improbably sovereign nation struggling to remain independent even as it transitions cautiously to a more productive economic model. For both of these countries, the next few years will likely involve more volatility in relations with the United States than they would prefer.

In the absence of serious threats to U.S. economic and security interests, now or in the past, the Latin American policies of the United States have usually been driven either by the vagaries of U.S. domestic politics (with generally suboptimal and sometimes appalling outcomes) or bureaucratic inertia (usually calm, but with missed opportunities). Trump may choose to revert to Cold War style bullying and interventions to please domestic constituencies, but only at the cost of provoking a decline in U.S. hegemony. Neglect and inactivity (and a Twitter ban) would better serve American greatness.

March 2017 ■

Latin American Transformations: Notes on Politics and Culture

by Steve J. Stern | University of Wisconsin, Madison | sjstern@wisc.edu

I wish to focus on a question of politics and culture that frames somewhat differently a half century of transformation. I hope this approach will serve to complement the excellent insights of my colleagues. My goal is to draw out some politico-cultural implications, as seen through a different lens, of the half century of economic growth, migration, political mobilization, new social movements, and hemispheric power so well analyzed by my colleagues.

What large ideas captured the political and cultural imagination of "troublesome" intellectuals and youths in Latin America during the last half century? A corollary follows. How might answers to this question have changed over time?

The question and its corollary offer an interesting angle for the theme of this dossier. They recognize that intellectuals and youths—although by no means uniform in their political and cultural sensibilities or in their degrees of sociopolitical conformity or nonconformity—have been significant social actors, albeit not the only ones, in the skepticism and mobilizations that drove social justice and inclusion struggles during a tumultuous half century. Such questions are also pertinent because as a scholarly organization, the Latin American Studies Association has been a space of intellectual and intergenerational communication, attuned to shifts of thought and social action and repression affecting intellectuals.

The term "troublesome" carries a double valence useful for the purposes of this commentary. First, the term embraces the idea that a fundamental *positive* consequence of critical thought and generational identity formation is precisely to "trouble" the status quo ante. Second, its elasticity recognizes the diversity of social justice critics: they did not all adhere to a uniform analysis of what was wrong with the status quo, let alone how best to combat or transcend it. The elasticity also recognizes the diversity of the targets of critique and their responses to dissent. The social actors who found themselves under fire by youthful or intellectual critics varied considerably. In the 1960s/1970s era of radical politics, for example, they could range from leftists considered too reformist or compromised by Old Regime politics, to moderate populists and centrist reformers, to landed oligarchs and conservatives and military dictators. The responses to troubling actors also varied. Military dictatorship regimes and their hard-line supporters often framed dissenters as dangerous antinational "subversives" fit for destruction in a "dirty" war. Others responded to them as political adversaries, albeit misguided or mistaken or ineffectual, to be won over or contained or neutralized politically.

During the last half century, the large ideas that captured the politico-cultural imagination of troublesome youths and intellectuals—what such a question meant, how it might be answered—changed dramatically. Consider three key moments: the 1960s/1970s, the "long" 1980s, and the post-1990s.

Before proceeding, it may be wise to note the limits of this commentary. I am speaking here of general tendencies and am aware that national chronologies vary and that countercurrents are also important. For example, my description below of the transition from heroic to postheroic conceits took place earlier in Chile than in Nicaragua, and awareness of the Nicaraguan example also provided a certain countercurrent within Chile. Moreover, it is worth recalling the multiple and overlapping temporalities—the "tricks of time"—that have long shaped

Latin America. In this conception, historical time is not a linear unfolding in which historical moment or event "C" displaces historical moment or event "B," which in turn displaced "A." Displacement and coexistence of distinct historical temporalities turn out not to be mutually exclusive and have inspired notions of circularity and persistence alongside notions of historical change and displacement. As a character in Alejo Carpentier's novel *Los pasos perdidos* (1953) explained to a traveler from the North, here we live simultaneously with the Virgin, Rousseau, and Marx. (For a fuller discussion of temporalities within a frame of history-literature dialogues, see Stern 1999.)

With these caveats in mind, let us proceed with the general analysis. In the 1960s/1970s era, a key question was how to envision a Latin America that could transcend the still relevant and stifling colonial legacy. Whether understood as economic backwardness and dependence, or as sociopolitical oppression and injustice, the idea that the colonial inheritance still shaped the social order suggested that Latin America's central problems and injustices had long roots, were structurally entrenched, and took especially acute form in the countryside.

