

José Ortega y Gasset *Lino Molina*

For this paper, I will write on the Spanish philosopher José Ortega y Gasset's theory of personhood and identity. This paper will be a generalized overview of his theory concerning personhood and identity which will come from the Continental tradition of phenomenology and existentialism. This paper will encompass three sources of material from this philosopher stemming from the beginning of his career to his later years of mature work. The three pieces of work I will be looking at will be his first book *Meditations on Quixote* (2000), his book based on lectures entitled *What is Philosophy?* (1964) and an essay from his book *History as a System* entitled "Man the Technician" (1962) from his late period. I will present his theory by showing continuity from his early writings to his later work, and show how his work complements the work of one of Ortega y Gasset's main influences, the philosopher Friedrich W. Nietzsche.

This paper will also focus on man being-in-the-world, the emergence of technology stemming from humans and some of Ortega's focal points of his phenomenology.

José Ortega y Gasset finds man as being thrown in the world and finding oneself as amid circumstance. Circumstance is one's surrounding, the external world and how the external world influences oneself cognitively and biologically. Ortega says that as man is thrown into the world, one has no desire to live, to be in the world, but instead has a desire for well-being and that one is hanging onto life. This desire for well-being is inseparable from the desire to be in the world though, to live, and this comes about as circumstance imposes itself on one creating problems for one's well-being, to live.

Ortega's conception of well-being is referring to one's biological and psychological well-being of a human, though he mentions that one primarily focuses and experiences one's psychological well-being.

With circumstance there are what is known as "objective necessities," which refer to things like food, heat, movement, etc., which are human necessities that are considered "objective conditions of life understood as mere existence in the world; they are

necessary according as man thinks it necessary to live" (Ortega 1962, p. 99). What Ortega is also indicating here is that humans have an "elastic attitude" in regards to their necessities, never abolishing them but always aware that they are necessary for living, and so these necessities can be suspended for a time so as to strengthen and improve one's well-being in other areas. Ortega also indicates that a human who is experiencing only being and not achieving well-being would want to commit suicide; life would become unbearable after a while.

Ortega notes that there are two purposes in life. The first is to promote the biological and organic state of existence by adapting the individual to nature. The second is to promote well-being, the good life which is human necessities, biological being, which is necessarily connected with well-being. The second purpose calls for nature adapting to the will of the individual.

It is also noted that human necessities vary and are always changing, and that humans are a function of these necessities that also change them. It is here that we find Ortega making an important claim that technology is synonymous with man and well-being, that technology emerges from man's existence, from man's dealing with circumstance. When we conceive all these as synonymous, Ortega says then we can understand the "meaning of technology as an absolute fact in the universe" (Ortega 1962, p. 100). Ortega then says that "Man without technology – that is, without reaction upon his medium – is not man" (Ortega 1962, p. 96). Ortega defines technology as originating cognitively as a plan one devises in dealing with the world, with one's circumstances to then be manifested through action either as a set of rules or guidelines, all to better one's well-being.

And so from here Ortega looks at animals and says they are atechical and are satisfied with the act of living, coupled with the objective requirements for living. It is from this view of raw being, of bare living, that animals are considered perfect, needing no technology. If human technology entered this realm of being it would be in excess since both the animals' instincts and human technology, though different, serve the purpose of sustaining organic life. Ortega says what we would have here are two sets of acts, one being the animals' instinctive acts and the other being man's technical acts. Man's technical acts coupled with the animals' instinctive acts so as to make bearable and easier the satisfaction of the necessities of animals would be an "overkill" and excess. Here Ortega says that humanity has emerged out of the state of being in which one adapts to nature, in which one performs those actions which are only necessary for that state of existence of the animal, to

emerge into what is called "human life." This human life that Ortega introduces is humans individually creating in their minds a psychological representation of themselves, of who they existentially want to be and performing actions to manifest this imagined existential future state in reality. This is basically the self-fulfilling prophesy of which psychologists and Nietzsche talk about as part of the constitution of self-overcoming. Ortega is basically saying that one must become the engineer of one's own life if one is to acquire "human life," and to do that we must create a psychological fiction of ourselves so that we can phenomenologically experience it. In a sense we must lie to ourselves so that we can exist beyond the existential animal state.

