosophy which dedicated entire works to understanding aspects, if not the entirety, of the human experience. Like puzzle pieces, the gaps in these men's contributions are complemented by each other. In this process, a distinct picture emerges: that of humanity as an orchestra. This is an evolution of an analogy developed by Frondizi in attempting to concretely convey the image of the self as a structure greater than the sum of its parts. As will be argued, Vasconcelos and Romero each provide the symphony with the materials it needs in order to make music—the music and instruments, respectively. Only together, however, are their ideas able to articulate a complete notion of what humanity is. This is in understanding that these three works are not the only ones of its kind within the subfield; rather chosen for their ability to coalesce into one another and create this picture of humanity which effectively summarizes one dimension of Latin American philosophy's stance on human nature. The purpose of this work, then, is to bridge these works together in an attempt to create a solid foundation for the further exploration and development of this discourse within the subfield.

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¡Esto es para ustedes!

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Latin American philosophy can be equally characterized by its contributions to the field of political philosophy and ethics as by its pursuit of its own nature. Some of the most prominent Latin American philosophers—Leopoldo Zea, Francisco Romero, Alejandro Korn, Enrique Dussel—cemented their status as representative figures of the field due to their ruminations on what Latin American philosophy is. And while answers have been given and formulated ever since the subfield's foggy inception, the precise character of modern Latin American philosophy remains in question. Though this might be attributed to the subfield's youth within the discipline of philosophy, it might also be understood as a result of its origin.

The history of Latin America has produced people confused by their own sense of belonging, as Mexican philosopher José Vasconcelos extensively argues: "the European man does not claim us and we do not claim him…we do not claim the Indian man and the Indian man does not claim us" (quoted in Kempff Mercado 1958, 56). The Latin American is neither here nor there, but exists in a racial, cultural, and historical limbo. Thus, the thought that emerges from such a person expectedly arises from and engages with that limbo. It can be argued that it originated out of a need to understand what being human within that limbo is: "if Western philosophy was born out of problems inherent to the human being, Latin American philosophy also had its genesis out of problems inherent to the American man, precisely in the dawn of our societies to independent lives as countries and its members as citizens" (Saladino García 2016, 35). Latin American philosophy, then, can be understood as an extension of Latin America's complex cultural position. What this means for this subfield is that it is as diverse as the Latin American man.

Though the question of identity largely remains unanswered, the tradition of Latin American philosophy has historically preoccupied itself with issues pertaining to the region's

"social, cultural, and political history" and not necessarily with the human or Latin American themselves (Schutte 1987, 24). Works on human nature are less common. Yet, as a discipline congenital to, among many other needs, the need to understand a new kind of humanity, there is untapped potential to enter the human nature discussion as elaborately as the field has penetrated the world of social and political philosophy.

The importance of the Latin American contribution to the philosophical discourse on human nature arises from exactly the oft-scattered dynamism of the subfield: the multiplicity of perspectives from which Latin American authors postulate theories informed by their experiences as children of a continent upon which many cultural traditions interact. Venezuelan thinker Ernesto Mayz Vallenilla characterized this experience as fostering an "*origineity*… in the diverse ways of understanding the being, and, therefore, objectivize its purpose and even its categorical significances" (Mayz Vallenilla 1986, 80). It is curious, then, how only José Vasconcelos's *The Cosmic Race* has been cemented as one of the field's seminal works. One would expect that a discipline with such a distinct disposition to add onto discussions of the nature of man and human existence more extensively took part in them.[1]

This is not to say that these discussions do not exist. Francisco Romero, alongside his well-known criticisms of positivism, is also known for his work on what he called "philosophic anthropology" (Nuccetelli et al. 2010, 517). Less prominently, Romero's student and fellow Argentine philosopher Risieri Frondizi's *The Nature of the Self* is a philosophical enterprise that echoes Romero's phenomenological elements in his exploration of man. Taken together, along with Vasconcelos, these three authors are some of the most prominent spokesmen for Latin

[1] In an effort to safeguard the integrity of the original texts in the process of translating them, the term 'man' as a synonym to 'human' or 'person' is consistently utilized throughout this thesis, as the works here evaluated substantially employ this gendered version of the term. This thesis thus does not employ gender-neutral language in reference to human persons in the spirit of consistency.

American philosophy in the greater conversation surrounding human nature. Engaging them in conversation with each other, then, opens the possibility of not only obtaining a more complete overview of the Latin American man (beyond the extensively-disseminated conclusions of Vasconcelos's own theory, now synonymous with Latin American identity), but of better understanding the significance of such assemblage in the study of human nature itself. Furthermore, the work of these three men not only perfectly exemplify the diversity within Latin American philosophy that characterizes the discipline, but their conclusions on human nature all belong to a broader narrative within Latin American philosophy of what it means to be human as informed by different academic, cultural, and philosophical perspectives. In this synthesis of influences and narratives, a more vivid, modern, and original picture of the nature of man is revealed. Moreover, the vastly different approaches of these men to the study of human nature might revitalize the philosophy of human nature. Indeed, the fascinating thing about putting these men in the same theoretical framework are their widely distinct ideological influences and approaches. Frondizi greatly engages with the phenomenological theories of the past in order to develop his own account of the self. Vasconcelos describes what humanity has been and what it ought to be from a historical, political, and ultimately *pathos*-driven perspective, distinctively from a highly racialized perspective. Romero engages in similar ideological trends as Frondizi, and he effectively completes Vasconcelos's cosmological postulation through his analysis of human intentionality and spirituality. While to some, this is a methodological and influential inconsistency symptomatic of a philosophical field that does not know what it is, engaging with the study of human nature in these different ways is perhaps what the discussion surrounding human nature needs in order to actualize itself and further its understanding of the modern, globalized, humanity.

Advancing this discussion necessitates an extensive analysis of the theories put forth by Frondizi, Vasconcelos, and Romero separately before analyzing them jointly, in order to contextualize the characteristics and statements that stand out when juxtaposed with the other works. The paper, then, is divided into four major chapters. The first three chapters describe, explain, and analyze *The Nature of the Self* by Risieri Frondizi (and, to a lesser extent, his essay "On the Nature of the Self"), *The Cosmic Race* by José Vasconcelos, and *Theory of Man* by Francisco Romero.[2] Having extracted the major points made by each of these texts, the fourth chapter ventures into the commonalities and differences between these texts in order to explore what the study of human nature reveals about Latin American philosophy. This will then allow for a diagnosis on this discourse surrounding humanity, illustrating how positionality informs (or, in this case, does not) the general trends displayed within the subfield. Lastly, an attempt at crafting a general picture of humanity within the framework of Latin American philosophy is made, piecing together the most significant elements from the contributions of these three authors, leading to the conception of the eponymous 'orchestral human'. Hopefully, this enterprise will further a better understanding of Latin American philosophy as an explanation *to* and a representation *of* the Latin American man. By unraveling that self, the field itself could follow suit, emerging from its perennial limbo.

[2] The versions of *The Cosmic Race* and *Theory of Man* utilized for this project are in their original Spanish language. In their respective chapters and for the rest of this thesis they will be referred to by their Spanish titles.

I. Frondizi: The 'What', *Gestalt,* and the Metaphor of the Orchestra

Before writing *The Nature of the Self* (1953), Argentine philosopher Risieri Frondizi had published some preliminary formulations in the Philosophy of Education Society's *The Review of Metaphysics* (June 1950). This essay contains a more condensed, if less specific, version of what he would later posit in *The Nature of the Self.* "On the Nature of the Self" and the later full-length book were the only works of their kind amongst the philosopher's canon, the product of a time when a phenomenological approach to the question of the self and human nature seemed to be a trend in Latin American philosophy.[3] Both the essay and book will be my principal reference for Frondizi's philosophy of human nature.

The 1953 book is divided in two parts: "Origin and Dissolution of the Modern Doctrine of the Self as Substance", and "Existence and the Nature of the Self". The former primarily functions as a survey across the contributions of René Descartes, John Locke, George Berkeley, and David Hume, while the latter presents Frondizi's own, contrasting account of the self. Frondizi's initial approach toward the question of human nature is born out of a need to move past substantialism and atomism. Substantialism characterizes the self as a substance with an "immutable nucleus" that is "surrounded by a superficial, changing shell" (Frondizi 1953, 138; 137). This, Frondizi argues, directly contradicts the very human ability to change as the self moves through life, for substantialism posits that as an individual experiences change, the core of their self remains the same. He particularly rejects Descartes's construction of the self as a "thinking substance", or *res cogitans* (though he does support his own theoretical development with Cartesian thought later on) (Frondizi 1953, 16; Gracia and Millán-Zaibert 2004). In regards to atomism, he takes issue with its conception of the self as a "chain of experiences," which

[3] This reliance on phenomenology is likely a result of his formation under the tutelage of fellow Argentine philosopher Francisco Romero, whose work this thesis will address in its third chapter.

renders the self as "mechanized" and passively conditioned by what it experiences rather than being an active participant in them (Frondizi 1953, 130). As opposed to his wide-ranging commentary on substantialism, Frondizi mainly contends with Hume's atomism, which "reduces a totality to its parts"— a central thesis that Frondizi's rejects (Gracia and Millán-Zaibert 2004).

