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**Alex Bryne. "After One Hundred Years of Service: Hegemony, Pan-Americanism, and the Monroe Doctrine Centennial Anniversary, 1923." *Diplomacy & Statecraft* 29: 4 (December 2018): 565-589. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1080/09592296.2018.1528780>.**

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Article Review Editors: Thomas Maddux and Diane Labrosse | Production Editor: George Fujii

REVIEW BY JUAN PABLO SCARFI, UNIVERSITY OF SAN ANDRÉS

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Although the bicentenary of the Monroe Doctrine is approaching in 2023, we have not seen much significant scholarly discussion over its legacy in recent years. Indeed, it is difficult to predict whether the bicentenary will stimulate new refreshing approaches to this old and long-standing question. However, it is fair to expect that it will not generate such a significant debate and discussion, as it was the case with the centenary back in 1923. For the meaning and scope of the Monroe Doctrine was at stake in the Americas then and thus they were widely discussed in the United States and Latin America. Moreover, these discussions were also closely connected to domestic factors of national identity, which also made the centenary an iconographic commemoration. This is precisely the main subject of Alex Byrne's timely and refreshing contribution to the impact of the centenary of the Monroe Doctrine on national identity. Byrne closes his article with a thoughtful reflection on the prospects for the forthcoming bicentenary and what we can expect from it. While in the context of the early twentieth century, "Americans... were still mostly loyal to its semi-sacredness in some form, the same is not true for the twenty-first century – now secretaries of state disavow it" (583).

The article presents a refreshing and non-conventional understanding of the Monroe Doctrine, exploring it mainly as a national cultural symbol. Although it recognizes the clear hemispheric implications of the doctrine in the 1920s, it assesses its significance as a reservoir of national identity, for it draws on some original primary sources of the exhibitions and iconography related to the centenary and its impact on national identity. Rather than focusing mainly on the application of the Monroe Doctrine and U.S. foreign policy towards Latin America to assess its impact and the controversies over its multiple meanings, Bryne concentrates instead on the production of the Monroe Doctrine Centennial half dollar coin. This symbolic object captured on one side the authors of the doctrine, President James Monroe and Secretary of State John Quincy Adams, and on the other side the American continent personified as two female features who acted jointly as guarantors of peace in the Americas. The images were both national and continental, but the receptors and targets of the iconography were primarily U.S. citizens.

The article also relies on the images and iconography displayed in the context of the exhibition of the centenary released at Exposition Park in Los Angeles California in July 1923, as well as its coverage in the *Los Angeles Times*. Bryne examines the "imagery of the American continents" and the coin mainly as a cultural dispositive of national identity (574). This emphasis on the cultural and iconographic dimensions of the celebrations and objects related to the centenary of the doctrine as a route to explore questions of national identity is certainly an original insight into the resonances of the doctrine. The paper generates concrete original research outcomes in that Pan-Americanism and U.S. hegemony are grasped to examine their impact on U.S. national self-perceptions. The article also situates the exhibition in connection to the intellectual history of the doctrine and the discussion it generated in U.S. political, foreign policy and academic circles. As such, it touches on the commemorative sessions organized by the American Academy of Political and Social Sciences, coordinated by Leo S. Rowe, who was the Director of the Pan American Union, and the International Pan-American Committee, paying special

attention to the different interpretations of the doctrine proposed by politicians and diplomats such as Charles Evans Hughes and John Barrett, as well as the historian Archibald Coolidge, among others.

Bryne's original approximation to the Monroe Doctrine should be regarded mainly as an interesting contribution to U.S. history and its national identity, rather than to U.S. foreign policy towards Latin America or U.S. transnational or continental history. As such, it certainly fills an important gap in the historiography of the Monroe Doctrine and its commemorations. Historians have long explored the Monroe Doctrine in connection to U.S. interventionist foreign policy towards Latin America and the construction of the U.S. imperial imagination of the American continent.<sup>1</sup> By contrast, Bryne's article concentrates on the national cultural and security anxieties displayed in the context of the centenary and how the hemispheric questions about Pan-Americanism and U.S. hegemony in Latin America were envisioned in local U.S. national settings.

Written with an especially fresh and fluid prose, Bryne's paper presents its arguments and contribution to the historiography rather unconventionally. In fact, the narrative is so fluid and well written that it is difficult to notice that the core argument of the paper is stated only on its fifth page. Bryne argues that the centenary "revitalised debate over the relationship between the notions of regional hegemony and inter-American cooperation in the conduct of American foreign policy following the tumultuous years of the First World War" (570). These two latter notions, namely regional hegemony and inter-American and Pan American cooperation, are presented as "antithetical visions" that are intrinsically juxtaposed as if they could never be complementary and functional with one another (583). Bryne concludes that "the direction of American foreign relations during the remainder of the 1920s emphasised hegemony over co-operation" and that "the United States empire was certainly not a benevolent presence in Latin America after 1918" (583). These conclusions suggest that the United States opted for a policy of hegemony over Pan-American cooperation towards Latin America in the 1920s.