Ortega specifies several times in "Man the Technician" that technical acts are not used to directly satisfy our necessities whether they be biological or superfluous, but are actually acts of effort and energy of a limited degree to save effort of a larger degree. These technical acts originate with the conception and manifestation of a plan of action which will satisfy our necessities, and benefit one's well-being. This is the moving power behind technology.

But another problem arises – that of all the saved effort and energy brought on by its human creators and technology. What becomes of so much idle time and energy? Ortega says that in order to find out the essence of technology we must first find out where all this saved effort and energy goes. With that, he then seems to be hinting towards the "human life," the life invented, as was mentioned before as an answer to this existential problem.

Man is thrown into existence under certain circumstances with which he must deal. Man has been biologically determined with instincts and the intellect to harness and direct these instincts towards well-being with will and thought. Concerning man's biological constitution, there are needs that need to be satisfied for living; they are necessary for living. These necessities are satisfied by actions that are required for the state of existence akin to an animal, to adapt to nature. Such necessities are food, drink and heat. Such actions that necessarily arise and are given the capacity to manifest them to man are given by nature such as walking, gathering food, and warming oneself. Such necessities are not necessary in themselves but necessary for living, and that their "necessariness" is conditional, not unconditional. The conditional status of these necessities can be seen in Ghandi or ascetics who would fast and test their neurophysiological strength in extreme temperatures, etc. Ortega defines necessity as "necessary natural conditions of life." He also mentions that, "Man is aware of their material or objective 'necessariness' and therefore feels them subjectively as necessities."

Ortega says that life is the necessities of necessities, that living is the original necessity and all other necessities are mere consequences of this first. But this necessity which is life is only a necessity in the subjective sense created by man's desire to live, by an act of will. By this same act of will and reinforcing the conditional states of necessities, man will sometimes commit suicide, to voluntarily end one's own existence.

Now in referring back to what was said earlier concerning these biological necessities that need to be satisfied by taking actions such as gathering food, walking, keeping warm, etc., what would man do if such a method of action failed in satisfying biological necessities? Man would take further steps, a second method of action in dealing with circumstance, a "Plan B" if you will which arises from man's desire to live a good life. This second set of actions is in contrast to the first in which the individual would adapt to nature. The second would have man direct his/her will upon the imposed circumstances in which he/she is embedded. Man by an act of will makes nature adapt to him/herself and man's creations. When there is no fire to keep warm so that one may not die or get sick, man will create a fire.

With the aforementioned, this redefines our concept of necessity and existence. Ortega says that as man realizes ever more fully the necessities and actions that satisfy them which both rise together especially with the failure of the first set of actions, then the planning and execution of the second set of actions, one realizes necessities come to be with different states of existence. One then considers the state of existence of an animal: does that existence which adapts to nature experience necessities? Ortega says no. He says this pointing out for their state of existence (in which one is biologically determined and suitable to an environment in which one adapts to nature not by choice, and whose first set of actions generally works to exist in that environment) one does question whether such a state of being can ever psychologically experience necessity regardless of how hungry an animal is. It can never subjectively experience necessity because of its biological and environmental disposition. There is nothing else for the animal to do besides acting out those first set of actions described earlier so as to satisfy its hunger. Ortega goes on to say that an animal cannot subjectively see hunger and necessity as tied together because it does not experience its surrounding circumstances being imposed on its biological being to experience necessity when one plans out and manifests a second set of actions in response to a failed first set of actions. This does hint to how conditional the being of man is.