Frondizi's positive view characterizes the self as *gestalt,* a dynamic structure made up by experiences that cannot merely be reduced to them. Strikingly, Frondizi suggests that the self is akin to a symphony rather than a painting: a unified whole made up of individual elements that "uphold each other mutually in an intimate sort of interweaving in which it is impossible to distinguish warp from woof" (Frondizi 1953, 182; 183). In conceptualizing the self in this manner, Frondizi provides a solution to the rigid staticism of substantialism and atomism's inability to explain the permanent essence of the self as it moves through experiences, generating a theory able to explain how the self is able to change whilst retaining a certain permanent essence (Gracia and Millán-Zaibert 2004). In order to elucidate how Frondizi arrives at this conclusion, his approach and theoretical divergences from the authors previously mentioned must be thoroughly developed.

i. On the Existence of the Self

Before delving into the complexities of the self, Frondizi first seeks to clarify the question. He emphasizes the need to ask a simple question of "what it is that exists without assuming anything concerning the nature of the 'what'" (Frondizi 1953, 112). This stems from what he recognizes is a common issue amongst those who assume that Descartes's attestation to the undeniable existence of *cogitationes* logically implies that there must be something that

experiences those *cogitationes*: “it assumes exactly what we have to prove,” that is, it presupposes the existence of the self given the existence of *cogitationes* (Frondizi 1950, 440). It prescribes the nature of the self as that which formulates *cogitationes* without answering what the self itself is—only what it does. While Frondizi opts to move away from what Descartes offers in terms of evidences of the existence of the self (essentially, he who is is he who doubts), he does recognize that Descartes’s model allows for the existence of experiences to be indubitable, as “if anyone doubts experiences exist, his very doubt will provide us with reason” (Frondizi 1953, 113). However, because of the question being asked (the ‘what’), this does not concretely provide evidence as to what the thing living through those experiences is.

Most importantly, however, the urgency of establishing evidence for the existence of the self arises from the need to reject Hume’s claim that the self is a “bundle or collection of different perceptions,” with nothing that links and sustains them across time (Frondizi 1953, 121-122, footnote 2). This is the point of contention drives Frondizi’s project, as he insists that there’s a endurance to the human existence which Hume’s notion of the self necessarily ignores or oversees; a “‘plus’ which can be reduced neither to an experience nor to the experiential stream,” and which “gives [the experiential stream] stability, unity, meaning, and continuity” (Frondizi 1953, 125; 125). In fact, Hume admitted to being unable to explain “the principles that unite our successive perceptions in our thought or consciousness” (Frondizi 1953, 126).

Experience is thus an unsuitable candidate for explaining what the self is, so is intuition. Yet, because the indubitability of experience has been demonstrated and because Frondizi explicitly seeks to reject Hume’s theoretical proposition, he utilizes experience as a starting point in building a definition of the self. Frondizi thus establishes that the best approach for examining whether there is a self is to “examine concrete psychological situations and find out whether or

not we can explain them wholly in terms of experience, which are the only reality we have found so far" (Frondizi 1953, 121). In this way, Frondizi seeks to integrate empiricism into his study of the self, citing substantialism's lack of an "empirical basis" in its postulation of the self (Frondizi 1953, 144).

Frondizi quickly identifies self-consciousness as a phenomenon that necessitates the existence of the self as (tautology aside) it cannot be without a 'self' to be conscious of. The book does not dwell on the evidence for the existence of self-consciousness, merely declaring that it "is one of the main characteristics of human life" and that "the self sees, and it knows what it sees" (Frondizi 1953, 126).[4] Not only this, but Frondizi claims that the self is conscious "not only of particular experiences but also of the unity and continuity of the self" (Frondizi 1953, 126). Self-consciousness is the mechanism through which humans know that the person who lived through yesterday is the same as that who lived through today. Consciousness moves from experience to experience sequentially and not sporadically; the self is and has memory (Frondizi 1950, 445). Even if somebody perceived themselves as a changing being and a changing being only, Frondizi explains that "[they] could not perceive [their] changing self unless there is something permanent in [them] that perceives the changes and something that constantly remains which [they] can use as a point of reference" (Frondizi 1953, 126). Moreover, Frondizi also identifies "strain, opposition, and struggle" as circumstances under which the existence of the self becomes evident, as it must take charge of the experiential stream in order to overcome peril as opposed to succumb, or give into it (Frondizi 1953, 127). The choice to both act upon and the

[4] This is an extension of his critique on the Cartesian affirmation of the self in doubt, rather deciding to build upon a premise that does not presuppose the existence of doubt but rather reifying the self in what its primary functions are rather than on its capacities. However, the logic employed is similar to Descartes's, just directly opposite: the self finds itself in what it can see, not in what it cannot (doubt).

course of action to take in the face of distress reflect the existence of a some*thing* with distinct agency and decision-making power.

In resisting the idea that the self is immutable Hume is generally unable to account for the fact that we intuit ourselves as the self-same being even as our perceptions change. Picture a child who moves away from their parents and who, years later, becomes indifferent to them. As the individual's immediate perceptions of the world around them changes—one without their parents—their relationship to them becomes diluted and disfigured. They lose the ability to worry for them, think about them, tend to them as they grow old, or feel any sense of responsibility as their children. While this may very well describe a real-world scenario, Hume's bundle of perceptions would suggest that this is an expectation of the human self rather than an individual's particular reality.

The psychological situations identified by Frondizi—self-consciousness as memory and decision-making as will—require the presence of a self, so does personality, the concept of responsibility, and the uniquely human ability to tackle moral dilemmas (Frondizi 1950, 445; Frondizi 1953, 127). The example of the parent-child relationship exemplifies the concept of self-consciousness as memory; decision-making as will is similarly effectively personified by a scenario in which someone is the victim of a robbery. Frondizi argues that the existence of the possibility where the victim fights back, or refuses to be robbed, is evidence of a self that exists in resistance to the world around it. Rather than succumbing to the reality of their situation, idly standing by while their integrity is at risk, only can *a* self have the power to act upon the situation. The non-self lets things happen to them, the self responds to its environment and makes things happen. Having answered the 'what', Frondizi is now able to answer what its nature is.

ii. On The Nature of the Self

Frondizi now turns to explain how it is that the self endures through change, how the self absorbs experience, and how it is an indissoluble, yet ever-developing, unity. This culminates in conception of the self as a structure, not a form or configuration, that is constantly in flux through the incorporation of new experiences that alter the structure itself and each other; a scaffolding where "whatever happens to one of its elements affects the whole, and the whole in turn exerts an influence upon each element" (Frondizi 1953, 175). Therefore, the self "depends upon [its] constitutive elements, lived experiences…but cannot be reduced to them," given that it is only by forming part of the whole that they acquire meaning, functionality, and identity (Gracia and Millán-Zaibert 2004).

Conceptualizing the self as structure serves a few important functions. First, it replaces the language of 'immutability' with one of endurance, allowing for the self to be understood as continuously-present yet not static. Frondizi denotes that it is because the self is always present that it is permanent, not because it does not change: "the error lies in confusing permanence with immutability" (Frondizi 1953, 142). By the self always being there, Frondizi would mean that the person's experiences are always there as members of the self as a whole—not as individual experiences, but as elements incorporated into this whole. Yet this whole is always changing, always integrating new experiences as they happen, without suppressing or letting go of any of its previous constitutive members. This is why a human being can be the same person they were 20 years ago while having changed: they have lived through new experiences that have altered—not substituted—previous elements of their selves. It is thus that Frondizi also indicates

that what makes humans human is their ability to change, as "if [they] did not change, [they] would not be a living human but would be a dead one" (Frondizi 1953, 142).

Frondizi utilizes the grief of losing a loved one as an example of a transformative experience that does not deny the endurance of the self. The shock, pain, emptiness, etc., consequent of grief are deeply rooted and complex psychological states that often re-route an individual's way of thinking and behaving. Moreover, these traumatic events leave mental scars that never fully heal or go away: their loss will follow them as they adjust to living their lives without the presence of that person, as their memories of that person resurface, or in the lifestyle changes they partake in as a result of the event. Though there are circumstances that may lessen the extent of this grief, Frondizi argues that these new experiences "cannot completely erase the spiritual shock produced by such blows" (Frondizi 1953, 143). This is because such experiences, particularly those of heightened emotion, are not "external elements that have modified the self but elements that have become constituent members of the very self" (Frondizi 1953, 143).

Articulating the self in this way implicates the self's past and future as part of its whole as well. The self will always be what it used to be, but its ability to be altered through experiences means that the self is also a "potentiality," because it is "always in the making" (Frondizi 1953, 146; Frondizi 1950, 445). Experiences of the past evolve, change meaning, and shift places within the structure of the self as the self develops; new experiences or experiences-to-be are filtered through the self which is, in turn, a whole made up of previous experiences. These new experiences "[modify] the [structure's] former state," but depend on this "former state" in order to become situated within the whole and acquire their "coloration" (Frondizi 1953, 182). Because of this, Frondizi characterizes experiences as having a functional (not substantial) bond that holds them together. The self becomes the self through experience and

action; there is no self without the experiences that constitute it and give it its character. The self is the purpose of experience. The same is true the other way around as well: experiences are the purpose of the self. A self without experiences would be like a symphonic orchestra without its musicians (Frondizi 1953, 183). This omnidirectional relationship can only be explained if the self is conceived as a structure and not a monolithic core with a periphery of experiences, or a homogenous potpourri of individual perceptions.

The self as a purposive filter of experiences further relates to its permanence and stability. The self changes insofar as it incorporates new experiences into its structure. Yet, not only is this change minuscule in the larger context of the whole, but it is change that occurs gradually and not consistently (i.e. every new experience does not always imply change as they do not necessarily "occupy a position in the totality that belongs to it") (Frondizi 1953, 185). Experiences are transient and unstable by nature. They acquire lasting influence as they become part of a certain self, and this influence is determined by the previous state of the self of which they become a part of. What gives experiences stability is the self. Yet, stability does not imply immutability. The self is stable in that it persists over time, yet this persistence is underscored by constant modifications that do not drastically reflect upon the appearance and behavior of the structure itself. One may add a third violin to the orchestra without changing the melody being played. But it adds layers. It is a different, if only minimally, orchestration of an already written piece. Add enough violins, however, and the sound and effect of the piece changes—even if the melody stays the same (Frondizi 1953, 185). Conversely, take away all the violins, and the members of the orchestra need to rearrange the musicalization in order to accommodate the lack of violins, producing an altered pattern and acquiring a different meaning as members of a whole (Frondizi 1953, 194). Either way, the melody is the "axis" around which the orchestra is

organized and each instrument is played (Frondizi 1953, 191). The same is true for the self: its structure is organized around a permanent axis which gives it stability and direction, but which does not constrict the members of the structure to a single spot throughout it.

