

# Santiago Pérez Triana (1858-1916) and the Pan-Americanization of the Monroe Doctrine\*

Jane M. Rausch\*\*

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**Abstract** | In recent years, historians have focused on efforts at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century by Alejandro Álvarez, Luis María Drago, and Baltasar Brum (all Southern Cone diplomats) to foster continental cooperation by Pan-Americanizing the Monroe Doctrine. Overlooked in this endeavor are the remarkable activities of Colombian author, journalist, and diplomat, Santiago Pérez Triana. Using primary and secondary sources, this article analyzes Pérez Triana's support of the Drago Doctrine at the 1907 Hague Convention, his speeches at the Pan-American Financial Conference in 1915, and his essays published in *Hispania*, a journal that he edited between 1912 and 1916, to show how he won the respect of American and European diplomats by emerging as an influential spokesman for Pan-Americanizing the Monroe Doctrine and for hemispheric unity.

**Keywords** | (Thesaurus) diplomacy. (Author) Monroe Doctrine; Pan-America; *Hispania*; Drago Doctrine



## Santiago Pérez Triana (1858-1916) y la panamericanización de la Doctrina Monroe

**Resumen** | En los últimos años, los historiadores se han concentrado en los esfuerzos realizados a comienzos del siglo XX por Alejandro Álvarez, Luis María Drago y Baltasar Brum (todos diplomáticos del Cono Sur) para fomentar la cooperación continental mediante la panamericanización de la Doctrina Monroe. Se han pasado por alto en este esfuerzo las notables actividades del autor, periodista y diplomático colombiano, Santiago Pérez Triana. Utilizando fuentes primarias y secundarias, este artículo analiza el apoyo de Pérez Triana a la Doctrina Drago en la Convención de la Haya de 1907, sus discursos en la Conferencia Financiera Panamericana de 1915 y sus ensayos publicados en *Hispania* —revista editada por él mismo entre 1912 y 1916— para mostrar cómo él ganó el respeto de los diplomáticos americanos y europeos al constituirse en un portavoz influyente de la panamericanización de la Doctrina Monroe y de la unidad hemisférica.

**Palabras clave** | (Tesoro) diplomacia. (Autora) Doctrina Monroe; panamericanismo; *Hispania*; Doctrina Drago

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\*\*PhD in History from the University of Wisconsin-Madison (Madison, United States). Professor Emerita at the University of Massachusetts-Amherst (Amherst, United States). Being a specialist in Colombian history and comparative frontier regions, she joined the History Department at the University of Massachusetts-Amherst in 1969 where she taught Latin American History until her retirement in May 2010  <http://orcid.org/0000-0001-6653-5524>  [jrausch@history.umass.edu](mailto:jrausch@history.umass.edu).

### **Santiago Pérez Triana (1858-1916) e a pan-americanização da Doutrina Monroe**

**Resumo** | Nos últimos anos, os historiadores têm se concentrado nos esforços realizados a começos do século XX por Alejandro Álvarez, Luis María Drago e Baltasar Brum (todos diplomáticos do Cone Sul) para fomentar a cooperação continental mediante a pan-americanização da Doutrina Monroe. Passaram por alto neste esforço as notáveis atividades do autor, jornalista e diplomático colombiano Santiago Pérez Triana. Utilizando fontes primárias e secundárias, este ensaio analisa o apoio de Pérez Triana à Doutrina Drago na Convenção de Haia de 1907, seus discursos na Conferência Financeira Pan-americana de 1915 e seus ensaios publicados em a *Hispania* –revista editada por ele mesmo entre 1912 e 1916– para mostrar como ele ganhou o respeito dos diplomáticos americanos e europeus ao se tornar um porta-voz influente da pan-americanização da Doutrina Monroe e da unidade hemisférica.