Yet recent and more classic and well-known historical studies on Pan-Americanism and the emergence of Latin American Studies in the United States have stressed the extent to which Pan-Americanism was deployed in U.S. diplomatic and academic circles as a tool for the construction of an informal empire in Latin America, especially in South America.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, Pan-Americanism proved to be appealing for certain Latin American diplomatic, legal and political circles in the early twentieth century to the extent that it stimulated the deployment of Pan-American redefinitions of the Monroe Doctrine in Latin America as a strategy to promote Latin American multilateral objectives and projects and even in some cases, such as women rights, to advocate an anti-U.S.-led and radical versions of Pan-Americanism since the 1920s.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Walter LaFeber, "The Evolution of the Monroe Doctrine from Monroe to Reagan." in Lloyd C. Gardner, ed., *Redefining the Past: Essays in Diplomatic History in Honor of William Appleman Williams* (Corvallis: Oregon State University Press, 1986), 121–141, Jay Sexton, *The Monroe Doctrine: Empire and Nation in Nineteenth-Century America* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2011); Gretchen Murphy, *Hemispheric Imaginings: The Monroe Doctrine and Narratives of U.S. Empire* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2005).

<sup>2</sup> Ricardo Salvatore, *Disciplinary Conquest: U.S. Scholars in South America, 1900–1945* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2016); David Sheinin, ed., *Beyond the Ideal: Pan Americanism in Inter-American Affairs* (Westport: Praeger, 2000); Sheinin, *Searching for Authority: Pan Americanism, Diplomacy and Politics in United States–Argentine Relations, 1910–1930* (New Orleans: University Press of the South, 1998); Mark T. Berger, "Toward Our Common American Destiny? Hemispheric History and Pan American Politics in the Twentieth Century," *Journal of Iberian and Latin American Research* 8:1 (2002): 57–88.

<sup>3</sup> Mark Petersen, "The 'Vanguard of Pan-Americanism': Chile and Inter- American Multilateralism in the Early Twentieth Century," in Juan Pablo Scarfi and Andrew Tillman (eds.), *Cooperation and Hegemony in U.S.-Latin American Relations: Revisiting the Western Hemisphere Idea* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), 111–137; Juan Pablo Scarfi, "In the Name of the Americas: The Pan-American Redefinition of the Monroe Doctrine and the Emerging Language of American International Law in the Western Hemisphere, 1898-1933," *Diplomatic History* 40:2 (2016):189-218; Jane M. Rausch, "Santiago Pérez Triana (1858-1916) and the Pan-Americanization of the Monroe Doctrine," *Historia y Sociedad* 35 (2018): 223-240; Katherine M. Marino, *Feminism for the Americas: The Making of an International Human Rights Movement* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2019).

Pan-Americanism as such was also consistently promoted by the United States in the Americas within specific continental legal networks and thus the promotion of U.S. hegemony in the Americas was not necessarily contradictory with that of Pan American legal cooperation.<sup>4</sup> Pan-American cooperation might not have been the dominant U.S. approach in the 1920s, but it certainly paved the way by the centenary of the Monroe Doctrine for the progressive consolidation a decade later of the so-called Good Neighbor Policy. Given Bryne's major concern with U.S. national identity, the notions of U.S. hemispheric hegemony and Pan-American cooperation are grasped mainly in connection to the national implications of the centenary and the nationally-oriented debates over the meaning and application of the Monroe Doctrine, rather than as central features of U.S. transnational hemispheric history and its role and policies towards Latin America. Therefore, all these Pan-American usages of the doctrine and inter-American diplomatic and legal trajectories are glossed over in this article.