The metaphor of the orchestra culminates in Frondizi's central thesis: the self is a structure with properties "that cannot be found in its parts," as opposed to a "mere sum" of parts or elements (Frondizi 1953, 197; 172). The experiences that make up the self "cannot be removed without affecting the whole structure and losing their own nature when separated from the whole" (Frondizi 1953, 172). They change the whole once they become part of it, and the whole changes them. They each have a certain role until a modification urges the acquisition of new functionality and new meaning. In the same vein, a symphony is unachievable by instruments being played in isolation without direction. It is only through the members that constitute that an orchestra becomes an orchestra, and only by being part of an orchestra do its members become, well, an orchestral musician. The music they play as part of their whole transcends them as musicians, the audience unable to know who plays what and only listening to the sound produced by the symphony as a whole—or, in other words, unable to "distinguish warp from woof" (Frondizi 1953, 183).[5]

Frondizi's attempt to dismantle the notions of atomism and substantialism through the use of empiricism ultimately unveils a conception of the self that is well-equipped to answer queries into the endurance, adaptability, and dynamism of the self that previous doctrines were unable to account for. Frondizi succeeds in this endeavor by first identifying the specific phenomena inherent to the self—self-consciousness, memory, agency—in order to understand what the self

[5] In reference to the citation made in p. 6.

is, and then exploring what it is about the self that allows it to have these characteristics (the 'what' before the 'nature of'). This segmented approach is an answer to the methodologies of the past which failed to answer quintessential questions of the self by rushing to identify its nature before having a clear picture of what it is that they are seeking to describe. In this manner, not only is Frondizi's *The Nature of the Self* an important effort at "elaborating a true philosophical system," but an innovative venture into the world of phenomenology that reimagines the self as a structure rather than a core or an unknown (Gracia and Millán-Zaibert 2004). This structure, in being greater than its constitutive parts, paints an entirely more complex picture of the self that adequately reckons with the aspects of the self that Frondizi puts forth.

II. Vasconcelos: The Race-Mindset Intersection

José Vasconcelos's 1925 book *The Cosmic Race* is an undeniable pillar of Latin American philosophy. It stands out as the only work of its kind and prominence that directly addresses the role of the Latin American in the greater project of humanity, utilizing the region's colonial history and even engaging in anthropological methods in order to enrich and contextualize its proposed thesis. This latter characteristic of his work is present in the second and third parts of the 1948 edition of *The Cosmic Race,* as Vasconcelos traveled down south his natal Mexico to Brazil and Argentina to conduct an ethnographic project that though vivid in detail, serves as more of an anecdotal appendix to the book's first part, "The *Mestizaje*", rather than its theoretical continuation.[6] Thus, it is this part which will be the focus of analysis throughout this section.

The Cosmic Race's thesis is established in the book's prologue: "the different races of the world [will] tend to mix more and more, until creating a new human type, made up of the selection of all pre-existing peoples"—this new human type, or race, being the titular 'cosmic race' (Vasconcelos 1948, 9). Vasconcelos argues that because of Latin America's colonial past and the nature of the colonizer-colonized relationship between the Spaniards and the indigenous, the region will be the cradle for this cosmic race, birthed out of "true fraternity and a truly universal vision" (Vasconcelos 1948, 30). The author arrives at this conclusion through a survey that examines the history of the human races prior to and during the conquest of the Americas, delving primarily into the psychology of the white man and of the Latin American man in order

[6] There is no direct equivalent to the Spanish word *mestizaje* in English, and attempting to translate it would erase the history and implications of the word which serve the greater purpose of this academic project. The word will be used in its original Spanish form and should be understood as the result of interracial reproduction, typically in the context of a colonizer-colonized reproductive interaction.

to explain the then-present state of both peoples and what their futures would look like.[7] Underscoring this proposition is Vasconcelos's affinity towards Platonic ideals and a borderline utopian optimism, positing beauty and pleasure as the ultimate characteristics of human relationships (Tardieu 2015, 155; Crespo 2010, 151-152).

Vasconcelos's project posits a greater mission for the region of Latin America, acknowledging the region's political and social struggles as being directly at odds with what its history and riches prescribe its inhabitants should be: joyful and free. However, it is this history which determines the people of Latin America as the only ones able to achieve the final form of humanity in a racial and spiritual sense. More broadly, *The Cosmic Race* speaks to Vasconcelos's belief that human nature is intrinsically tied to race and geography, with these factors heavily influencing humans' modes of being and assigning roles to play within the grand scheme of their cosmic history.

i. The 'Cosmic' Future of Humanity

Vasconcelos identifies early on the four races that precede and will coalesce into the final race, the "four great contemporary races": the "Black," the "Red," the "Yellow," and the "White" (Vasconcelos 1948, 53). These races arose, had a period of dominance, and fell in this respective order, the White race being the latest one to appear and dominate. Vasconcelos argues that, just as with previous racial groups, the Whites' era of power would eventually come to an end, opening a new era where no one race would dominate the others and where their amalgamation

[7] 'Then-present' is in reference to when the essay was written and not necessarily as a form of distinguishing a different state of these races at the time this dissertation is being written. There exists an argument for the lack of progress towards this 'cosmic race'.

would become the new human, a "fifth universal race" (Vasconcelos 1948, 16). Each of these races has had a characteristic mission whose completion would lead to them "leaving" (Vasconcelos 1948, 25).[8] Vasconcelos attributes the White man's long reign to his ability to recognize his mission as the "bridge" in between this humanity and the next, tightly embracing the role of colonizer (Vasconcelos 1948, 25). By fulfilling their role and establishing colonies wherein *mestizaje* occurred, however, the White race unknowingly set an expiration date for its control over the world.

Vasconcelos does markedly distinguish the difference between the White Anglo-Saxon colonization of present-day United States territory and the White Spanish colonization of present-day Latin America. These differences in colonial mechanisms are what determines Latin America solely, not the United States, as the birthplace of the final form of humanity. Whereas the colonial enterprise of the British in North American territory was based upon the complete elimination of native Indigenous groups and the reproduction of White settlers as its populative mechanism, the Spanish actively mixed with the native population and enslaved Black Africans and their descendants.[9] This latter behavior, Vasconcelos argues, is in line with the "purpose of History," which is to "achieve the fusion of all peoples and cultures" (Vasconcelos 1948, 27). The *modus operandi* of the British colonial empire directly contradicts this, but its insistence on racial homogeneity is a mark of decadence, since it does not advance humanity towards its final form. The White conquest over American territory, then, marked the beginning of the end for the White race: it allowed the White man to engage in the decadence of his own race while

[8] "Leaving" where?

[9] There is a difference between the reproduction with the enslaved population done by the Spanish and that done by the British. Not only did the Spanish do so at a greater rate, but the ultimate purpose of such endeavors also differ. When the British reproduced with the indigenous and African populations, it was done so clandestinely and often with the purpose of expanding the enslaved population. The Spanish, Vasconcelos argues, did so out of their own desire.

generating a universal race made up of all distinct races. Even if the Anglo colonization of Northern American territory does not coincide with the evolution of humanity, the fact that the White man was able to replicate his previous success in this territory and its citizens then able to replicate it abroad as well has served to position the United States and the White race as dominant over the years. The absolute victory of the White man over the Red man as displayed during the British conquest was merely a "repeat [of] the victory process of a[n already] victorious race" (Vasconcelos 1948, 27). This is why the saxons have had "uninterrupted and triumphant" success, because their mission was "already known in history" and had already been accomplished previously (Vasconcelos 1948, 31). In contrast, the Latin American mission is absolutely new, breaking tradition and venturing into unknown territory. It is a new enterprise, and figuring out how to carry it through takes its time. Until the fifth race emerges and nullifies the White man's dominance, the White race will be able to claim victory. Yet it is the Latin American man, then, who holds the keys to humanity's evolution towards its final form.

Eventually, this final race will rightfully emerge as part of a historical mandate. The Latin American man's recognition of his "divine mission in America," as opposed to his Anglo-Saxon counterpart, entitles him to consummate it (Vasconcelos 1948, 27). Not only did Spanish colonizers interracially procreate during their colonial enterprise, but—according to Vasconcelos—Latin American independence leaders fought for the equality of all races during their respective emancipation campaigns. This fostered the development of a post-colonial society where racism, if not completely eradicated, is entirely less prevalent than it is in the United States. In "assimilat[ing] the races that the yankees destroyed," Latinos gained "the rights…and hopes of an unprecedented mission in History" (Vasconcelos 1948, 26). The White man burned the bridges that the Latino man has been able to uphold. It is then that in Latin

America will occur the complete fusion of humanity's races, creating a final race which synthesizes the "treasures" of each of its constitutive races and thus allows for "true fraternity and a truly universal vision" (Vasconcelos 1948, 27; 30).