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### **Introduction**

President James Monroe's announcement in 1823 that the United States would oppose European expansion in the Western Hemisphere endured into the twentieth century as a unilateral and fundamental principle of U.S. foreign policy. In 1904 President Theodore Roosevelt added a "Corollary" to what had become known as the Monroe Doctrine, stating that if any Latin American nation behaved in a manner that invited European intervention, it was the obligation of the United States to intervene in order to prevent the European action. Ironically, as the United States embarked on unprecedented interference into the affairs of Central America and Caribbean nations during the next twenty years, its diplomats at the same time were supporting a contradictory policy –Pan-Americanism–, a movement which conveyed U.S. commitment to a set of values consistent in respecting national sovereignty and promoting continental cooperation. The existence of these two conflicting approaches to hemispheric relations at the turn of the century set the stage for a vigorous debate among U.S. and Latin American international lawyers, politicians, and intellectuals over how the rationales behind the Monroe Doctrine and mutual cooperation could be combined into a multilateral doctrine that might serve as a hemispheric principle<sup>1</sup>.

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1. Alejandro Álvarez, *The Monroe Doctrine: Its Importance is the International Life of the States of the New World* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1924). In addition to providing a history of the Monroe Doctrine up to 1924, this book has a compilation of the varying views expressed about the policy by more than 40 Latin American and U.S. statesmen and publicists. It includes three essays by Pérez Triana and also one by fellow Colombian, Rafael Reyes.

In a recent publication, historian Juan Pablo Scarfi has skillfully shown the ways in which Alejandro Álvarez, Luis Maria Drago, and Baltasar Brum endeavored at various Pan-American conferences, through the American Institute of International Law, and through other hemispheric networks to resolve this contradiction by bringing about the so called Pan-Americanization of the Monroe Doctrine<sup>2</sup>. In other words, they sought to achieve an American international law which would expand or Pan-Americanize the idea of U.S. legal and political exceptionalism in the Western Hemisphere and guarantee the integrity of every state from external intervention. Scarfi's discussion focuses on the efforts of diplomats from Argentina, Chile, Brazil, and Uruguay. But in this scenario had been overlooked the important role played by the Colombian author, journalist, and diplomat, Santiago Pérez Triana (1858-1916) who supported the same goal at the 1907 Hague Convention, at the Pan-American Financial Conference in 1915, and through his editorship of the influential Spanish language journal, *Hispania* (1912-1916). In an attempt to redress that omission, this essay, after brief discussions of Monroe Doctrine historiography and Pérez Triana's early career, will review Pérez Triana's activities in order to show how, by articulating the views of fellow Latin Americans regarding the need to Pan-Americanize the Monroe Doctrine in these forums, he gained the respect of North American and European diplomats.

## Reexamination of the Monroe Doctrine

Since its inception in 1823, studies of the Monroe Doctrine have been legion, and the emergence of global history at the turn of the twentieth century renewed debates about its significance for the Western Hemisphere. The classic studies such as Arthur Whitaker's pioneering work, *The Western Hemisphere Idea*, and Peter Smith's, *Talons of the Eagle: Dynamics of U.S.-Latin American Relations* emphasized the role of the doctrine as a way to legitimize U.S. interventions<sup>3</sup>. On the other hand, others such as Mark T. Gilderhus with *Pan American Visions: Woodrow Wilson in the Western Hemisphere: 1913-1921* and Greg Grandin in "The Liberal Traditions in the Americas: Rights, Sovereignty, and the Origins of Liberal Multilateralism" discuss the interplay between the Monroe Doctrine as a unilateral policy and Pan Americanism as a cooperative policy with Latin America that the United States adopted concurrently by

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2. 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," *Diplomatic History* Vol: 40 n.º 2 (2016): 189-218.

3. Arthur Whitaker, *The Western Hemisphere Idea* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1954); Peter Smith, *Talons of the Eagle: Latin America, The United States, and the World* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996).

end of the nineteenth century and especially during World War One<sup>4</sup>. In 1924 the tension between the two was clearly revealed in a book edited by Alejandro Álvarez, *Pan-Americanism from Monroe to the Present: A View from the Other Side*, to mark the one hundredth anniversary of Monroe's pronouncement. This volume included a documentary history of the U.S. policy from its inception up to 1924 as well as a selection of varying views expressed about it by more than 40 Latin American and U.S. statesmen and publicists.