Every country seemed to have its languishing regions of extreme agrarian misery that incarnated the idea of a long history yet to be overcome. Brazil had its Northeast of drought-stricken peasants on the move, Mexico had its Yucatán of landed oligarchs and Maya laborers, Peru had its southern highlands of Indians dominated by *gamonales*, Chile had its countryside of *inquilinos*. Such regions had long inspired artistic expression in music, literature, and film about social worlds of long historical root considered both authentic and disturbing in the national imaginary, even as they were "rediscovered" in new political contexts in the 1960s and 1970s. Consider, for example, the cinematic redeployment in 1963, by Brazilian director Nelson Pereira dos Santos, of the 1938 novel by Graciliano Ramos, *Vidas sêcas*. Likewise, the *politics* of regional identity, modernity, and backwardness also emerged within a longer temporality. As Barbara Weinstein (2015) has recently shown, even well before the 1960s/1970s moment, the construction of the Brazilian "modern" was tied in politics and cultural imagination to differentiation—São Paulo not unto itself but in relation to the Northeast.

By the 1960s, the regions that symbolized structurally entrenched misery and neocolonial persistence and backwardness sparked not only art but also urgent debate, both political and academic. Could agrarian reform or revolution happen in the here and now, not in the far distant future? Were regions of extreme agrarian misery best understood as social worlds produced by the absence of modernity, or in contrast, as products of a modernity of inequality rooted in colonialism and dependence? Burgeoning literatures on the agrarian question, development and dependence, and colonial legacies reflected the climate of debate. (See, e.g., Stavenhagen 1970; and for retrospective analysis, Roseberry 1993, Stern 1988, Weinstein 2008; cf. Adelman 1999.)

Most important, the new moment sparked mobilization and experimentation, not simply debate. What changed by the 1960s/1970s moment was not the sense of an old legacy still present and unjust and problematic, but rather the level of complacency and acceptance. The social problems of the Old Regime had now turned urgent and explosive. Even the institutional pillars of Old Regime conservatism—the Catholic Church, the military—seemed no longer so monolithic. Especially after the Cuban Revolution, social transformation had become an imperative, an idea whose time had come. In this era, when the idea of "reform versus revolution" was so much a part of politics and culture, and also intersected with a Latin American version of the Cold War, could the colonial legacy finally be transcended? Could some sort of social liberation finally happen, notwithstanding the resistance that would also meet such experiments?

It was this atmosphere and reality of social struggle that could create new projects and ideas in unexpected places. In Peru, for example, junior officers turned in the late 1960s from fighting insurgent leftist guerrillas to promoting a military politics and language of revolution including agrarian reform, Indian emancipation, and worker cooperatives under General Juan Velasco Alvarado. Meanwhile, a historically conservative Catholic Church could produce a Gustavo Gutiérrez, a priest whose social action experiences with poor people in the late 1960s and early 1970s inspired the language of liberation theology. Of course, Peru was not the only example, and transnational encounters also mattered. The 1968 conference of Latin American bishops in Medellín, not simply a response to Vatican II but also, and more deeply, a leadership response to grassroots religious social action experiences in humble communities, was fundamental in the turn toward a language of preferential option for the poor.

Beyond the details of specific cases, a compelling conceit shaped the political and cultural moment of the 1960s/1970s, especially among dissident intellectuals and youth: the idea of a "heroic state"

and a “heroic pueblo.” Of course, the idea of state-led reform to usher in a new era of transformation that would liberate the pueblo had prior roots. The Mexican Revolution; the rise of populist leader-heroes with mass followings, such as Lázaro Cárdenas and Juan Domingo Perón in the 1930s and 1940s; the spread of projects of state-led industrialization in the middle third of the century—all testify that the myth of a heroic state did not come on the scene in a sudden big bang in the 1960s. Likewise, the idea of a combative pueblo that would mobilize heroically to demand rights and create a new society of justice for *los de abajo* also did not arise out of nowhere. Nonetheless, it was in the 1960s/1970s moment that notions of a heroic state and a heroic pueblo forging a social liberation—especially for workers, peasants, and urban migrants—synergized and fired a new political imagination. New utopias, demands, and mobilizations inspired many youths and intellectuals. (For an astute panoramic analysis of Latin America’s 1968 moment of youth and student politics, including the nuances of relations with workers and between “Old” and “New” Lefts, see Gould 2009.)