Beyond the integration of all of humanity's previous races, the transcendence of this final race is also a product of the nature of the relationships that birthed it. Vasconcelos argues it was the Spanish man's "abundance of love" that led him to reproduce with indigenous natives and Black slaves (Vasconcelos 1948, 26). This exemplifies Vasconcelos's vision of a true humanity, one founded upon beauty, love, and freedom. These are humans' "higher functions" (Vasconcelos 1948, 41). Humanity has historically formed its societies and civilizations through its lower "potentialities;" first through its mastery of the material world, and then through extensive use of its intellectual capacities and socio-political dexterity (Vasconcelos 1948, 36). But humans' ability for aesthetic appreciation, their free will, and their sense of spirituality are their highest functions. Only a race created through love is conducive to humans who fully exercise these higher functions, creating a man "infinitely superior to all who have existed" (Vasconcelos 1948, 42). Moreover, Vasconcelos alleges that the prevailing characteristics of each of the preceding races that become integrated in this final race will be a product of free will and voluntary acceptance, making use of humans' free will and freedom of choice. This, in turn, is a symptom of an era where beauty will be the main force behind human behavior, rather than reason, where an "act, just because of its beauty, will produce joy" (Vasconcelos 1948, 52). Humans will do as they please, not as they must, aiming for a happy existence founded upon love and freedom.

It is thus that Vasconcelos builds an argument for how Latin America's colonial past, its divergence with its Northern colonial venture, and its population of "free-spirited" people are the

key components that will usher a new era for humanity (Vasconcelos 1948, 52). The *mestizo* children of the region, though systematically oppressed by Whiteness, are the seeds upon which humans will achieve a final form where they will be able to make use of their higher capacities in shaping their behaviors and creating society. The role of race in this reconstruction of mankind's trajectory is undeniable, making it extremely clear that the essence of humanity can hardly be separated from racial ethnicity and geographic positionality. Not only is this true when identifying the periods and achievements of humanity throughout history, but also when accounting for differences in human's mindsets, attitudes, and behaviors. This chapter will now turn to the Vasconcelian analysis of Latin American thought, enabling a more rich and nuanced understanding of this final race, what it needs to do in order to achieve its 'cosmic' status, and, more significantly, outlining the characteristics that influence a certain group's way of existing amongst all of humanity. Doing so will disclose key aspects of Vasconcelos's understanding of human nature.

ii. The Role of Mindset

Though Vasconcelos recognizes that the mission of Latin America is unprecedented in human history, he does concede that the region is plagued by issues that have limited its advancement towards a utopian future. Not only is geography an obstacle to a truly united people, yielding a disjointed ethnic unity that often struggles to find familiarity in its neighbors, but Latinos reject the colonial past that Americans, conversely, tightly championed. This has created a troubled mindset of self-unimportance and deep-seated hatred for their own skin that greatly slows down progress towards what is already a gargantuan task. The people of the region,

then, have been slow to recognize their own place within humanity and the role fated to them by destiny.

Latin American people's first setback towards achieving their final form is a lack of regional patriotism, added to a divided existence that often leads them to "deny each other" (Vasconcelos 1948, 18). Political turmoil and an "exclusively national patriotism" blinds inhabitants of the region to their collective problems—that is, the challenges the entire group faces, namely against the Northern Anglo-Saxons (Vasconcelos 1948, 18). There is an overwhelming preoccupation with national matters that prevents Latinos from seeing each other as a confederation with a greater common undertaking. Vasconcelos suggests that the solution to this is finding common ground rooted in its countries' shared history, as well as acknowledging the threat posed by the White saxons. This has more to do, however, with the perennial rejection of Latin America's Spanish heritage. Vasconcelos once again juxtaposes the mentality of the United States against Latin America's, claiming that the "yankee feels as English as the Englishman from England" while the "American Spaniard does not feel as Spanish as the children of Spain" (Vasconcelos 1948, 19). This mindset, as well as the phenomenon of regional fragmentation, can be attributed to Latin America's independence campaigns, which largely occurred in segmented units rather than uniformly across the region. The study of Latin American history does not present independence leaders as "units of a continental movement," but as autonomous agents confined to their national borders (Vasconcelos 1948, 24). Additionally, the rhetoric of independentists from the United States greatly differed from that of Latin America's, with the former building upon their English legacy while the latter denies the Spanish, seeking to completely cut ties with its colonizing entity. This is still reflected in modern politics: the United Kingdom is a political ally of the United States, whereas the relationship

between Spain and most Spanish-speaking Latin American countries is contentious and civil at best (Vasconcelos 1948, 19).

Vasconcelos also acknowledges the influence that each empire's national origin had on the post-colonial attitude of these newly-formed countries. He particularly praises the mind of the British colonizer, which enforced political and social consistency across its American colonies. In contrast, the late Spanish colonizers completely degenerated the early venture of the Spanish empire in desperate efforts to gain riches and power. Their egomania led them to claim entire territories as their very own, recurring to an absolutism and militarism that not only fragmented the greater Spanish empire in Latin America into completely separate colonies, but completely undermined the peaceful co-existence amongst natives and colonizers that the early Spanish conquest had fostered (Vasconcelos 1948, 22). It was the Napoleonic wars, however, which ultimately tipped the scales in the saxons' favor, as the Louisiana Purchase gave British America the land, power, and status it needed in order to consolidate itself and its post-colonial nation as a global superpower. Without the Louisiana Purchase, Vasconcelos argues, the territory would have had to become part of Latin America, as the French never ceded the land to the British (Vasconcelos 1948, 21).

Finally, this sense of inferiority, both as products of a colonial venture they reject and in comparison to the success of the North American Anglo-Saxon, has proliferated a defeatist sentiment in which the Latino man bows his head down in the face of disaster. The Latin American has accepted the defeat of its indigenous ancestors as their own, refusing to associate with their regional compatriots as a way to deny the colonial history they reluctantly share. Hence, Latin Americans are content with seeing "walls in mountain ranges instead of summits" to conquer; they submit to the geography of the land as an excuse to disassociate themselves

from their neighbors (Vasconcelos 1948, 23). Only by defeating this mindset and by embracing their rightful Spanish heritage, as did the North Americans with the British, will Latinos be able to act in the race's best interest.

If Section i of this chapter is Vasconcelos's testament to the role played by race in the history and future of humanity, then this section speaks to the importance ascribed to geography in shaping humans' behavior. Not only does he identify the topography and magnitude of the Latin American region as a crucial component in Latinos's perceptions of themselves and each other, but Vasconcelos very explicitly makes mention of the Louisiana Purchase as the deciding factor between the victory of the White Anglo-Saxon in the United States and the submission of the Latin American man. Yet, this is only true because of the White man's vision of himself as the ever-victorious race: the repeated conquest and acquisition of territories only fed into the White man's self-aggrandizing of their own historical mission, aided by a familiar pattern that they could blindly follow to remain triumphant. The Latin American man, on the other hand, feels inferior to his past colonial self and to his Northern counterpart, who relentlessly climbs the summits the Latino sees as walls. The land is at the mercy of the White man, while the *mestizo* is at the mercy of the land. This is a problem of attitude, not singularly of geography; an attitude uniquely shaped by the race-dependent victories (or lack thereof) that ultimately determined each people's course of history. Paradoxically, and as pointed out before, it is only the White man's victory today that enables the Latino's ultimate victory as the final race.

What Vasconcelos is able to do with this project is describe how empirical experience (in this case, in the form of race, geography, and history) and mindset interact with one another as

part of a feedback loop that culminates in the formation of a particular type of human. The thesis of this book suggests that the nature of the White man is different from the nature of the Latino, the Red, the Black, the Yellow man. Each person's nature is a product of their shared history with members of a particular race, and this attitude determines how they view the terrestrial and human world around them. It is these different natures as functions of race which situate the members of each race within a specific moment in time, with a very specific purpose and mission to fulfill. Only the nature of the Latino man, through his mode of conception and the characteristics of his existence, will enable him to flourish towards the final form that Vasconcelos prescribes for humanity: the triumph of free will and love over violence and oppression. In that way, it might be said that the nature of all races of men worked towards the accomplishment of a singular, final goal: the creation of a cosmic race, in the form of the *mestizo* man. He, who bears the treasures of all the races that came before him.

III. Romero: Intentionality and Purpose

What Vasconcelos holds over Romero in terms of his seminal text's popularity, Romero has in renown among peers in the field of Latin American philosophy. Not only did his former student Risieri Frondizi himself recognize (and comment on) the significance of Romero's 1952 book *Teoría del hombre,* but reviews of the text often make a point of recognizing Romero's dedication to the craft of philosophy and its culmination in the ideas put forth within the book.[10] As previously delineated, Romero dedicated most of his career to philosophic anthropology, elucidating some of his first thoughts on the matter nearly eight years before publishing the 1952 text in *Papeles para una filosofía* (1944) and *Filosofía de la persona* (1944). *Teoría del hombre*, Frondizi writes, is the "ripened fruit" of a life dedicated to constructing a comprehensive understanding of man as a dualistic being with an intimate connection to the cosmos (Frondizi 1953, 22). Thus, not only did Romero's last venture into philosophic anthropology cement his legacy amongst Latin American philosophy, but it is one of the most complete treatises on the subfields's contributions to discussions of human nature.

Romero conceives of man as many things: a being capable of objectivation, an intentional being, a spiritual being, a universalist being, a transcendent being. This is what the first and second parts of the book, "Intentionality" and "Spirituality" respectively, spend much time elaborating on. The third and concluding part, "Man", preoccupies itself with explaining how man as conceived of in the first and second parts socializes, historicizes, and finds purpose. Throughout *Teoría del hombre*, Romero illustrates what man is by describing what animals are not, utilizing the animal kingdom as a frame of reference that allows him to understand and

[10] See "La teoría del hombre de Francisco Romero" by Risieri Friondizi in *Filosofía y letras* vols. 49-50, Jan.-Jun. 1950; "Hombre y cultura en Francisco Romero" by Mario A. Presas in *Universitas Philosophica* vols. 15-16, Dec. 1990-Jun. 1991; and "La 'Teoría del hombre' de Francisco Romero" by José Gaos in *Diánoia* vol. 2, no. 2, 1956.

elucidate the particular characteristics that make man human. The principal distinction between man and animal is animals' sole obedience to natural, instinctive needs; men, Romero argues, are capable of behaving in response to their natural needs but may also, and often do, act without regard to the self. This is what Romero identifies as the spirituality that only exists in man, and which, along with "ordinary intentionality," "constitute what truly is humanhood" (Romero 2008, 173; 245). Man is a creature capable of intentional objectivation that may return to the subjective self (the act recognizing and utilizing the objects of the world around him to satisfy his own needs), or an objectivation which finality is truly objective (true selflessness, often present in dimensions of human behavior such as ethics or the pursuit of knowledge). This dual ability means that humans must constantly, consciously or unconsciously, choose in between the final projection of his objectivation.