A review of the positions endorsed by Latin Americans undergirds Scarfi's thesis that, beginning with Luis María Drago in 1902, there were many calls for the Latinization of the Doctrine that continued into the 1920s. Foremost among these arguments were those put forward by Santiago Pérez Triana. Juan Pablo Scarfi's essay reflects the most recent approach to hemisphere relations, which draws on a theory developed by Robert Pape known as "soft balancing." In an article published in 2005, Pape defined "soft balancing" as a situation in which weaker states confronting a unipolar power lever nonmilitary tools, such as international institutions, economic statecraft, and strict interpretations of neutrality to constrain the superpower<sup>5</sup>. Pape's analysis primarily concerned international relations since World War Two, but Max Paul Friedman and Tom Long, in their article published in 2015, suggest that "soft balancing" may also best describe the early twentieth century techniques employed by Argentina and Mexico in promoting the Calvo and Drago doctrines in Pan American and other international conferences as a way to contain the "unipolar" power of the United States<sup>6</sup>.

While Friedman and Long, like Scarfi, emphasize the activities of Argentina and Mexico, the most powerful Latin American countries at the turn of the century, in the struggle to counter U.S. influence, they also allow that "the key role played by particular individuals further demonstrates the theoretical value of linking soft balancing with constructivist insights."<sup>7</sup> The Colombian Santiago Pérez Triana was one of many non Mexican or Argentine intellectuals who fervently supported the Drago Doctrine, and it was his concise essays in his revista *Hispania* (many republished in English) as well as his eloquent speeches at The Hague Convention of 1907 and the Pan-American Financial Conference of 1915 that enhanced his international prominence.<sup>8</sup>

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4. Mark T. Gilderhus, *Pan American Visions: Woodrow Wilson in the Western Hemisphere: 1913-1921* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1986); Greg Grandin, "The Liberal Traditions in the Americas: Rights, Sovereignty, and the Origins of Liberal Multilateralism," *American Historical Review* Vol: 117 n.º 1 (2012): 68-91.

5. Robert A. Pape, "Soft Balancing against the United States," *International Security* Vol: 30 n.º 1 (2005): 7-45.

6. Max Paul Friedman and Tom Long, "Soft Balancing in the Americas: Latin American Opposition to U.S. Intervention, 1898-1936," *International Security* Vol: 40 n.º 1 (2015): 120-156.

7. Max Paul Friedman and Tom Long, "Soft Balancing", 143. Long develops his argument more extensively in his book, Tom Long, *Latin America Confronts the United States: Asymmetry and Influence* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015).

8. Other Colombians supporting Drago's Doctrine were Pérez Triana's colleagues in the revista *Hispania*, Baldomero Sanín Cano and Enrique Pérez Lleras.

## Pérez Triana's early life

Born in 1858, Santiago Pérez Triana embarked on a career that was unique compared to those of other members of the so-called "Classic Generation"—the individuals who determined the course of Colombian history during the years from 1890 to 1905—<sup>9</sup>. The eldest son of Radical Liberal president, Santiago Pérez de Manosalbas (1874-1876), he lived most of his life outside of Colombia, first in the United States, later in Germany, where he attended the University of Leipzig from 1877 to 1881, and eventually in Europe, where after a sojourn in Madrid, he settled in London, England. His wife, Gertrude O'Day, who he married in 1896, was the daughter of Daniel O'Day, a wealthy North American manager of Standard Oil in France. Pérez Triana's efforts to succeed in commerce, first in the United States and then in Colombia, not only failed but also engendered serious scandals that forced him to flee both countries. In December 1893, to avoid imprisonment by Colombian authorities, he slipped away from Bogotá, and with the aid of friends, he crossed over the Andean cordillera by a little known route. Making his arduous voyage down the Meta, Vichada and Orinoco rivers, Pérez reached Trinidad in April 1894, having completed a ninety-day adventure that he immortalized in a book published in English as *Down the Orinoco in a Canoe* (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell, 1902) and in Spanish as *De Bogotá al Atlántico por la vía de los ríos Meta, Vichada y Orinoco* (Paris: Imprenta Sudamericana, 1897).

