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COMMUNISM AND NATIONALISM

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By Victor Alba

Hand in hand with the expansion of Communist power in the postwar world, there has come into being a voluminous body of literature analyzing Communist methods of political penetration. The relatively few among these studies which deal with Communist action in Latin America have tended to emphasize the party's tactics of wooing support among key segments of the population by means of flattery and promises of material benefit, reinforced on occasion by threats or by what might be termed political "blackmail" - in brief, by the familiar Communist technique of the carrot and the stick.

What has, however, been generally neglected so far is the broader ideological context within which the Latin American Communists have cast their campaigns and through which they have achieved a measure of success. As in the recent past in Asia, and to a certain extent also in Eastern Europe, communism in Latin America has not operated under the aegis of the traditional slogans of class struggle and proletarian revolution. Aware of the lack of solid Marxist tradition among the Latin American population, the Communists decided to conduct their propaganda in a more comprehensible political idiom; they developed what for Latin America was a new concept of nationalism and then proceeded to exploit it for their own political purposes. It would be meaningless to discuss Communist policies in Latin America without an analysis of this new type of nationalism. And in order to explain its genesis, we must first turn to a consideration of traditional Latin American nationalism.

#### THE ERA OF POSITIVE NATIONALISM

The boundaries of the twenty countries that form Latin America correspond roughly to the administrative divisions of the Spanish colonial period. Almost all these countries originally obtained their independence not from Spain but from the Spanish crown which had been usurped by one of Napoleon's brothers. Thus the present republics assumed statehood before ever having acquired separate national characteristics, and this circumstance in turn was responsible for the development of a "continental" feeling, a sense of each country's belonging to a bigger whole, Latin America.

Simon Bolivar, the most outstanding leader of the independence movements, was also a proponent of Latin American unity, and toward this effort even called a meeting of American states in Panama. Other attempts to promote Latin American unity followed; sometimes they were regional in nature (the Isthmus Federation for example), sometimes political (establishment of the APRA in Peru.) All these efforts failed, to be sure, but they had the effect of strengthening the desire for unity, particularly among the intellectuals and the middle class.

As a result, the Latin American intellectual was, until some twenty years ago, a "continentalist"; he advocated union of the Latin American countries in order to solve the great problems of the continent - to develop agriculture, improve education, lay foundations for the growth of democratic institutions, and encourage the emergence of continental culture. The hope expressed in *La Raza Cosmica* by Jose Vasconcelos, the Mexican philosopher, conveyed the hopes of most Latin American intellectuals, regardless of political tendencies. In Latin America, Vasconcelos said, two cultures were being fused, the Western and the native. Likewise, two races, the white and the Indian, were being amalgamated. In the future, he thought, Latin America would be the place whence a new culture, a synthesis of East and West would emerge.

The development of national consciousness within the individual Latin American republics was based on concrete factors, not abstract ideas. It was the product not only of the administrative division of the colonial period, geographic factors, and personal ambitions of individual leaders, but also of the progressive mixing of races, the abolition of slavery, the formation of political parties (conservative and liberal), and, later, the development of industrialization and unionism.

Just as in the second half of the nineteenth century, the urgency of the problems of the moment forced the labor movement - originally established by the immigrants who left Europe after the 1848 revolutions and the Paris Commune - to adopt a pragmatic program without ideological objectives, so also the feeling of nationhood was pragmatic in its orientation. No one spoke of seeking supremacy over all Latin America; the ideas of expansion and national superiority, once common in the European nations, did not occur to anyone.

The nationalism that developed in these circumstances could be called positive or realistic. The immediate tasks that arose with independence were so pressing that the attention both of the leaders and of the people was completely taken up with them - e.g., how to deal with the acute problems of farmers without land, a middle class without schools, artisans without capital. A sense of nationalism developed only to the extent that each state placed itself in the service of its citizens. The nation was not a symbol, the result of a "glorious past", an abstract entity, but something concrete and tangible - the citizen and his commonwealth.