Lastly, Ortega indicates that this second set or system of actions in response to nature and circumstance is what we call a tool or technology. Technology is a response to nature and circumstance when a first set of actions failed to acquire satisfaction of hunger or heat. Technology is not meant to directly satisfy our necessities but is there to primarily achieve a better life. In addition, technology modifies nature and circumstance to man's advantage, and not to directly satisfy our necessities. That was the purpose of the first set of actions which failed and their capacity to manifest them were biologically given to us by nature.

Ortega also notes that the invention of a technological procedure presupposes that it guarantees the satisfaction our needs at our pleasure any time within certain limits. What we have here then is this technology, specifically modern technology as non-adaptable to changing circumstances and eliminating any sort of effort or striving to achieve a good life, a well-being, and this is devaluing effort in some sense.

It is here that we can see some of Ortega's Nietzschean roots as he looks at the concept of psychological insecurity brought out in part by the imposition of circumstance on man, thus enabling the emergence of attaining security psychologically and branching it out materially through technology. This origin of insecurity in technology Ortega finds disgusting, like Nietzsche he sees most of humanity as hampered by it and existing through life hesitantly, cautiously. This has harmed mankind overall. Though, like Nietzsche, Ortega does look at the opposite side of things for analysis as to the functional benefit of this fear and insecurity in which security and technology emerged together as actions trying to satisfy a necessity of the masses. This fear was beneficial to humankind in that it made people cautious of the world and not too brazen, cavalier, or cocky. Although he does add to this in *What is Philosophy?*, especially concerning science and how things in the past had gone awry in the nineteenth century. Ortega sides with pragmatism yet he also critiques it in *What is Philosophy?* saying that pragmatism had also led to what he calls the "imperialism of physics" which had dethroned philosophy and gave to the people an easier time in dealing with questions of the Universe by dissecting it into specialized disciplines that the scientists thought they knew the Universe, hence this is in reference to the hypothesis. Science, with its pragmatic application, began to see itself as absolute and so convinced the populace to propagate the trend. This is where Ortega refers to sciences effects as the "terrorism of the laboratories." Ah, but Ortega also notes in "Man the Technician" that the world, circumstance, coerces humans into self-reflection, especially more for

others a deep self-reflection of oneself and the Universe, and think philosophically. In *What Is Philosophy?* Ortega talks about philosophy as a different kind of method than that of science; instead of hanging on for security to the scientific method and presuppositions of the Universe as we see in the scientist, the philosopher practices a heroic intellectualism, doing away with these presuppositions and acknowledging that it is possible that one will find his/her answers and one might not.

On stating the problem of philosophy we found it to be the most radical, most fundamental problem that could be imagined, the very archetype of the problems. On the other hand we saw the more problematical a problem is, the purer is the cognitive, theoretic attitude which perceives and scrutinizes it. Hence, philosophy is the intellectual exercise par excellence; compared with it, all the other sciences, including pure mathematics, hold a prestige of the practical. (Ortega 1962, p. 92)

And with this, Ortega thinks that the sciences are subordinate to philosophy and philosophy should appropriate the sciences in answering the larger questions that philosophy provides and tackles with.

With the fundamental questioning of the Universe that is philosophy which circumstance coerces us to, we now start looking for knowledge in the Universe and to answer the question of what the Universe is. Ortega starts to do some phenomenology here as he tells us that when we perceive the world we can never experience its totality at once but instead we see pieces of it, fragments of the world. Ortega gives the description of being in a room and that experience of the room is only an immediate fragment of the Universe. This is what Ortega calls in his book *Meditations on Quixote* the patent world, experiencing the world in the natural attitude. Though this example of the room given in *What is Philosophy?* does not use the term "patent world" but instead uses the term "present," both terms are serving the same description. Ortega also says that what is outside the room, what is awaiting us if one opens the door and experiences the rush of perceptual experience come at oneself is what is "compresent," this "outside" is the background for the room and it is experienced through the experience of the room as one becomes aware, notices that this room and all the individual objects inside of it are only a fragments to something larger, something beyond, something appropriating this room. The manner in which the room presents itself implies or refers to a world outside to be experienced, that is enfolding. This is what Ortega calls the "compresent" or as he also calls it in *Meditations on Quixote*, the "latent world." In *Meditations on Quixote* Ortega gives us an example