Even in defeat, as military dictatorships repressed citizens, among them many young people and intellectuals now considered the antinational internal enemy, such ideas did not suddenly disappear. As Salvador Allende put it in his eloquent radio farewell on September 11, 1973, “History is ours, and it is made by the people [*los pueblos*].”

Although the focus here is on troublesome youths and intellectuals, it may be worth noting that even in the more conservative and paternalistic social sectors, the idea of the heroic state embarked on development projects to transform society was influential. The military regimes that spread over South America in the 1960s and 1970s typically offered a heroic official story of saving their societies from subversion and Communism and disorder. Their doctrines of national security did not necessarily preclude projects of state-led development or physical monuments testifying to a future of geopolitical and economic greatness. The Itaipu Dam at the confluence of Brazil and Paraguay was an extreme example. Other kinds of monuments were more abstract—for example, the statistics of growth, consumer acquisition, and alleged economic “miracles” of Brazil and Chile in the 1970s. In short, the ups and downs and transformations of the twin conceits of heroic state and heroic pueblo did not march in lockstep.

Nonetheless, the 1960s/1970s moment of hope gave way. It had rested on the complementary yet competing nature of the conceits of heroic action by the state and the pueblo, that is, from above and below. The crushing military dictatorships that spread over much of South America came down hard on youths and intellectuals, among others, as they redefined troublesome citizens into war enemies. Political projects had failed. Utopia had turned into illusion. Elsewhere, the moment also gave way while reflecting specific histories and struggles. In Mexico, for example, the 1968 massacre of student demonstrators at Tlatelolco undermined the PRI’s particular version of the heroic state conceit—a paternalistic state fulfilling its revolutionary legacy to a needy pueblo that had once risen up in revolution. The credibility of such a framework, already wobbly, crashed hard, especially among youths and intellectuals. By the 1980s, as debt crisis and neoliberal ascendancy took hold from Mexico to South America and produced a “lost decade” of economic shrinkage and social deterioration, the epic conceits of earlier times seemed remote and unrealistic—not a narrative of heroism and liberation, but a prologue to failure and suffering.

Yet, what destroys some possibilities and ideas can open up others. A second moment emerged. New social actors and new social values, less stifled by the politics and parties of another era, can arise. In a second moment, the “long” 1980s that spilled into the 1990s, Latin American sensibilities among troublesome youths and intellectuals shifted toward the post-heroic. The post-heroic state would not lead the way to the promised land of economic development or social liberation. The state, even the post-dictatorship states haunted by the constraints of democratic transition paths and neoliberalism, would step aside and defer to the market. The post-heroic pueblo also turned out not necessarily as combative and resilient and politically organized as once thought. It would not forge a clear path to political and social emancipation. Such transitions to a post-heroic sensibility and the attendant disillusion were especially notable, of course, in the Southern Cone transitions from dictatorship. (See, e.g., Paley 2001, Moulian 1997, and Winn 2004 for the case of Chile.) But they extended as well to the politics of civil war regions, for example, the decline of heroic conceits by the Left and eventually the Right during the Shining Path war and the Fujimori collapse in Peru during the 1980s and 1990s. (For analyses encompassing both coast and highlands, and grassroots as well as elite politics, see, e.g., Burt 2007, Degregori 2000, Stern 1998.)

Yet, the era of a post-heroic state and a post-heroic pueblo did not preclude strong social mobilizations that caught the imagination of critical youths and intellectuals. On the contrary, the 1980s was also the era of “new social

movements." Newly visible and newly assertive actors—for example, middle-class and poor women, the urban poor in their shantytown neighborhoods, indigenous peoples, human rights victims and activists—came on the scene. The key actors were not reducible to the categories of worker or peasant. New values and new languages of rights—for example, human rights, women's rights, native peoples' rights—came to the fore as forceful priorities. New struggles—for example, a struggle for democracy, and against the misinformation and impunity that accompanied state terror regimes—also came to the fore.