#### THE PARADOXES OF POLITICS

This explains why in Latin America, in spite of the propensity to rhetoric inherited from Spain, programs of all political parties, from the radical left to the radical right, have been almost invariably designed to meet the situation of the moment. Thus, one of the most permanent features of the liberal programs in the first half of the nineteenth century was the demand for annual budgets; and the conservatives during the same period insistently campaigned for increased immigration

In the last third of the nineteenth century, the socialist parties themselves and the labor unions did not clamor for the establishment of socialism, but rather sought laws to protect the health of the worker; and in Argentine their goal was payment of wages in gold pesos which could not be devaluated. It may thus be said that in content and spirit, Latin American nationalism was closer to Anglo-Saxon nationalism than to that of Western Europe, in spite the fact that during the entire period French and Spanish influence was much stronger than that of Great Britain and the United States; the latter was felt mostly in the constitutional organization of the new states.

One of the consequences of this positive nationalism was that political and social doctrines were nationalized, so to speak, when they arrived in Latin America; they were adapted to the necessities of the moment, and became pragmatic. There were -for example- anarchist, socialist, and labor union groups in Latin America, but none of them was revolutionary in attitude. Emigres from the Commune, who were the leaven of the South American, and especially Argentine labor movement, directed their former revolutionary ardor into political campaigns for immediate and practical social reforms. The two Latin American social transformations that have been called revolutions (Mexico and Bolivia) were actually political movements to enact reforms, in spite of their revolutionary methods. For a long time, therefore, European socialists and anarchists considered their Latin American friends mere reformers, and Moscow called Latin American Communists who endeavored to adapt the principles of the Third International to the specific situation in their countries "traitors" and Trotskyites".

At the same time, conservatives have frequently given the impression of being reformers because the nature of their nationalism has not permitted them to ignore the concrete situations they faced, situations in which there has often been little worth preserving. Thus Lucas Alamán (1792-1853), the great Mexican historian and conservative politician, saw in the industrialization of his country the basis for political stability and devoted his time and fortune to establishing factories and industrial development banks. At that time this was a reformist attitude, because the typical conservative in nineteenth-century Latin America was a defender of the system of large landed estates. And when a utopian such as the Mexican J.N. Adorno (1807-1887) appeared, he did not propose, in spite of the influence of Fourier on his ideas, that a new society be formed, but rather that workers' savings associations be set up to buy industries.

For more than a century these were the dominant characteristics of nationalism in Latin America. As a spontaneous product of local social and political conditions, this nationalism is still alive among most Latin Americans- among farmers and workers, the middle class, and a part of the new industrial bourgeoisie.

For some of the people, however - and particularly large numbers of intellectuals - this attitude of positive nationalism was to undergo a profound change under the impact of Communist influence. To understand the significance of this change it is necessary to realize the

important fact that political action in Latin America is traditionally stimulated and preceded by an intellectual movement, on first sight . . . often far removed from the political arena.

#### THE ROLE OF THE INTELLECTUAL

History abounds with examples. The Mexican revolution of 1910-1917 was ushered in by the struggle of Alfonso Caso and the so-called "Athens Generation" against the positivism that had served to justify the dictatorship of General Porfirio Diaz. In Peru, university reform - from which issued the idea of popular universities, the nursery of the Aprista movement - was defended by the literary magazine *Colonida*, beginning in 1915. The Brazilian "1922 Movement" was, according to one of its founders, the poet Mario de Andrade, "an announcement of the nascent revolutionary attitude which faced the problems of the country!"

This key role of the intellectual in politics is rooted in the social conditions of the Latin American countries. As a result of a high degree of illiteracy, poor communications, and inadequate dissemination of mass culture, the population as a whole exerts political pressure very rarely and for brief periods only. The single truly articulate, vocal and effective body of public opinion is the relatively small middle class, within which the intellectuals exercise considerable influence. Only by taking these facts into account can the importance of the intellectual climate in the political development of Latin America be properly assessed.