of walking through a forest and experiencing the path that one is walking as present or patent but that when one notices other paths to be taken or other nooks and crannies to be investigated, asking what is under that rock or experiencing the back and “insides” of objects. Ortega gives us more examples in this book when he is walking through the forest and notices the two sounds, the stream and an oriole flying past, who rests on a branch and starts chirping. Ortega says that one directs their attention, focuses on the sound of the stream, but yet can hear the oriole as part of the background. When one directs their attention to the oriole’s singing, that singing of the bird is pushed into focus and at the same time the sound of the stream is pushed in the background to be out of focus, “blurred” if you will. But one will also notice that as one does this focusing from one thing to another, one will realize and experience depth and distance, and that out in the objective world such measurements do not exist and are only anthropomorphic as one engages with the world. Thus,

If there were only a passive way of seeing, the world would be reduced to a chaos of luminous dots; but besides the passive way there is an active seeing which interprets by seeing and sees by interpreting, a seeing which is observing. (Ortega 2000, p. 68)

What Ortega is giving us here is a taste of his phenomenology. This active seeing that he talks about will be given the term of foreshortening as that it is a combination of active seeing and passive seeing otherwise known in phenomenology as the “natural attitude.” The experience given earlier in regards to seeing and experiencing depth and distance is essentially apperception to which Ortega gives the term “depth.” This depth can also be experienced with color:

What color do we see when we see a faded color? The blue which we have before us we see *as having been* a more intense blue, and this seeing the present color along with its past color, through what it was formally, is an active vision which is not like a reflection in a mirror; it is an *idea*. The fading or dulling of a color is a new virtual quality which comes over it, giving it something like a temporal depth. Without the need of reasoning, in a single, momentary vision, we discover the color and its history, its hour of splendor and its present ruin. And something within us echoes, instantly, that same process of decline, of decay; hence the somewhat depressing effort a faded color has on us. (Ortega 2000, p. 68)

In the latter case the surface, without ceasing to be flat, expands in depth. This is what we call foreshortening. Vision in depth is made possible by foreshortening, in which we find an extreme case of a fusion of simple vision with a purely intellectual act. (Ortega 2000, p. 69)

So, with experiencing this depth, this apperception, we can say, "that when a thing is present, the world is always compresent, always included with it." (Ortega 1964, p. 96)

From here, Ortega then talks about what he calls the "fundamental being." The fundamental being is always presented to us in its absence, he says, "The fundamental being, by its very essence, is not a datum, is never a thing present to the understanding; it is the very thing that is lacking in all that is present" (Ortega 1964, p. 98). Ortega further adds that the fundamental being seems to present itself as different, or exotic, a contradiction, the non-being. This seems to go hand in hand with what I showed earlier about depth, of foreshortening, but Ortega here says that we are experiencing things non-being especially when we look at a person with an amputated arm (as he gives in one example) or the latent world outside of the room. Through this conscious experience of philosophy, some people perceive the fundamental being as a problem, a theoretical problem, as if the world is pleading for us to philosophize to complete it, to complete a concept of the Universe, the purpose of philosophy as Ortega tells us (Ortega 1964, pp. 97-98). What Ortega is telling us here with the fundamental being as well as in the examples in *Meditations on Quixote* (which are all telling about apperception, eidetic seeing, and foreshortening, and the mission of philosophy to complete a concept of the Universe) the latent world, the compresent and the fundamental being are scaffolding for the foreground, for what is presented to us immediately, the patent world. What is also alluded to here is that since the world is fragmented into objects which imply a latent world that is apperceived – but can be investigated when it is moved into our immediate perceptual field, and that this latent world which serves as background scaffolding to the patent immediate world which is moved into focus as we move our attention to it – we humans ourselves are fragmented. What is meant is that we humans engage with the world, our circumstances, and that through this engagement one recognizes the world as always alluding to non-being, the fundamental being, necessarily in the world, and that the world is fragmented.