During the ten years between 1896 and 1906 Pérez Triana resided in Madrid, where he supported his family by editing journals and publishing articles, essays, and poems, and dabbling in diplomacy. A prolific writer, he had an astonishing gift for languages, and he was an attractive and convincing orator in English, Spanish, French and Italian. In addition to *Down the Orinoco*, he published three other books during this period: *El Deber de Cantar: Cantos Colombianos* (Lausana: Imprenta Jorge Bridal, 1899), a collection of six poems dedicated to his father; *Reminiscencias tudescas* (Madrid: Librería de Fernando Fé, 1902) which set down his memories of his university life in Germany, and *Tales to Sonny* (London: Anthony Theherne & Company, 1906), dedicated to his son and consisting of six short stories written for children.

In 1900 Dr. Rafael Zaldívar, an ex-president of El Salvador, who had corresponded with Pérez Triana in previous years concerning railroads and other enterprises, arrived in Madrid

9. In his *Generaciones colombianas* (Bogotá: El Dorado, 1976), Abel Naranjo Villegas proposed a scheme for understanding the evolution of Colombian history by dividing the ruling elite during the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries chronologically into seven different generations. In this context a "generation," he explained, was understood as a group of people who worked more or less simultaneously within the same social, cultural and political contexts, even though their approaches to the phenomena of the time might have been different. The Classic Generation lived in an era marked by authoritarianism, by dogmatic and ideologically oriented thinking. Its members exhibited a sentimental attachment to Spanish culture and adopted an individualistic, egocentric approach to life. Although they did not adequately understand the confused reality of their country, they embraced a strict patriarchal style and two strikingly opposing political viewpoints reflected in the Radical Constitution of 1863 and the Conservative Constitution of 1886. See page 73.

to attend an Ibero-American Congress and invited Pérez to accompany him as his secretary. Eduardo Zuleta, the secretary of the Colombian Legation in Paris, Madrid and Brussels, was the official Colombian representative at the congress, and the meeting was also attended by such prominent intellectuals as Justo Sierra, César Zumeta, Alberto Blest Gana, and Carlos Fernández Shaw. Zuleta recalled that when Pérez Triana arrived, he was “expressive, smiling and jovial;” however, he attended the session in silence, listening to the eloquence and brilliant expositions of the others without saying a word. Zuleta attributes his uncharacteristic silence to the fact that he was Zaldívar’s secretary and did not want to outshine his mentor on this occasion. Nevertheless, he established good contacts with some of the finest minds of the period which would serve him well in the future. After the Congreso, Zaldívar appointed Pérez Encargado de Negocios for the Salvadoran Legation in Madrid, which while not particularly remunerative, enabled him to continue participating in important literary circles<sup>10</sup>.

After the death of his father-in-law in 1906, Pérez Triana with Gertrude and Sonny established a permanent residence in London, where their fine house became a favorite meeting place for European and Latin American intellectuals. Physically Pérez did not cut an impressive figure for, as his good friend Eduardo Nieto Caballero has written, he was short, “with a paunch and the face of a toad, who peered through very thick glasses.”<sup>11</sup> His progressively worsening eyesight left him nearly blind by the time of his death, and he suffered from anxiety, insomnia and diabetes. None of this mattered, however, for as another friend, R. B. Cunninghame Graham wrote:

His soul appeared especially modeled for friendship. No one could remain unmoved by his wit, his humor, his joviality, or before the magic of his conversation that perhaps constituted the fundamental factor of the magnetism exercised by his personality before the world. Pérez Triana cultivated great and small personalities with loyalty and disinterest. He was ready to help at any moment with his counsel, his influence and even his money, and nothing was more painful for him than the death of a friend.<sup>12</sup>

## Involvement in Colombian Politics

Pérez Triana created a comfortable life for himself and his family in England, but he was always in close touch with events occurring in Colombia. A bystander during the horrendous War of the Thousand Days (1899-1902), he was angered at U.S. involvement in the secession

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10. Eduardo Zuleta, “Elogio de Santiago Pérez Triana,” *Anuario de la Academia Colombiana de la Lengua* (Bogotá: S.e., 1937), 394-395.