The post-heroic moment, in short, was also a moment of emancipation that fired the imagination. The failure of past utopias meant that action, thought, and the identity of social protagonists were less tethered and less stifled by the political parties and transformational schemes of the earlier era. A certain kind of optimism and return to the idea of a struggle of liberation could reemerge, now within a context of the plurality of grassroots struggles and demands for dignity and inclusion, rather than an orderly master scheme of liberation. This was a kind of self-making process of identity formation and liberation. (For contemporaneous case study analysis and theorization, see, e.g., Escobar and Alvarez 1992; Massolo 1992.)

By the 2000s and into our time, however, a third sensibility has begun to take hold: perplexity. The urgent question is, "What now?" The sense of perplexity is rooted not only in disillusion with earlier schemes of liberationist utopia in the 1960s/1970s moment. It also reflects the weight of persistent socioeconomic inequality and the awareness of the modest impact of the social movement mobilizations and pressure from below that had seemed promising in the long 1980s. By the current era, when neoliberalism, globalization, and constrained democratic transition seemed to have undermined the prospects of major change through creative self-making agency from below by new social actors, Latin America—particularly the "troublesome" youths and intellectuals who dare to dream of something better—arrived at the moment of the question without an answer: "What now?"

To be sure (as noted earlier when comparing Nicaragua and Chile), not all regions marched in tight step to the same chronologies. More important, countercurrents could also arise. The first decade of the twenty-first century produced a substantial countercurrent, a kind of parenthesis between the disillusion of the 1990s and the current moment of perplexity. A new cycle of left political turns and social mobilizations took hold and drew attention. One variant was the notion that radical leaders such as Hugo Chávez in Venezuela, Evo Morales in Bolivia, and Rafael Correa in Ecuador would promote, with popular support and mobilization, a twenty-first-century socialism and (in the latter two countries) an intercultural democracy that would decolonize internal social relations of power and education. In solidarity with Cuba, they would presumably create an international counterweight to neoliberal capitalism. Another variant was the notion that leftist leaders in the former military dictatorship countries, such as Lula (Luis Inácio Lula da Silva) in Brazil, Néstor Kirchner and Cristina Fernández in Argentina, and perhaps Michelle Bachelet in her first presidential term in Chile, could ride the wave of popular demand for a society of well-being beyond neoliberalism, despite working within the constraints of global capitalism. Both at leadership levels and in street mobilizations and voting returns, the "Pink Tide" moment had arrived.

Yet the potential for disillusion was not far below the surface. As Fernando Coronil (2011) presciently observed, the new emergence of the Left was precarious, haunted by a profound paradox. A future of expectation had taken hold in societies where the idea of the future itself was in doubt. Latin America's "crisis of futurity" (260) meant that the Left's resurgence and even its own future might prove fleeting. Yet, people insisted on the right to a better future with dignity. In this new context, utopias and concomitant struggles would continue to inspire social actors, but what they also sought was the ability to "dream their futures without fear of waking up" (264).

In recent years, the falling apart of the Chinese-driven commodity boom, the resurgence of conservative politics, the magnitude of corruption exposés and the Odebrecht scandal, all have contributed to the sense that, indeed, we cannot yet dream "without fear of waking up." The moment of hope, a welcome detour from the disillusion one could already perceive in the 1990s, gave way to perplexity: What now?

One can exaggerate the bleak side of the "what now" moment. Renewals of creativity, agency, mobilization, and hope happen, and these testify to the imagination of youths and intellectuals, among others, who refuse complacency. Such agency seems most authentic and real on a small scale, at the level of microinitiatives, rather than scaling up into a larger sense of hope. On the one hand, such initiatives have a larger significance than meets the eye. They can transmit progressive values and yearnings into the larger culture and feed a national imagination that again demands a more inclusive future, respectful of

rights and critical of social injustice. The remarkable recent study by Víctor Vich (2015) of art and culture in Peru in the wake of political violence and atrocity—the making of an insistent human rights sensibility, notwithstanding state lethargy and hostility—is an excellent example. Elsewhere, the potential of creative street culture performance and organizing to seep into the wider environment of political demand and expectation has also been notable. Consider, for example, the impact of youth taking to the streets to demand quality education without debt in Chile, or more recently, to demand that a botched plebiscite on the Colombian peace accord not shut down a possible future of peace.