The conclusions arrived at by Romero are a product of their grueling development across the book's three parts and twelve chapters. Because of this, an extensive description of the phenomenological mechanisms utilized by Romero in the generation of his theory of man is essential in order to appreciate his contribution to discussions of human nature. Only then will this chapter be able to appropriately illustrate the complex interrelationality between the natural and organic, the spiritual, the real, the universal, and the transcendent at work in the constitution of man.

i. "Mere Intentionality" and "Spiritual Intentionality"

The first part of Romero's book extensively sketches man's intentional psychism and its capacity to objectivate. Objectivation, as defined by Romero, is the "perception of something as an object," which in turn is "anything which we assign a presence to before the subject…the things and beings of the external world" (Romero 2008, 39). As previously remarked, Romero's argument operates as a constant comparison of the animal world. In this case, what distinguishes man's perception to the world around them from animal perception is the former's ability to intentionally objectivate; to perceive the world in objectivations that "start from a subject and are directed towards an object"—that is, that is aware of his own projected subjectivity onto the objective world (Romero 2008, 33). Only man is able to be subject and object at the same time: "both perceiving objects and being a subject are exclusive attributes of man and define him" (Romero 2008, 39). That is what intentionality does. It "extracts the individual…and turns him into a 'me' endowed with a world" (Romero 2008, 164).

One of the main characteristics of humans' intentional objectivation is its ability to both identify a certain something as part of a broader category of objects (based on a person's previous, subjective, perception of that thing) while also knowing that it is an individual, separate object from others in its class (e.g. being able to identify what a rose is and knowing that it is not the same rose as another one seen before). They can also objectivate full or entire objects (roses) and objectivate isolated characteristics of a particular object (the redness of a rose), as well as order these objectivations in terms of scope and relevance at a given point in time. This capacity to objectivate granularly and abstractly implies a much clearer understanding of the "natural ontological order," only possible through this particular kind of "cognoscitive

apprehension" that animals, due to their lack of intentionality, do not display (Romero 2008, 61; 59).

The formulation of man as a subject in a world of objectivations also implies the existence of an "interiority," or the space where he realizes "primary objectivations" and which is a highly "intimate experience" (Romero 2008, 103). The phenomenon of self-consciousness is part of this intimate experience, though it does not encompass its entirety and thus cannot be defined as a synonym. These intimate experiences, in turn, presuppose the notion of self-perception which involves the "objectivation of identity"—in other words, the meta-objectivation of the subject himself (Romero 2008, 103).[11] It directs an individual's outward, objectivating gaze inwards, towards the self; and in the process, "disfiguring, perverting" himself as an objectivity but which allows them to "solidify, articulate, and hierarchize [their] contents" as they would an object of the outside world (Romero 2008, 104). Such return to the self is only possible through the interior, intimate kingdom of the human mind; and, most significantly, allows humans to identify and delineate their needs, desires, and abilities, among others.

Animals' pre-intentional psychism means that they live at the mercy of their own sense of "preservation and life expansion," solely engaging in acts which serve "strictly vital interests" (Romero 2008, 85). An animal has no self-perception, and thus, no awareness of itself as a subject with distinct wants and needs. It only conceives of itself as an 'itself' with a raw instinct to survive, and which will do whatever it needs in order to do so. Humans, on the other hand, view the world around them through the lens of their own subjectivity and keenly aware of what

[11] Romero utilizes 'self-consciousness' and 'self-perception' as two separate terms, self-consciousness referring to the awareness of man's own existence and self-perception describing the phenomenon of perceiving one's own identity as one would perceive the world of objectivities around them.

his post-instinctual self needs through the act of self-perception. They are thus able to "subordinate life, molding it according to its intentions," "coloniz[ing]" the temporal dimensions of reality as a type of parasite which "enslaves the complex from which it is born" but which also "elevates it to a higher dignity" (Romero 2008, 82-83).[12] Colonialist verbiage aside, the underlying implication is that while an animal's existence and survivability is a function of the land around it, human intentionality grants the power to manipulate the land to fit humanity's various aspirations, as identified through the objectivation of themselves.

That is what this type of intentionality, which returns to the self, implies: an objectivation which considers the object's utility with regard to the subject. It engages with the objective world in the interest of serving the subject's needs or wants, but in a more advanced manner than an animal would. This ability to objectivate the world as a response to the self as subject is what Romero means by "mere intentionality" (Romero 2008, 100). It is a human operation inasmuch as they are natural creatures, and as they have "organic requirements and impulses" that they distinctly fulfill by "welcoming and folding himself to these impulses and requirements" (Romero 2008, 155). This is what allows humans to, say, choose what they want to eat once they are hungry, depending on the foods they like and what they are craving at the moment. A carnivorous animal, on the other hand, rather than making a choice to eat a certain species of prey rather than another, just satisfies itself with whatever is accessible to them and whatever they are able to hunt.

However, in the latter chapters of Part One and especially in Chapter IV, "Me and The World. The Natural Man", Romero recognizes another type of human intentionality: one which

[12] Romero discriminates "real entities" as being either "spatial-temporal" or merely "temporal" (Romero 2008, 168). The former species are that which is inorganic and organic, and the latter are what is intentional and what is spiritual. This is not entirely relevant to the present thesis, but it is an important distinction to be made as part of Romero's project.

remains projected onto the object, rather than returning to the self. In these situations, man acts purely as a function of the "other" and in "response" to the objective world before him (Romero 2008, 155). This is spiritual intentionality, an "intentional act" in which the "subject subjects himself to the object" (Romero 2008, 162). While mere intentionality "redirects reality towards…man's naturality" (views reality as a function of his own unmet needs), spirituality "suppresses" man's naturality in favor of an act which "is not only directed towards objects, but by them is governed and in them it exhausts itself" (Romero 2008, 165). Intentionality with subjective intent is ordinary, intentionality with an objectivist intent is spiritual. Intent, or purpose, is what determines the nature of the act (Romero 2008, 186).

Spiritual acts often manifest themselves in man's pursuit of knowledge and dedication to the disciplines which explain the objective world without a purely self-satisfying finality. When someone decides to study mathematics and subjects themselves to the order imposed by arithmetics, algebra, calculus, etc., they are giving themselves to these entities of reality without a subjective expectation. Dedication to knowing and understanding a particular discipline is a fundamentally spiritual act in that it is the result of "an interest which in the [subject] is engendered through the mere existence or instance of the object" (Romero 2008, 196). Furthermore, the "selflessness" of the spiritual act also makes it the core of studies of morality and ethics: "absolute morality," Romero writes "belongs exclusively to the spiritual sphere" for the simple fact that pure morality begets the loss of selfish notions in service of an other (Romero 2008, 196; 155).

Yet Romero does clarify that mere intentionality is as necessary to the constitution of man as his spirituality. Spiritual intentionality "completes and perfects" mere intentionality; the latter presupposes and is "conducive to" the former (Romero 2008, 157; 148). Yet, man without

spiritual intentionality, Romero argues, “is not an animal [but is also] not a man in the full sense of the word either” (Romero 2008, 148). Though he may not act on it at a given time, he still has the capacity of spiritually objectivating the world: it is the “promise of spirit” which Romero labels as that which determines what the human condition is (Romero 2008, 148). Because the conception of spiritual intentionality necessitates mere intentionality, and since spiritual intentionality is an exclusively human ability, man needs both to be man. There arises his characteristic dualism. It is the “frequent conflict between natural conditioning from the merely intentional and the freedom of spirit…subjectivism and whole-hearted objectivism” (Romero 2008, 198). Thus, this tension between mere intentionality and spirituality is what defines man.

Beyond bestowing man with his human condition, spirituality also endows him with the capacity to transition from existential particularism to a sense of universality. As the subject is “deprived of their own effective reference to themselves, from the intention to reconduct everything to his own concrete entity,” he “feels universalized” (Romero 2008, 196). He is “projected towards reality,” free from his own subjective construction of the world and privy to objective reality, able to know it as it is and distinctly aware of himself as an object in a universe of objects (Romero 2008, 197). Romero denominates this as a “consciousness of totality…a conscience of myself in spiritual relation to the whole” (Romero 2008, 204). This universalist mechanism works in conjunction with the transcendental mechanism of spirituality. Acts of spirit are transcendental in that they are “directed towards the object and within it it remains, without effectively referring it to the existential singularity of the subject” (its particularity; the characterization of spirituality as transcendence necessitates the universalism as a direct opposite of particularism, as previously identified) (Romero 2008, 205). Transcendence, in Romero’s terms, is a “going outside of the self, an outpouring or disposition to the other” (Romero 2008,

206). Since this is precisely what characterizes an act as spiritual rather than merely intentional, Romero concludes that one may understand all spiritual acts as transcendent acts. This conclusion ultimately cements what is *Teoría del hombre*'s central thesis: "to be is to transcend" (Nuccetelli et al. 2010, 517).