The characteristics of positive nationalism discussed above have long - and perhaps most clearly - been reflected in the arts and letters. All Western literary and artistic trends and schools of thought have generally enjoyed a favorable reception; but just as in the case of political and social doctrines, they have been quickly refashioned to suit the conditions and temperament of Latin America. They have lost their characteristics as schools of thought and become new media for expressing the immediate reality.

It is significant that all the literary histories of Latin America reveal facts: an absence of abstract scholarship and an abundance of regional writers, essayists, poets and novelists dedicated to social criticism. In the nineteenth century this tendency was primarily expressed in the regional novel. The works of Euclides de Cunha, Ricardo Guiraldes, Quiroga, Jose Eustasio Rivera, Romulo Gallegos, Giro Alegria, and Mariano Azuela fall in this category.

Much more recently, in the 1920's and the early 1930's, a new group of writers sprang into prominence. More radical than their predecessors, they denounced the social status of the Latin American working man: the rubber worker in the jungle, the Indian in the Andes, the peasant of the Mexican plateau. Some of them, like Jorge Icaza, Jorge Amado, Jose Revueltas, and the poets Nicolas Guillen, Cesar Vallejo, and Pablo Neruda were Communist sympathizers. Others, like

Mauricio Magdaleno, Gabriela Mistral, Jorge Ferretis, Erico Verissimo, Rosa Arciniegas, Octavio Paz, Manuel Galvez, and J.L.Borges had no ideological tie with communism. But whatever the political sympathies of these men, in their work they were equally fired by the plight of the underprivileged Latin American.

The outcries of social protest which for a decade and a half following World War I permeated literature as well as other art forms found their expression in a new realism, as vigorous and as nonconformist in its tendencies as the parallel, socially conscious cubist, symbolist, and surrealist movements in Europe. But, significantly the preoccupation in Latin America was principally with the lot of the individual rather than with the abstract collective identity of the nation. In the arts, as in literature, man was ever present, and supplied the themes for two big schools of painting; the muralists of Mexico and the easel painters of Brazil. The Indian, the Negor, the man-in-the-street all entered the paintings, just as they entered, through their folklore, the music of Villa-Lobos, Sylvestre Revueltas, and others.

It is important to stress that the social consciousness that pervaded the arts and letters after World War I had essentially indigenous roots and remained, until the early 1930's, by and large unaffected by direct Communist influence. The Communist movement had until then been extremely weak and ineffective in Latin America. It lacked power in the labor movement, it never had as much as a foothold among the rural population, and it received little if any support from the vocal and influential middle class.

Even the intellectuals remained largely isolated from Communist influence. It is true that many of them had admired some of the accomplishments of the Bolshevik revolution, but they had generally found Moscow's rigid adherence to the revolutionary dogma of class warfare unpalatable and singularly unsuited to the Latin American scene. In addition, the Latin American middle class intellectual, unlike his European counterpart, did not suffer from an historical guilt complex vis-à-vis his underprivileged fellow citizens, and thus was not inclined to sublimate his malaise in the party's fold. Nor did the weak Communist parties hold out much promise as instruments for satisfying any latent yen for power. In fact, knowledge of Marxism per se did not begin to spread widely among intellectual circles until the early 1930's. Until then, with a few exceptions mentioned above, it had been popular only in certain Argentine and Chilean socialist groups.

#### THE EMERGENCE OF A NEW PATTERN

By 1935 the situation began to change rapidly. The new flexibility of the Popular Front policy brought the Latin American Communists the opportunity to break out of their isolation. Their first logical target was the intellectuals; only through them could the Communists hope to exert influence over the middle class - the students, technicians, professionals, industrial bourgeoisie.