At the same time, however, such moments of hope and creativity contend with a larger sense of perplexity and disillusion that can feed conservative and self-defeating sensibilities—the sense that the world of social interaction is fundamentally predatory, that security against criminals and gangs is the overwhelming public policy concern of citizens, and that nearly all elites, of any ideological persuasion, fail to resist the allure of corruption. The damage caused by the Odebrecht scandal is not limited to the economic sum total of nefarious direct effects on public works and revenues. It also includes the consequences for belief in a politics of future possibility within societies of inequality and injustice. Corruption and the attendant white-collar political criminality have become part of the current moment of perplexity.

No formulaic answer can respond to the question, "What now?" In some ways, the dilemma is global rather than exclusively Latin American. The election of Donald Trump as president of the United States has created an extreme caricature, a kind of theater of the absurd and dangerous, of the fact that perplexity has gone global. In a sense, the answer has yet to be written—by a myriad of social actors, not simply intellectuals or youths.

Yet for two reasons, the current moment of questioning without the security of a convincing answer is not altogether depressing. First (and as noted above), even if micro-level initiatives do not always scale up into a confident scheme of liberation, they can transmit critique and aspiration into the wider culture of yearning and insistence. In that sense, they keep hope and social demand alive.

Second, as intellectuals we know that perplexity, the sense of not knowing, has a positive dimension. It drives people to formulate new questions, to insist on new social issues, to reach for new creative insights. As the late Fernando Coronil demonstrated in his own remarkable essay on "the future in question," we have arrived at a moment when it is both sobering and exciting to study Latin America, and to dream of an inclusive future of dignity.

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DEBATES

Anti-racist Struggles in Latin America

Coordinated by Juliet Hooker

Black and Indigenous Lives Matter: LASA-Ford Special Grants for Research on Racism in Latin America

by Juliet Hooker | University of Texas at Austin | juliethooker@austin.utexas.edu

During the tenth cycle of the Ford-LASA Special Projects grants, which are intended to support transregional research initiatives, LASA awarded grants to two initiatives that brought together activists and scholars involved in antiracist research and action in Latin America and the United States.

One of the awards helped fund a meeting of the research teams involved in a multiyear research project of the Red de Acción e Investigación Anti-Racista (RAIAR, the Antiracist Research and Action Network) that began in 2014. The project, entitled "When Rights Ring Hollow: Racism and Anti-Racist Horizons in the Americas," encompassed seven cases/countries across the Americas: Brazil, Bolivia, Guatemala, Colombia, Mexico, Mapuche mobilization in Chile, and the United States. The central hypothesis of this research project was that a successful rights-based frame of black and indigenous movements for recognition, advancement, and redress—in place for at least three decades—had run its course, and that a phase of dramatic across-the-board expansion of formally recognized black and indigenous rights since the 1980s was coming to an end. This closure was particularly relevant for struggles for racial justice, because black and indigenous rights often have been conceived and deployed as the anchor of antiracist struggle. As Charles Hale, Pamela Calla, and Leith Mullings explain in their recent article on RAIAR: "When we formulated this two-part 'end of an era' research hypothesis in the course of 2014, we could not have fathomed the horrifically amplified confirmation that history would soon deliver, perhaps most evidently in the United States. Donald Trump's 2016 election and the ugly racial animus that his campaign unleashed in the U.S. have parallels in each of the six other sites of struggle in our study."[1] Two of the most innovative aspects of the research project undertaken by RAIAR—its Americas-wide comparative scope and the concerted attempt to place indigenous and Afro-descendant experiences and perspectives into a single analytical lens—have been rendered prescient by the politics of racial backlash that seems to be accompanying Latin America's current "right turn," notably in Brazil.

Another LASA-Ford award helped fund the international workshop "Insurgencies: Police Violence and Pedagogies of Resistance in the Americas" in New York City, which brought together activists and established and emerging scholars in the field of racialized policing practices in the Americas. The workshop sought to advance transnational collaborative research on the lived experiences of state terror and the radical pedagogies of resistance that emerge from such contexts. The scholars and activists involved in this project sought to reframe the debate about police violence and democracy. Their point of departure was the fact that the racialized aspect of this particular form of state violence remains systematically obscured. In the wake of the protests that emerged in Ferguson, Missouri, following the killing of Michael Brown, and the surge to prominence of the various organizations