Now, here we consider the concept of "radical reality" which the fundamental being is alluding to. Radical reality is the tightrope walk that Ortega faces with his form of existentialism and phenomenology. Radical reality is trying to not fall into the trap of idealism and to keep that balance of thought and action. In radical reality, Ortega emphasizes that human subjective experience is the focal point all other realities radiate outward from – that human existence is then the measure of things. But Ortega notes that even

though human perception is central, it is not the most important one. Ortega is trying to get across that radical reality is my circumstances that I always find myself in and that circumstance, the world is dependent upon my being to give it existential value, and depth as one discovers new ways of experiencing the world through philosophizing and science.

Ortega also notes that "every life is a perspective upon the universe, he does not negate objective truth." (Gonzalez 2005, p. 72) As explained in the book by Dr. Pedro Blas Gonzalez entitled *Human Existence as Radical Reality*, Ortega has several different explanations as to why one cannot know objective reality. One is that humans are finite beings which can only know that which enters one consciousness at any time, and this means anything that enters one's consciousness derives from one's circumstances. A second is that humans have a finite consciousness that is rooted in time and can contain a certain number of experiences to which one will have to decide which ones one will focus on and which ones one will ignore and disregard. Humans are limited by their subjectivity, further it is so because humans lack the tools to get beyond this subjective experience to get to that purely objective realm. This is one of the many explanations to Ortega's famous quote "I am I and My Circumstances."

From here, we can see that Ortega sees that existence and our perspective is nothing but the processes of the priorities of the will. This is most notable in his essay "Man the Technician."

In section four of "Man the Technician," Ortega points out the necessary importance of the functionality of what he calls facilities and difficulties valued by humans and brought about by the construction of nature or circumstance. Man finds him/herself embedded, biologically existing with the world, yet when humans utilized what is considered a first set of actions used to satisfy needs (or what Ortega says are first experienced as desires since nature provides for the organism) that is suited specifically for a particular environment. But man is not suited for one particular environment, and with that, man experiences facilities and difficulties existing in the world, this is most realized when those aforementioned first set of actions are put to the test and for the majority of the time fail. When this has come about, one does not cease to function and resign from existence at this stage like an animal would, which was suggested by Ortega, but man would devise a plan of action to then mobilize it to counter the difficulties in which man experiences him/herself as somewhat alien to the world. This "somewhat" that I mentioned is in regards to what Ortega says that man experiences him/herself as "a kind of ontological centaur, half immersed in

nature, half transcending it." This "half immersed" is in regards to man's biological constitution, man's biological and physiological existence. The "half transcending" is referring to man's "extranatural," the Self, or one's character that is not given to us by nature from the outset, but must be constructed over time with much effort.

It is from this point that I interpret Ortega is referring to biological determinism. Human beings are different from the rest of animal life, being that they can emerge out of the state of existence known as "animal life" into the state of existence known as "human life." For this to be possible man would have to be biologically determined to have the cognitive capacity to do that in contrast to animals. In addition, humans would have to be biologically determined cognitively to phenomenologically and psychologically experience what Ortega is suggesting. This is to experience one's life as a project, a life project constantly being built earning one's existence by being-in-the-world, by experiencing and earning one's existence hour by hour through nature's facilities and difficulties, as the world provides, cares for one and yet challenges one, but we must remember not to sound anthropomorphic when describing how one interacts with nature. As Ortega said, a person has to earn his/her existence metaphysically. This is so because man does not fully coincide with nature but is (as was mentioned earlier) an ontological centaur. It is that "extranatural" part of us that aspires to be something more, to surpass one's present state of existence, and to reaffirm one's existence through a technological system. The constitution of technology, according to Ortega, is originated when someone constructs an idea or concept forming a plan of action to counter circumstance which is being imposed on the individual. When this plan of action has been constructed temporally it must then be manifested through action by an organism in space and time, again all motivated by the psychological well-being of the organism so as to save large amounts of effort and energy by using some effort and energy to accomplish this. This systematic technological method is also utilized by man in maintaining and surpassing one's existence as one "becomes" when one manifests their aspirations through action to constitute "being," to "be" such and such. Man builds him/herself, man is an engineer, man is a technician. Man is not just constituted by his/her biological makeup but also of a character that wants to vent its strength to transcend itself, it aspires for a better life, this aspiring never stops. But what is most needful of this better life is to manifest the aspiration into a reality instead of it existing as mental images which are constituted by grey matter and electrical charges. As Ortega says, one can easily think of oneself taking on a