As it happened, the middle 1930's found a large sections of the Latin American intelligentsia in a particularly vulnerable state of mind. Not unlike many of their counterparts elsewhere in the West, they were afflicted by a deep sense of frustration. Neither their teaching and writing, nor their protests had prevented the rise of dictatorship. At the time the Popular Front became the Communist slogan of the day, dictatorial regimes were in power in Argentina, Uruguay, Paraguay, Brazil, Bolivia, Peru, Venezuela, Nicaragua, El Salvador, Honduras, Guetamala, the Dominican Republic, Haiti and Cuba. Everywhere else democracy appeared unstable. Bitter memories of certain United States acts of intervention sill lingered in the minds of many. Dissatisfied and disheartened, the intellectual searched for some means of bringing effectiveness to his convictions.

The task confronting the Communists was one of finding an approach which would allow them not only to appeal to the intellectuals emotionally, but also to draw them into political complicity. The approach had to be effective with the liberal professor, the leftist journalist and the revolutionary student, but also with the right-center politician and the conservative businessman. The Communists' answer was a new radical and negative brand of nationalism. Its slogans were abstract and irrational watchwords extolling the "national glories" and the "pre-Columbian civilizations" of the Latin American countries; its effect was to supplant the humanitarian aspirations of the synthesizing nationalism Latin American had known before.

Over a period of years during the 1930's Communists' now brain-child of negative nationalism succeeded in bringing about a change in the ideological orientation of the world of art and letters. There were exceptions, of course, especially among the more outstanding figures of the intellectual community; but a majority of the intellectuals and artists gradually came to adopt positions opposed to the traditional ideas of positive nationalism. This new, negative nationalism has continued to have crucial influence until very recent years; to understand its impact, it is necessary to know its characteristics.

#### THE NATURE OF NEGATIVE NATIONALISM

1) It is isolationist and autarchist. One of the favorite themes of many writers during the past twenty years has been that indigenous tradition alone is the source of all progress, that the national culture needs no European or other foreign influence. Minor figures have been built up as great reformers in order to find a basis for this kind of cultural isolationism. Thus in Mexico an effort was made at one time to convert the third-rate poets of the so-called "Metaphor" group (the title of the magazine they publish) into literary prophets. The reason for this was clearly their solid record of cultural chauvinism. During another period there was an attempt to induce Mexican artists to model themselves after

... the great nineteenth-century engraver Jose Guadalupe Posada, whose work was marked by symbols of death. And so skulls appeared for two decades in the works of almost all Mexican engravers. This was not just a matter of temporary predilection; the style was consciously directed and motivated.

2) It is separatist. Mention was made earlier of the "continentalism" which had long been prevalent in Latin American intellectual circles. With the coming of the new nationalism this spirit virtually disappeared, and it is now limited to the formalities of inter-American diplomacy. No one any longer speaks of a Latin American culture, but of Uruguayan, Salvadorean or Mexican culture. The absurd situation has thus developed where nations with the same traditions, similar political and economic organization, the same language and similar aspirations, consider themselves not interdependent, but completely independent in cultural as well as in political and economic matters.

3) It is antiquarian. The negative nationalist has searched the past for literary themes and other elements to bolster his present attitudes; he has considered himself a cultural descendant of the pre-Columbian Indians and in extreme cases even has proposed the establishment of autonomous republics of certain indigenous peoples (Mayas in Mexico, Aymaras in Bolivia). A typical case is that of Vicente Lombardo Toledano, Secretary General of the CTAL (Latin American Confederation of Labor, an affiliate of the Communist-dominated World Federation of Trade Unions), who as candidate for the presidency of Mexico in 1952 opened his election campaign by taking "an oath of loyalty" before the supposed tomb of the Aztec king Cuauhtemoc. Painters, for their part have more and more tended to give us pictures of the pre-Columbian peoples as in the murals and frescoes of Diego Rivera and O'Gorman in Mexico. Mexican ballet companies are actually groups of folklore dancers who have endeavored to present Aztec and Mayan dances and have paid little attention to modern ballet. No less revealing, in this connection, is the dispute still raging between Mexican architects over whether new Mexican architecture should take its inspiration from the pre-Cortezian esthetics of the quadrangular pyramid, or whether such reminiscences should be discarded. To understand the significance of all these attitudes we must imagine how it would be if an attempt were made in France to base ballet and architecture on what we know of the customs of the Gauls or if political candidates "took an oath of loyalty" to the spirit of Vercingetorix.