Recognizing the primary characteristics of man's dual dimensions now grants the ability of distinguishing how these operations are present in and originate what are solely human institutions and faculties. Section ii of this chapter provides an overview of what Romero establishes as the key capabilities of man, the culmination(s) of his intentionalities.

ii. The Uniquely Human

Throughout *Teoría del hombre* and particularly in Part Three, "Man", Romero speaks on how intentional objectivation and spirituality explain certain dimensions of human behavior, plainly stating that the "basic situation" of man as an "intentional being…determines and conditions what in his affections and behaviors appear as specifically human" (Romero 2008, 101). Conversely, these behavioral spheres also feed and enrich aspects of human intentionality. Language, for example, is a symptom of humans' heightened objectivation. The ability to both engage in "ultra individual objectivation" (i.e. the attribution of individuality) and "general objectivations" (i.e. the attribution of category) is the only reason why languages have common nouns, or words, for certain objects rather than proper nouns for every single object they encounter (Romero 2008, 63). Once someone learns what a pencil is, and what makes a pencil a pencil, they are able to recognize another pencil when they encounter it. They know it is the same type of thing as that which they encountered before, but not the same thing. They know it's

a pencil, just not *the same* pencil. Language, in turn, strengthens man's collective intellectual ability in that it "reinforces objectivation" and enables the communication of that objectivation to other human beings, uniquely able to "giv[e it] its own life" outside of the subjective self (Romero 2008, 64; 65).

Objectivating language, Romero goes on to explain, facilitates human tradition. Language, in enabling man to communicate his objectivations to other men, allows for "the durability, the conservation of these materials indefinitely, in oral or written tradition" (Romero 2008, 108). Because tradition is of "cumulative character" and builds upon knowledge of precedent, language is key in preserving these precedents from which tradition grows out of and is enriched by (Romero 2008, 108). Furthermore, in asserting that the human experience is not only made up of one's own objectivations but also of "living…on rich soil in which the experiences of all and of every day are sedimented," Romero solidifies the essential importance of language and tradition as quintessential in the human condition. Finally, this renders man as the only being whose "peculiar and exclusive heritage is not biological," as is that of all other living species, but more broadly "the world, just as the species or group as perceived and conceived it, and all the accumulated cultural objectivations" (Romero 2008, 111).

Both because of his condition's root in tradition and because of his status as an intentional being, man is a creature of memory. Romero insists that "every human activity that does not have an equivalent in the animal is a product of man being a 'me' endowed with consistency, continuity, and autoperception" (Romero 2008, 153). This is because such capabilities come from human intentionality, the fact that he is a subject, and that he knows so; his consciousness of totality facilitates his understanding of situations "not as trimmings of their strict presence, but as elongated and complicated into others" (Romero 2008, 151). Man is

capable of judgment insofar as his perception of a certain object is subject to "certain attributes and relationships previously perceived," informing his subjective objectivation before perceiving or interacting with a given object and then influencing later perceptions of the same object (Romero 2008, 51). His objective world, as perceived through his subjective lens, is consequently a "result of his experiences," and this perception, reciprocally, "accompanies every experience" (Romero 2008, 151). More broadly, this is also what cements man as a historicist being, or one with special attention to documenting the present and learning of all that came before him.

Memory culminates in purpose. Romero's closing remarks include "all voluntary acts are necessarily endowed with purpose for him who does them and, at least, when he does them" (Romero 2008, 345). Purpose is what justifies the act to the person that executes it, a result of a "subject's interiority" and the result of the "me-object" relationship which prompts the desire to execute the act, as well as the method of execution (Romero 2008, 347; 361). Purpose acquires its highest significance when it is applied to the simple act of living. "Dignity and universality," Romero proclaims, are only qualities of men whose "lives are endowed with purpose," insofar they are able to identify what it is they want their legacy—what they transcend with—to be (Romero 2008, 366). Through their intentionality each individual is able to define what their own purpose is and decide what they want to transcend with, only accomplishable through spirituality in its universalist nature.

As will be argued in the next chapter, what Romero is able to do is expand the foundations of Frondizi's phenomenological work by giving his conception of man outward

direction, or better explain how man as a structure made up of the self and constitutive experiences interacts and affects the world around him. At the same time, he answers what Vasconcelos is unable to when he speaks of a cosmic, final race in a universalist sense: what transcendence is, and how man is able to accomplish it. *Teoría del hombre*'s central contribution to the human nature discourse is ultimately his commentary on humans in relationship to the world around them, how their interiority interacts with their existence in an objective reality, and how their spirituality tangibly impacts reality in both its dimensions (spatial-temporal and temporal). Intentionality is what defines the nature of this relationship and human legacy, as individuals and as a group.

IV. Assembling the Orchestra

With all the pieces of this project's puzzle laid out, it is now time to decipher the way in which they fit together. The final picture, ideally, will fulfill two purposes: elucidate how the similarities and differences are symptomatic of the ideological trends these authors engage in; and showcase the idea of man that these three men, only when analyzed together, ultimately construct. Though not a fully comprehensive representation of what human nature is to the subfield of Latin American Philosophy, the prominent status of these men as pioneers of this particular study produce one illustration of the field's overall tendencies in this discussion.

i. Alignments and Dissidences, or a Diagnosis of Latin American Philosophy

The task of analyzing points of convergence in the points made in the three selected books is facilitated by the fact that Romero and Frondizi have similar, theoretical proclivities, Frondizi having studied under Romero before being drawn towards the ideological currents of North American philosophy (Pappas 2011, 156). Both *The Nature of the Self* and *Teoría del hombre* are, to different extents, phenomenological books. Frondizi's engagements with the studies of substantialism and atomism branch off into a completely new formulation, which undoubtedly seeks to explain what these two theories failed to address in terms of the human experience and what the self is. Frondizi walks alone, for the most part, in this venture, seldom leaning on other phenomenological theories to articulate his argument (other than Hume's).[13] Conversely, Romero heavily leans onto the work of Edmund Husserl and Max Scheler, freely utilizing Husserl's definitions of intentionality, immanence, and transcendence in the

[13] Hume's bundle of perceptions is arguably a product of his empiricism rather than a commitment to phenomenology, though it does stand on the frontier of the latter.

development of his own theory. It can be inferred, then, that the parallels in many of Frondizi and Romero's propositions are not the result of a phenomenological trend, as they do not draw from the same authors and concepts within this subfield. It can instead be attributed to their time together working in Argentina and, by consequence, used as evidence of Latin American ideologies on the matter.

A point of contention for this logic is the fact that Romero and Frondizi write from a universalist perspective, not situated in their context as Latino and Argentine men. It is perhaps because of this that their works do not hold the same prominence in the Latin American philosophy canon as Vasconcelos's *La raza cósmica,* which is intrinsically tied to Vasconcelos's own identity as a Mexican and whose main thesis was inspired by his travels across South America. *La raza cósmica* is almost exclusively a Latin American philosophy book, while *The Nature of the Self* and *Teoría del hombre* are also of phenomenological, metaphysical, and even ontological character. This undoubtedly changes the methodology and foundations that these three men employ, and explains why Romero and Frondizi's theory of man and the self are more aligned with each others' than with Vasconcelos's—even if Vasconcelos and Romero's work do both have certain anthropological roots.[14] Yet this is also a highly valuable distinction to make, because it exemplifies the nature of Latin American philosophy as a diverse subfield of philosophy. Under the presumption that works of Latin American philosophy are so because of the national origins of their authors, the texts within the discipline are as varied as the philosophical influences of the authors and not confined by the boundaries of the region (as are fields such as continental philosophy). While this is a consequence of the subfield's, and the

[14] Romero constantly makes this distinction throughout *Teoría del hombre*, clarifying that he opts for methods of anthropological analysis instead of psychological or sociological. It is also part of the project of "philosophic anthropology". Yet for Romero it is more of a theoretical approach, while for Vasconcelos it is distinctly methodological, in the form of the ethnography that make up the second and third parts of the 1948 edition of *La raza cósmica.*

region's, relative novelty, it is also a true reflection of the people of Latin America as the children of all the races and cultures that came together in the creation of its modern condition. As it is a melting pot of race, it is also one of ideology. Its academics, with no local precedent, must venture into the philosophy born out of other regions in order to formulate their own. In this sense, it can be argued that the subfield necessitates a universalist perspective before being able to develop its own positional one. This is why, as will be demonstrated, Vasconcelos benefits from Romero's universalism and intent on understanding man before understanding the Latin American man.

Once again, however, it must be reiterated that the similarities in the arguments of Romero and Frondizi still arguably exemplify, in some regard, trends in Latin American ideologies, as the authors and traditions they draw upon overlap only superficially. One of the most outstanding similarities is the way in which Frondizi and Romero understand the flux of experiences within the self: both convey experience as something to be absorbed and which becomes part of the self. Frondizi understands experiences as the constitutive elements of the self, constantly shifting within the self, which absorbs new experiences that acquire the "coloration" of the experiences which came before it (Frondizi 1953, 182). The role of memory in Romero's theory of man echoes that same constitutive mechanism in that experiences of the past become part of the self to inform perceptions of the future: "in man occurs an ebb-and-flow between perception and memory…accumulated experiences in his memory…go on to integrate every present perception" (Romero 2008, 322). Man as an intentional being capable of judgment implicates his ability to remember, and to act upon the objective world based on previous objectivations. Romero also describes how mere intentionality, in its return to the self, is able to "hierarchize its contents, seen in connection to the center that sustains them and around which

they dispose themselves" (Romero 2008, 103). Not only does this echo Frondizi's rhetoric on how some experiences are more prominent in the self than others, but it also astoundingly sketches a similar outline of the self as Frondizi: a structure.