certain social role with a better psychological well-being, but that is very different from actually "being" that concept of oneself in the future. It is very different from actually living it and manifesting it through one's body by action. With this Ortega says that man is an aspiration and is always "becoming," having to earn one's existence which means by that process of realizing one's aspirations under given conditions in which we find ourselves. Through these given conditions, these circumstances are facilities and difficulties that a person encounters in his/her pursuit of their "life project," and what is confronted by us has no being apart from us nor independent of us. A thing's value of being considered a facility or difficulty in life is dependent upon whether it helps, reinforces, and serves one's aspirations, one's life project, or presents itself as contesting one's aspirations. This life project stamps its profile on the world which surrounds me, and the world or circumstance reacts to this as described in the aforementioned, to my life project.

What is also to be said here is that Ortega sees the body as part of circumstance, that one's body is also considered a thing as one finds oneself with it in life. As for my interpretation, I see it that one's aspirations of greatness are what differentiate one from non-living things and animals. One's aspirations seem to phenomenologically redefine the body, by reanimating it as one with those aspirations, as an essential ingredient in the manifestation of one's aspirations.

Ortega notes that one's aspirations are an explanation for such great relativity in the experience of reality, the world. He says that to each personal life project or aspiration the world of circumstance presents differing facilities and difficulties that change over time as that person's necessities change over time as well. Man then is motivated to attain a psychologically comfortable temporary state of existence known as well-being which accomplished through a set of actions that makes nature adapt to a certain extent to man. These set of actions secondly satisfy man's necessities. So, these actions are hitting two birds with one stone, as they say. These sets of actions are primarily used to reduce the amount of effort and energy to maintain psychological well-being and the satisfaction of biological necessities to live. What Ortega has not pointed out so far is how does biological determinism comes into play here so as to affect one aesthetically – to attract someone to take certain or different courses of action to maintain well-being. Through aesthetics how would one psychologically respond? Then again Ortega's circumstance does seem to answer that through determinism, though very generally.

This life project of Ortega's also dictates how people phenomenologically perceive technology and its uses. To note again Ortega sees the sets of actions that were described above and the life

project as kind of technology, and sees them as the origins of technology. Ortega says that technology was created to adapt nature to man's will, to eliminate or reduce effort and energy so that man can use and direct that effort and energy to accomplish, from the conception to the manifestation, a better future existential state of being. At the same time, one is satisfying the biological necessities for living, these requirements for living. This is basically what Nietzsche calls "self-overcoming," and the "will to power" taken from this Ortega interpretation.