4) It is symbolistic. Specific, real themes have been replaced with more general, often symbolic themes. Thus, for example, a novel on current events may be constructed in the form of a fable. This penchant for the abstract and the didactic is exemplified in the novels of the Mexican Jose Revueltas, the paintings of David Siqueiros, the later paintings of Diego Rivera (such as the murals on peace and Guatemala, which caused such a furor in Mexican intellectual circles in 1952 and 1955), and also in the poetry of the Chilean Pablo Neruda, the novels of the Brazilian Jorge Amado, and the music



of the Cuban Nicolas Guillen. In other writers who do not have Communist affiliations this propensity for symbols is less evident, but very few have managed to escape the influence entirely during the past years. The symbols are almost always abstract: the nation, the enemy of the nation, Nazi-Fascism, and lately, American imperialism, peace, warmongers.

#### SPROUTING SEEDS IN FERTILE SOIL

The permeation of Latin American arts and letters by the ideology of negative nationalism was not simply the result of Communist propaganda. The appeals were effective indeed, and the audience was receptive, but the Communists' success would certainly have been less striking if they had not availed themselves of the more stringent methods of administrative persuasion, or to use a harsher word, blackmail. During the era of Popular Front amity, many party members and sympathizers contrived to infiltrate a whole range of institutions in the field of culture and information - newspaper offices, publishing houses, private and public cultural organizations. From these positions they were able to reward their friends and punish their enemies in the intellectual world. In short, they established a certain measure of informal censorship, by means of which they denied employment or publishing rights to many artists and writers who failed to conform to the Communist-sponsored cultural precepts, to the abstractions and chauvinism of the new nationalist spirit. Some of the artists who refused to respond to the appeals of the Communist campaign finally crumbled under this more drastic method of persuasion and were swallowed up by the new conformity.

At the same time, in their efforts to garner the political allegiance of as many political interests as possible, the Communists also abandoned many of their past doctrinaire positions. They forgot class warfare and with easy expediency began to support any element or issue which might further the cause. In Chile, where in 1938 they established the first Popular Front government in Latin America, they persuaded a wealthy landowner, the Radical Pedro Aguirre Cerda, to become the Popular Front candidate for the presidency. In Mexico, only twenty months after denouncing President Cardenas as "the one responsible for carrying forward... the program of fascization and strengthening of Yankee imperialism in Mexico", the Communist Party changed its line to praise his government as one of "true progress toward a more advanced stage in the (Mexican) Revolution".

In a similar spirit Lombardo Toledano, whose rise as a para-Communist labor leader coincided with the evolution of the Popular Front policy, felt free by 1942 to negotiate a friendship pact between strongly protectionist Mexican management organizations and the Mexican Confederation of Workers which he headed. By then, of course the Soviet Union had already entered the war. Two statements of Lombardo's made at the CTAL congress in Cali will illuminate the Communist position of the "patriotic war" period: "We have come a very long way from those

romantic, sterile attitudes that prompted us to utter impassioned cries against imperialism"; and, "During the war against the Nazi-Fascist axis the working class should not employ the strike as a normal fighting weapon".

The Communists novel political posture and their nationalist campaign soon brought dividends in the political arena. Their attitude was as effective in Latin America as it turned out to be a few years later in Europe. They succeeded in having themselves elected to the legislative bodies of a number of Latin American countries. In 1940 there were 12 Communist deputies in Chile, 17 in Brazil, 12 in Cuba, 6 in Costa Rica, and 6 in Uruguay. The Chilean President Gonzales Videla included a Communist minister in his cabinet (1946-1947) and even President Bastita of Cuba was persuaded to do the same at an earlier date (1942-1944). It was, after all, comfortable to have no adversaires on the left.