While Frondizi does not necessarily conceive of the self as the 'center' around which experiences orbit and would likely resist such verbiage, as it has certain atomistic connotations, Romero's conception of the self aligns with Frondizi in that it understands experiences as enduring and ever-shifting. Moreover, Romero does refer to the man as a "being with a particular structure," as well as man's intentionality as an "intentional structure" and consciousness as a "rigorous structure" (Romero 2008, 115; 187; 21). Though clearly not in the same vein as Frondizi, it is still a clear distinction from the words utilized by peers to characterize humans: a core, a substance.[15] And despite illustrating the self as having a 'center', Romero also denounces atomism in affirming that humans "are not statues, but a dynamic complex" (Romero 2008, 278). Both are, to some extent, anti-atomistic stances.

Frondizi and Romero's view of humans and the self evidently do bear resemblance to each other. The processes at play are similar; it is each author's purpose with their texts which differs and thus, their respective approaches. Romero is more preoccupied with explaining *how* man acts; Frondizi opts to explain *what* man is. Frondizi explains the inner mechanisms that enable man to be the intentional, spiritual being that Romero argues him to be. For example, in a situation of moral urgency—say, the decision to give one's meal to a homeless person—the guilt of not having done so before, the memory of a friend in a similar situation, or a previous positive interaction with another homeless person may be the determining factors in performing this

[15] Romero does utilize the word 'substance' but never in the context of what humans are; he sometimes characterizes whatever it is the body gathers from the outside world—"organic messages" as substance. He does not commit to this characterization, and also refers to them as merely "the senses" (Romero 2008, 187).

action. Frondizi illuminates how experiences within the structure of the self, awoken by the present circumstances, arise. Romero's intentionality then describes how these experiences within the self outwardly manifest towards a particular direction. In other words, Romero takes a more behavioral approach while Frondizi takes a constitutive one. If understood in this way, then each man's postulations cannot be taken in isolation as a complete picture of humanity. They are part of a sequence.

Though Vasconcelos's first edition of *La raza cósmica* text precedes both Frondizi and Romero's work by a quarter century, the Mexican thinker is never referenced in *The Nature of the Self* or *Teoría del hombre.* Expectedly so, as Vasconcelos operates in an entirely different sphere than the Argentine authors; yet, Romero's work in part does converge with Vasconcelos's in that both works address human spirituality and humans as cosmic beings. Vasconcelos describes the final stage, or evolution, of human relationships as a state of "spirituality," as opposed to "material" or "intellectual or political" (Vasconcelos 1948, 38). Such state involves shifting from reason, "reciprocal conveniences," and "appetite," to "pleasure" and "beauty" as the reigning principles of human behavior (Vasconcelos 1948, 40). Considering Romero's positing of spirituality, these conceptions bear a resemblance in that both argue that it necessitates a selfless interest in the objective world: aesthetic admiration is a complete engrossment in the object as it is and the qualities it possesses. Vasconcelos does argue, however, that such aesthetic affinity is ultimately a vehicle for joy. In that regard, it would be harder to characterize these acts as spiritual because there is a return to the self: the object is beautiful because it generates jubilation in the subject that perceives it. Even so, the objectivating act is, to some extent, a product of sheer curiosity rather than in the interest of fulfilling a natural or instinctual need. Furthermore, spirituality in Vasconcelos's terms and Romero's terms entail the

ultimate use of free will. For Vasconcelos, because pleasure, not logical resolution, is the finality of human action, men will finally be able to "do as they please, not as they must…will becomes free, it pushes out the finite and bursts and settles in a sort of infinite reality" (Vasconcelos 1948, 40-41). Romero contends that the "absolute transcendence of the spiritual act corresponds to a notably greater freedom [than that enjoyed by pre-intentional and merely organic creatures], because all natural coercions have been suppressed" (Romero 2008, 208).

In both cases, spirituality is the key for the culmination of the being: transcendence. While Vasconcelos identifies the *mestizo* race as the only human race truly able to do so as virtue of its creation under the tenets of love and pleasure (spiritual attitudes), Romero explains the reason why spirituality is conducive to universalist behavior and transcendence. Vasconcelos merely asserts that spirituality is the final step towards a cosmic humanity; Romero elucidates why this is so. Not only is spiritual intentionality transcendent in its pure objectivity and in the fact that it necessarily exists as a "function of [the] universalized conscience and at its service," but it is also a "new type of process" which intensifies the "cosmic regiment" in that it is an activity of "more intense vibration than any other type of physical and vital processes" (Romero 2008, 204; 85). It is a "drama without parallel throughout the rest of reality" (Romero 2008, 85). Because, according to Vasconcelos, only Latinos, the final race, have a truly spiritual attitude, by Romero's logic then they are indeed the only humans capable of influencing the cosmos. It explains what the final race's "truly universal vision" is (Vasconcelos 1948, 30).

Romero is also able to explain the relationship between race and mindset which Vasconcelos's perspective of human nature is built out of. It is, of course, through human intentionality, as intentional objectivation allows for the culturalization of men insofar it enables the passing of knowledge of "the world, just as the…group has perceived and conceived it, and

all the accumulated cultural objectivations" (Romero 2008, 111). The verbal expression of objectivations is "cultural creation" which is then preserved through language itself and tradition. Romero also explains that man, especially before it is able to fully objectivate on its own (i.e. in his early age), is conditioned by the culture around him. The individual "quietly trusts in the culture surrounding [him]" until he is able to question the content of these cultural objectivations (Romero 2008, 146). This "constant process of acculturation" as described by Romero thus explains how Vasconcelos's concept of mindset across races works: because their missions and end goals are different (e.g. the White man's mission is to colonize and dominate), their objectivations of the world are different, depending on how the objects around them will serve their final goal. This is how mindset arises. According to this logic, then, because Latin Americans' mission is to achieve humanity's final form, the way in which they objectivate is distinctly different than that of previous races, as these objectivations must end in the object itself rather than in function of the subject's (or in this case, race's, needs). This is why their kind is unprecedented.

The way in which Romero verbalizes the relationship between culture and the self does not only resonate with components of Vasconcelos's framework, but it is also reminiscent of the relationship between the whole and its members which Frondizi ascribes to the self. *Teoría del hombre*'s third chapter concludes by stating that as "culture makes [man]" and "he makes it," a whole is "composed and organized" which "returns to each [man]" (Romero 2008, 146). Frondizi's conceptualization of the self is, one might say, a micro-version of what Romero is depicting culture as: a whole made up of parts which are influenced by their integration to the whole, and in turn exert influence onto the whole as well. The essential piece missing from Romero's characterization is the idea that this whole cannot be reduced to its constitutive parts.

Once again, however, an operative similarity arises that though applied differently, it utilizes a somewhat similar logic.

What becomes clear is that Romero's *Teoría del hombre* nicely complements and elaborates on the work done by Frondizi on *The Nature of the Self* and Vasconcelos in *La raza cósmica.* It essentially bridges concepts found across the latter works, which can be attributed to the book's multidisciplinary approach: phenomenological like Frondizi's, anthropological like Vasconcelos's. *The Nature of the Self* and *La raza cósmica* are vastly different works of philosophy which thoughts on human nature could rarely be said to coincide with one another. This is not a matter of the authors of each book clashing with one another or struggling to find common ground on the same subject, but once again being an issue in the difference in disciplines and methods used by Frondizi and Vasconcelos. Frondizi strives to explain what the self is, while Vasconcelos seeks to explain what the end goal of humanity is and the role that Latin America plays in it. They are very dissimilar cases that, ultimately, are still very relevant to the matter of human nature, especially given Latin American philosophy's scarcity of works which touch upon this topic. Their lack of overlap displays the subfield's disciplinary scatteredness and shortage of commentary on human nature. Because of this sparsity, then Romero's multi-faceted *Teoría del hombre* is quintessential in being able to truly uncover what the nexus of Latin American philosophy and philosophy of human nature is. This is not to say that Frondizi and Vasconcelos's contributions are not equally important. As I will argue, only through the three authors' input can a truly complete picture of human nature through the lens of Latin American philosophy be constructed.

That said, there are a couple of common elements between the three books: all of them have empiricist tendencies in that they repair on how experience shapes individual and collective

selfhood; and they all understand humans and/or humanity as dynamic complexes. Frondizi does so explicitly, writing that "the self…is a unity that is dynamic and structural" (among other instances) (Frondizi 1953, 156). Vasconcelos envisions the final race as a dynamic integration of all preceding races' "treasures" and "capacities," and Romero argues that humans are dual beings, such that "integrity demands the constant confluence of mere intentionality and spirituality, and there is no true humanity without the mixture of these components and the tension produced between them" (Vasconcelos 1948, 30; Romero 2008, 187).[16] There are also broader commonalities, not necessarily present in each book but telling of certain tendencies on the matter: there is a clear interest in understanding the spiritual dimension of human existence, redefining the self and the language utilized to describe the self, and especially in deciphering the micro-mechanisms at play within the self and its interaction with the world. All of these, along with the rather diffused and sparse significant works on the topic, are good indicators of what the condition for studies on human nature within Latin American philosophy is.

ii. Tuning the Instruments

Because the postulations of Frondizi, Vasconcelos, and Romero share some common ground, it is possible to piece them together. This is not only a meaningful task in that it attempts to fill the gaps in the frameworks of these three authors, but in that it gives much-needed shape to the broadly disseminated commentary on human nature within Latin American philosophy. The hopeful consequence of this endeavor is to establish what the starting point is for those who wish to advance the field's contributions to this conversation.

[16] 'Dynamic', for these purposes, understood as a descriptive term for an organism or structure made up of parts in constant flux and transit, each with varying degrees of influence upon the whole at different points in time.