More importantly, Bryne's emphasis on the national impact of the doctrine over hemispheric questions presents certain limitations for the analysis, since Latin American visions of the doctrine, as well as critical approaches to it, are overlooked. Only a passing reference is made to the interpretation of the doctrine proposed by the Panamanian politician Ricardo Alfaro in the context of the centenary who stated that "the South still understood the doctrine as a facilitator of United States imperialism" (577). Interestingly, some of the most critical visions of the Monroe Doctrine emerged in Latin America and resonated and influenced in turn U.S. diplomatic and academic circles. For instance, Yale Professor Hiram Bingham's important and influential critique of the Monroe Doctrine, when he famously regarded it as an "obsolete shibboleth," emerged just ten years before the centenary as a result of his visit to South America and his personal empathy and engagement with the South American critiques about the Monroe Doctrine.<sup>5</sup>

This dimension of the transnational influences and hemispheric debates that shaped national critiques of the doctrine in the United States is not examined in this paper. At the same time, anti-imperialist critical visions of the doctrine are also overlooked, especially those that emerged in Latin America. In the context of the centenary, the Monroe Doctrine became a subject of critique within Latin American legal and diplomatic circles following US intervention in Veracruz in 1914 and other subsequent regular interventions in Central America and the Caribbean in the 1920s, especially among jurists such as Isidro Fabela (Mexico) and Emilio Roig de Leuchsenring (Cuba), among others. This Latin American resistance and these critiques of the doctrine in the 1920s in the context of the centenary are not explored here.<sup>6</sup>

Bryne's article provides a refreshing, original and timely contribution to the understanding of the important ways in which continental principles, images, and rituals of commemoration have shaped U.S. national identity and the long history and celebrations related to the Monroe Doctrine, including its centenary and its forthcoming bicentenary. The most notable limitation of the article has to do with the fact that the scope of the discussions and debates over the meaning of the Monroe Doctrine in the context of the centenary adopted a hemispheric and even in certain cases a global scale, especially when the League of Nations was created and President Woodrow Wilson invoked the doctrine as a doctrine of the world, just a few

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<sup>4</sup> Juan Pablo Scarfi, *The Hidden History of International Law in the Americas: Empire and Legal Networks* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2017).

<sup>5</sup> Hiram Bingham, *Across South America: An Account of a Journey from Buenos Aires to Lima by Way of Potosi* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1911); Bingham, *The Monroe Doctrine: An Obsolete Shibboleth* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1913). On Bingham's visit to South America and his critique of the Monroe Doctrine, see respectively Ricardo D. Salvatore, "Local versus Imperial Knowledge: Reflections on Hiram Bingham and the Yale Peruvian Expedition," *Nepantla: Views from South* 4:1 (2003): 67-80, and Scarfi, "In the Name of the Americas."

<sup>6</sup> Juan Pablo Scarfi, "Denaturalizing the Monroe Doctrine: The Rise of Latin American Legal Anti-imperialism in the Face of the Modern US and Hemispheric Redefinition of the Monroe Doctrine," *Leiden Journal of International Law* 33:3 (2020): 541-555; Scarfi, "Mexican Revolutionary Constituencies and the Latin American Critique of US Intervention," in Anne Orford, Kathryn Greenman, Anna Saunders and Ntina Tzouvala, eds., *Revolutions in International Law: The Legacies of 1917* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021), 218-241.

years before the centenary. Yet these dimensions and their implications are not examined in their full length throughout the article and they are only implicitly acknowledged.

One important merit and ostensible strength of this paper is, however, its contribution to the exploration of the domestic impact of the broader debates and anxieties generated over the meaning and scope of the Monroe Doctrine in the context of its centenary, primarily as regards U.S. national cultural identity. All in all, Bryne offers a new and well written narrative and an unconventional insight into the understanding of the commemorations of the Monroe Doctrine and why they stimulated new specific domestic self-reflections regarding U.S. national identity and its role in the Americas in the context of a turning point in U.S. foreign policy towards Latin America. As for the bicentenary of the Monroe Doctrine in 2023, it is more likely to expect, given the current state of inter-American relations, that it will stimulate more domestic discussion and self-reflection over U.S. national identity within the United States than broader continental debates over the future of the Americas and the prospects of inter-American relations.

**Juan Pablo Scarfi** is a Research Associate at the Argentine National Scientific and Technical Research Council (CONICET), and a Lecturer in Global History & International Relations at the University of San Andrés, Argentina. He completed his PhD at the University of Cambridge, and he was a Visiting Scholar at Columbia University, University College London (Institute of the Americas), the Institut des Hautes Études de l'Amérique Latine (IHEAL), Université Paris 3, Sorbonne Nouvelle, and more recently a Fulbright Visiting Fellow at the Elliott School of International Affairs, George Washington University. He is the author of *The Hidden History of International Law in the Americas: Empire and Legal Networks* (Oxford University Press, 2017), *El imperio de la ley: James Brown Scott y la construcción de un orden jurídico interamericano* (Fondo de Cultura Económica, 2014), and co-editor (with Andrew Tillman) of *Cooperation and Hegemony in US-Latin American Relations: Revisiting the Western Hemisphere Idea* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2016). His current research project focuses on the origins of human rights in the Inter-American System and the geopolitics of the Cold War.