The policy of negative nationalism was primarily designed to seduce and appease the intellectuals and the liberal political elements. But the aim was wider in scope, as was indicated before. Not only was the integrity of the left wing to be subverted; it was to be put to sleep so as to leave the Communists free to court without protest the political right. The soporific was effective, enabling the Communists to establish amicable relations with all the Latin American dictators during the war. Later, when in the wake of the Peronist movement a new wave of dictatorships swept over the Americas, the Communists maintained an ambivalent attitude, courting both sides of the fence. They were thus in the position to infiltrate the entourage of the dictators as well as the exiled democratic opposition groups. In their self-appointed role of "critical patronage" they served the dictators as advisers on labor problems while they extended their own control over the labor unions and confused the man-in-the-street on the real nature of dictatorship. On occasion they even used their privileged positions to pressure the dictators into commercial relations with the Soviet Union and the "people's democracies"

Thus a supra-nationalist campaign that had begun as a propagandist foray aimed at the intellectuals developed into a systematic method of Communist infiltration of all the facets of Latin American national life. As a result, communism for the first time became a considerable factor in Latin American politics.

#### THE CASE OF MEXICO

The Communists have applied- and are still applying- similar techniques of cultural and political subversion in the underdeveloped countries of other continents, using variations as required by the special characteristics of each country. Latin America in this respect has served as a laboratory for Moscow. It might be worthwhile therefore, to see precisely how this subversion was undertaken in a specific situation. A good example is that of the Mexican artistic

world, where the development of negative nationalism reached a stage of such refinement that the personal, ideological and material interests of some Communist artists became inseparably intermingled.

In the early 1920's a group of Mexican painters ranged around Diego Rivera and David Alfaro Siqueiros set forth the principles of "revolutionary art". In proper Marxist style, they proclaimed that painting must be realistic in form and social in content; it must be accessible to the masses and serve toward their enlightenment; it should therefore be executed in murals and supported by the state. With the help of well organized public relations and the support of certain politicians, the group was increasingly successful in pushing its claim to be the only valid school of painting; over a period of years it managed to establish a virtual monopoly over official commissions, exhibition halls, and the media of criticism.

Thus the Leftists were already well entrenched in their domination over the Mexican art world when the ideology of negative nationalism came to the fore. With little difficulty, they adapted the "revolutionary" slogans of the 1920's to the new pseudo-nationalist line.

As applied to artistic activity in Mexico, the ideas of negative nationalism have been aptly summed up in two remarks by Siqueiros, perhaps the chief exponent of "socialist realism" in Latin America: Mexican art (produced by Communists) is good, he said, "because it is Mexican"; moreover, "There is no other way than ours" - the Communist. These two statements and how they applied - that is, to blacklist as "traitors to Mexican art" anyone who would not accept them as precepts - express better than any description, the real meaning of the technique which the writer has endeavored to analyze. Bringing its influence to bear, this group persistently and effectively hampered the careers of many artists who refused to toe the line. It was largely successful, for example, in preventing muralists not of its school from winning commissions for work on public buildings. Other artists found the doors of the exhibition halls and museums closed to their works. Those who did manage to make a name for themselves despite such pressures found themselves the target of violent attack on the basis not of their artistic ability but of their alleged "un-Mexicanism" - and worse. Among the principal victims were the painters Rufino Tamayo, Maria Izquierdo, and Jose Clemente Orozco. Tamayo, for example, was not able to exhibit his work in Mexico for many years, and was viciously attacked when he finally did. This is what Tamayo's fellow painter O'Gorman, a Communist sympathizer, had to say about his colleague:

Actually, Tamayo's painting is in line with a popular demagogic action which proposes to support a reactionary position. One of the reasons why his works are sold at such high prices is that his painting effectively serves the interests of the social class it represents. The earnest desire of the professional critics of Europe and America to present Rufino Tamayo as Mexico's greatest painter, above Rivera and Siqueiros, clearly indicates the reactionary position of Tamayo's painting within the Mexican plastic movement".