The only way to concretely do so is to begin from what has been identified as the two main commonalities between texts: empiricism and dynamism. Because empiricism is a methodological approach rather than a theoretical one (though no less indicative of the subfield's inclinations), determining what the ultimate conceptual contribution from these three men can truly only be done utilizing the dynamic nature of humanity as its foundation. Having determined this, one thing seems clear: Frondizi, in spending the most time articulating the dynamic nature of the self as a structure, establishes an appropriate groundwork from which all three theories can be integrated—especially because Frondizi gives us the metaphor of the orchestra. If the metaphor of the orchestra explains the relationship between the self and experience *while* being able to effectively capture the dynamic nature of such a whole, then we might consider extending this metaphor to Vasconcelos and Romero in order to create an all-encompassing analogy.

The orchestra as a metaphor for the self helps Frondizi effectively illustrate a whole greater than the sum of its parts, with its parts working towards a shared purpose to be transmitted by the whole—every musician playing their instruments in conjunction to produce a single melody—and each part having a different role to play within the symphony—the instruments in each section of the orchestra: strings, woodwinds, brass, or percussion. That is the basic structure of the self. Yet, Frondizi's symphony only has musicians. It does not have instruments, and it does not know the music it will play. Only Romero can provide its musicians with instruments, and Vasconcelos the sheet music.

It has been argued that Romero's main role in this assembly of works has been that of a mediator. Moreover, in Romero's intentionality we find the mechanisms through which Frondizi's argument for the self and Vasconcelos's vision for humanity are validated. Intentionality, in allowing man to understand himself as subject and in its use of memory and

judgment, is what lets man absorb experience in the constitutive manner which Frondizi describes: it becomes part of the self in that it never leaves, just shifts within the structure. Spiritual intentionality, on the other hand, in its pure objectivation and true departure from the self onto the world, explains how humanity obtains its universalist attitude and how it is that it transcends, fulfilling Vasconcelos's prescriptions. It can be said, then, that Romero bestows the musicians of the symphony with the instruments they will play, not only because it allows them to play the music but because it figuratively is the bridge through which the orchestra can play the music. In other words, it connects Frondizi's *The Nature of the Self* with Vasconcelos's *La raza cósmica.*

This makes sense taking into account Romero's piece on culture and the reciprocal nature between environment and man. By making the connection between race and mindset—or in more basic terms, environment and self—Vasconcelos essentially contextualizes the world of experiences which Frondizi's self is made out of and frees Frondizi's self from the theoretical vacuum it is conceived out of, positioning it within the real world and within the realm of a particular race and culture. It exemplifies how experience becomes part of the self through the manifestation of mindset and behavioral patterns. Yet this interrelation can only be explained through the mechanisms identified by Romero which define the relationship between the self and the objective world: intentionality and objectivation as the creators of human tradition and culture. Intentionality and objectivation are the instruments through which the self can have the experiences that make it up and modify it, as well as the instruments through which culture becomes part of the subject and influences his mindset. The different aspects of the self being utilized in carrying out these objectivations—intuition, memory, morality—determine which

particular instrument is being played at a particular moment in time (i.e. intuition is brass instruments, memory is percussion, etc.).

This leaves Vasconcelos as the author in charge of determining the music to be played. Vasconcelos's ultimate preoccupation is output: legacy, the fulfilling of a mission, the tangible effects of human civilizations. Making tangential Frondizi's self, exemplifying the way in which immediate empirical experience becomes part of the self (or how culture shapes behavior and attitude), Vasconcelos allows the symphony's musicians to *make* music instead of existing in a metaphorical limbo, forever on stand-by. Furthermore, Vasconcelos's model of human behavior as one heavily guided by an individual's race is, in a way, prescribing the genre of melody an individual will play. Under these terms, each race would play a different genre of music, but every individual plays their own unique song by virtue of being individuals.

This integration of 'genre of music' does imply the adoption of Vasconcelos's racialized understanding of humanity. It consecrates the idea that behavior and mindset vary depending on a person's race. However, the way in which this is being suggested as a fundamental aspect of this metaphor is not truly Vasconcelian. The reason why race shapes behavior is not inherent to the race itself. It is not biological, it is not programmed. It rather engages with Romero's understanding of culture and tradition, and how objectivations spread within members of the same race and adjacent cultures (Romero 2008, 146). While Romero identifies language as the reason for this phenomenon, it is Vasconcelos who is truly able to explain how race becomes adjacent to culture: geographic proximity. As races of the world congregated in their geographic clusters through segmented domination of land (as explained by Vasconcelos: "the triumph of the White man started with the conquest of snow and the cold") and processes of segregation, cultural objectivations spread only within the same race (Vasconcelos 1948, 35). Racial

proximity promotes an environment where culture becomes adjacent to race. By identifying the relationship between race and mindset, Vasconcelos implicitly delineates these different cultural categories. In the context of this metaphor, then, his role as 'musical director' is cemented only through his recognition of race as indicator of mindset and the role of geography, though this can only be attributed to the dimension of culture and not biology through Romero. This highlights the importance of reading these authors in conjunction, as only then is this an acceptable understanding of race as the genre of music. Finally, it is important to clarify that the five races named by Vasconcelos are not the only being proposed here as the only races, cultures, or 'genres of music', as Vasconcelos's racial categories are severely limited. Race here encompasses all denominations that divide humans on the basis of their appearance and heritage.

It is only through the orchestra that these men are able to assemble together that a truly complete picture of the human being arises. The way in which each human exists within the world can be explained through their constitution as an orchestral being who, supplanted by instruments and sheet music, play their own unique songs for the world to hear. This analogy explains the processes through which an individual plays a particular melody, which instruments stand out at a specific moment in time, and how they all come together to constitute a single unified whole made up of systems that need each other in order to play the music. Not only is this a complex constitution of man which aims to explain various dimensions of the self and human existence in a new, innovative way, truly evidencing the significance of considering the Latin American contribution to the philosophy of human nature and vice versa; but it is also a rather symbolic representation of the dynamic nature of Latin American philosophy and the interrelationality of the works of its exponents. It is only natural that a subfield led by men of

historical, social, and political multiplicities engenders a similarly manifold and layered understanding of the self.

By examining the works of Risieri Frondizi, José Vasconcelos, and Francisco Romero individually and collectively, this project has hopefully demonstrated the importance of the study of human nature through the lens of Latin American philosophy's deeply diverse, rich, and dynamic foundations. Risieri Frondizi's notion of the self as *gestalt* puts forth a postulation of the self seldom considered before in a firm attempt to stand against the substantialism and atomism of phenomenological tradition. This innovative stance not only provides a framework through which the enduring aspects of the self can be explained, thus accounting for realities of human existence such as memory and agency, but also gives lip service to the dynamically complex nature of the self. The self is always in the making, always integrating new members into the structure that constitutes it, and constantly evolving through the incorporation of these new experiences and the re-signification of previous experiences. More than anything, however, the self is a whole greater than the sum of its parts, a relationship he likens to that of an orchestra and its members: it cannot exist without them, but the music they make is greater than what they would have been able to play in isolation. Such is the self and the experiences that constitute it.

Contrastingly, José Vasconcelos completely embraces his positionality as a Latin American man in his portrayal of a racialized humanity destined to coalesce into a single, final race in the form of the Latin American *mestizo.* Through the evaluation of the racial history of the world, the conquests of the White man, and the constitutive differences of the Latino race, Vasconcelos' *La raza cósmica* predicts the culmination of human history in the triumph of the people of Latin America, children of all races of the world. Vasconcelos recognizes the historical mandate of the Latino people, ultimately cemented by their conception and predilection towards pleasure and free will. Yet beyond his idealism lies a fundamentally segmented understanding of humanity which utilizes race as its organizing principle. Race, Vasconcelos argues, determines an

individual's mission, and along with geographical distribution, their mindset. In the context of Frondizi's metaphorical orchestra, Vasconcelos provides the sheet music to be played in that he verbalizes the importance of output, or legacy, and assigns the type of music based upon an individual's race, recognizing their aptitude and inclinations towards a particular genre given their race.

Francisco Romero's survey across all aspects of human intentionality results in a dualistic interpretation of man where natural impulses and spiritual inclinations exist in perpetual tension with each other. This duality is not only what makes man human, but it also explains how the culmination of objective intentionality in the form of spirituality makes man a cultural and historicist being. *Teoría del hombre* also explains how humanity is transcendent insofar it is spiritual: spirituality as an object-aimed objectivation signifies an outpouring of the subjective self onto the world. Man is as capable of these objectivations as he is of objectivating the world to fulfill his needs and desires as a subject, hence the different nature of certain actions that, though different in execution, are exclusively and uniquely human. Romero deciphers the tools humans utilize to interact with the world around them and be part of it in a particular way; as well as relating Frondizi's self to the world around it and explaining Vasconcelos's transcendent cosmic race. It illustrates and provides both men with the necessary instruments—literally and metaphorically—to validate their theories of human nature in practice.

The orchestra's musicians, instruments in hand and scores in their stands, are thus able to make music. The integration of Frondizi's, Vasconcelos's, and Romero's inputs culminate in a multi-dimensional conception of human beings as ever-changing and purposeful individuals, each meant to play a different song. The questions posed by the gaps in their contributions can be answered by each other in a way that highlights the importance of finding these connections

within works in the subfield of Latin American philosophy in order to build solid foundations for the field to build upon in seldom-discussed topics. This venture into the field's potential to substantially enrich discourse on humanity and human nature yielded a highly complex understanding of man that would not be complete without having engaged these three authors in conversation with one another. In addition to a new articulation of the human existence, its implications on further research on the matter within Latin American philosophy, and in-and-of itself, this project is also a representation of the methods through which new bases for the field can be established. Finally, it aspires to be a testament to the importance of re-treading known territory in order to map different routes and reach undiscovered destinations. Only then can the subfield find new meaning—and, as Romero affirms, transcend.

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