In section seven of "Man the Technician" we see even further the Nietzschean influences in Ortega's thought. Like Nietzsche, Ortega looks down upon the Indian ascetic as being "anti-life" though he does not do it as blatantly as Nietzsche did. Another thing is Nietzsche supports the concept of phenomenologically experiencing life like a game, a sport, a seeing oneself as one player among many, to be a good sport even in life's most harsh horrific moments, and to respond to such circumstances in a most dignified way. Ortega does seem to hint (as he has done in other sections) that one should not hold back their emotions too much, but to keep their composure through self-discipline. Be passionate about life's every moment but not an "emotional wreck." To have self-control, to want "to live intensely in this world and to be as much of an individual as he possibly can, centered in himself and filled with a sense of independence of everything else" (Ortega 1962, p. 131). Ortega says this type of person would have the principle element of "a basic feeling of leisure derived from an ample control over the world" (Ortega 1962, p. 131). This control that Ortega talks about is the same as Nietzsche's idea of control in having much self-control, self-discipline of oneself but trying to gain control of one's circumstances, and yet this self-control is based on prior experiences of having control in certain environments. This type of person is also described by Ortega as having good personal hygiene including one's aesthetic tastes. Nietzsche says the same thing too, but he emphasizes more one's aesthetic tastes and company one befriends, to not lower one's standards and condescend to the Last Man; one has a better self-esteem than to do that. This type of person that I have been describing and implying is what Ortega calls the "gentleman" type. The gentleman type seems to have a more subtle tone than that of Nietzsche's *Übermensch*, plus this gentleman type does not seem to have the moral or social impact on humanity to the degree that the *Übermensch* does, even though there are similarities. In this section, Ortega introduces one last character, and that is the "hidalgo." In contrast to the gentleman type in which Ortega describes (and got most of his inspiration from) the characters and

behavior of certain socio-economic classes of the English and how they run their businesses, the hidalgo of Spain differs only in economic wealth. Seeming to understand certain aspects of suffering that the gentleman type knows nothing of (and vice versa) the hidalgo does not let his lack of economic wealth anger him as we see the majority of humankind do. To make a short note, this also sounds very much like the concept of overcoming in Nietzschean thought. The hidalgo has learned to live without much material wealth but yet bestows dignity, much like the Übermensch's "bestowing virtue," on his conditions. Ortega says that dignity makes the hidalgo and the gentleman equals, like non-jealous brothers.

Ah, but the figures of the gentleman and hidalgo types made their first appearance in *Meditations on Quixote*, and was presented much more beautifully, much more aesthetically. In *What is Philosophy?*, this Nietzschean definition of the hero is presented again though Ortega is calling it much like Nietzsche did in some of his passages, "intellectual heroism," though playing a more active role in the world and not the image of a scholar. In the following passages that I will present from the chapter called "The Hero" one can still see the references to the emergence of technology, the ontological-centaur, the fundamental being, and those strong Nietzschean influences.

People may be able to take good fortune away from this neighbor of ours, but they will not be able to take away his effort and courage. His adventures may be the vapors of a fermenting brain, but his will for adventure is real and true. Now, adventure is a dislocation of the material order, something unreal. In this will for adventure, in this effort and courage, we come across a strange dual nature, whose two elements belong to opposite worlds; the will is real but what is willed is not real.

How is it possible for that which does not exist—a projected adventure—to govern and alter harsh reality? Perhaps it is not possible, but it is a fact that there are men who decide not to be satisfied with reality. Such men aim at altering the course of things; they refuse to repeat the gestures that custom, tradition, or biological instincts force them to make. These men we call heroes, because to be a hero means to be one out of many, to be oneself. If we refuse to have our actions determined by heredity or environment it is because we seek to base origin of our actions on ourselves and only on ourselves. The hero's will is not that of his ancestors or of his society, but his own. This will to be oneself is heroism.

I do not think that there is any more profound originality than this "practical," active originality of the hero. His life is a perpetual resistance to what is habitual and customary. Each movement that

he makes has first to overcome custom and invent a new kind of gesture. Such a life is a perpetual suffering, a constant tearing oneself away from that part of oneself which is given over to habit and is a prisoner of matter. (Ortega 2000, pp. 148-149)

This concludes my paper on Ortega y Gasset's theory of personhood and identity, which addresses the cognitive development of people the emergence of technology, the phenomenological and existential experience of being-in-the-world, Nietzschean influenced concepts of self-overcoming and the ideal person.

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