Such harsh politicalization of artistic criticism rarely occurs on other continents -except, of course, in the Communist countries. But in Latin America, this type of comment has frequently been voiced during the past twenty years, because negative nationalism created an atmosphere in which it was accepted. By labeling independent artists and writers as "non-national" at best - or as "reactionaries selling out to imperialism", and "traitors to their country" in the case of formidable opponents - the Communists weakened their adversaries and intimidated the irresolute.

Communist hegemony over the arts in Mexico extended well beyond the sphere of painting. Similar influence was extended over the theater and motion pictures (even though for a briefer period), over magazines and publishing houses, and even reached into institutions of higher learning. In all of these fields, the Communists used their control over patronage as a political instrument, in pursuit of the same set of purposes: creating a mass audience and making it receptive to Communist propaganda, promoting the interests of their adherents, and developing a following of disciples and clients while smothering any competitive ideas, work or talent outside of their own camp. And such, for a time, was their public following that even non-Communist intellectuals often felt themselves compelled to outbid their Communist Colleagues in proofs of fervent and intransigent nationalism. Nationalist ideas were thus intermingled with professional interests and personal vanities, and these elements in combination were put to use to serve political goals.

#### BEGINNING OF A CHANGE

In Mexico, as well as in the other Latin American countries, a reaction has recently set in against the regimentation of the past. Today's generation of young intellectuals and artists did not experience the romantic epoch of the Popular Front; emotional appeals made in its name fail to impress them, and they refuse to join new Communist fronts. Some, under the influence of a few outstanding figures who resisted the Communist appeal, others on their own account, keep the doors of the cultural world open both to foreign experiments and to contact with the man-in-the-street. The twenty years of negative sterilizing nationalism are passing into the pages of history, and new prospects are opening up for free, unrestricted creation, without watchwords and official prophets. The advent of the new spirit has already brought forth abundant works of originality and depth.

One of the most significant signs of this renaissance is a revival of the Latin American consciousness. Thought is beginning to be directed again not only toward the Paraguayan, the Brazilian, and the Chilean, but toward the Latin American. If for two decades negative nationalism caused intellectuals to turn back to symbols of the past, they now once again turn their sights toward the future, and a new more united Latin America is beginning to take shape in their minds.

What are the causes of this incipient change? In the first place, Latin America is still confronted with unsolved problems - economic, cultural and social - and, as we have seen negative nationalism, far from facilitating their solution, has only aggravated them. The young intellectuals, looking at the situation of their respective countries and of the continent as a whole, cannot help perceiving the pernicious effect that negative nationalism has had in these respects, as well as in its stifling limitations of cultural development. In the latter sense, the interest of the new Latin American intellectual generation in French existentialism, in Keynesian economic theories, in the newest jazz forms, etc., has been indicative of a rebirth, not because these things have had any profound influence upon the actual product of Latin American cultural activity, but simply because the interest in them, of itself, signifies a realization of the possibility of finding new paths and new solutions outside the narrow limits imposed by negative nationalism.

In the second place, there is today a much better understanding of communism, of its history and its propaganda methods, than in the period of the Popular Front or immediately after World War II. Though this understanding is still far from general in Latin American society, it is spreading; and it serves as a kind of vaccine against easy infection by the philosophy of negative nationalism.

This is not to say, however, that negative nationalism has entirely lost its power of seduction or ceased to hobble intellectual development. With the whole arsenal of highly-developed Communist propaganda techniques at their disposal, the sponsors of negative nationalism are quick to exploit for their own ends any real grievances which arise, as well as those artificially fabricated by their own propaganda. Recent events in Latin America have demonstrated that these elements still retain enough of their grip to require long and persistent effort before their influence will be overcome. This is a task, essentially, of promoting greater clarity of thought, of supplying factual information, of clearing away the cobwebs caused by over-indulgence in the intoxicating wine of negative nationalism. Obviously, it is a task which only those Latin American intellectuals who already have reawakened can undertake and bring to final success.