11. Eduardo Nieto Caballero, “Santiago Pérez Triana,” in *Hombres de Pasado* (Bogotá: Ediciones Terra Firma Litografía, 1944), 19-21.

12. *Hispania*, Year 5 Vol. 5 n.º 54 (June 27, 1916): 1617-1618.

of Panama in 1903, an action he regarded as “international piracy.” Although many Colombians expressed outrage, Pérez’s views, coming from Europe, carried substantial weight. During the years that followed, he repeatedly attacked President Theodore Roosevelt, who claimed “I took Panama,” with reproaches, caustic ironies and bitter sarcasm. In 1913, in an open letter he chastised Estanislao Zeballos, the rector of the University of Buenos Aires, for awarding Roosevelt an honorary doctorate by pointing out that America’s youth would regard the gesture as an example of moral degradation<sup>13</sup>. Pérez was likewise a bitter critic of General Rafael Reyes, who ruled Colombia as a virtual dictator from 1904 to 1909, a period known as the *Quinquenio*. In his book *Desde Lejos (Asuntos colombianos)* published in London in 1907, Pérez faulted Reyes for governing without the customary checks and balances of Colombia’s constitution and for his policy of negotiating foreign loans to fund public works<sup>14</sup>.

He also denounced Reyes’ efforts to recognize Panama’s independence through a treaty negotiated by Enrique Cortés for Colombia, Carlos Arosemena for Panama, and Elihu Root for the United States. On May 1, 1909 he wrote a letter to President William Howard Taft urging him to oppose this treaty, because, among other considerations, the Reyes dictatorship was essentially illegal, and if the United States accepted the treaty, it would be complicit in his fraudulent rule<sup>15</sup>. This letter, published simultaneously in Spanish and English, was widely circulated on both sides of the Atlantic. It established Pérez as an effective spokesman for the rights of Latin peoples with regard to U.S. policy. It may also have contributed to Reyes’ two sudden decisions in early June 1909: first, to allow a congressional election that gave a majority to the Republic Union (a newly organized party), and second, to depart abruptly from Colombia to seek exile in Europe.

## Pérez Triana and the Drago Doctrine

Besides commenting on Colombian affairs, Pérez Triana’s publications at the turn of the century also dealt with matters of hemispheric importance. After 1902, in addition to denouncing U.S. action in Panama, he became an enthusiastic supporter of the Drago Doctrine, and as a delegate to the Second Hague Convention in 1907, he had the ideal stage on which to defend this proposal. Luis María Drago was an eminent Argentine jurist and minister of foreign affairs in 1902 when three European states (Britain, Germany, and Italy) imposed a naval blockade on Venezuela to enforce financial claims resulting from that country’s default on bonds. On December 29, 1902 Drago sent an official note to the

13. Sergio Elías Ortiz, *Santiago Pérez Triana* (Bogotá: Editorial Kelly, 1971), 85.

14. Santiago Pérez Triana, *Desde Lejos (Asuntos Colombianos)* (London: Wertheimer, 1907), XIX.

15. Santiago Pérez Triana, “Carta al Presidente Taft en pro de la honradez internacional” (London: Wertheimer, Lea y Cia, 1909), 16.

Argentine minister in Washington, Marín García Mérou, stating that “such use of force was contrary to international law, for the collection of loans by military means implies territorial occupation to make them effective [and it implied] the suppression or subordination of government.”<sup>16</sup> He went on to develop his position (known as the Drago Doctrine) in two books, *La República Argentina y el Caso de Venezuela* (1903) and *Cobro coercitivo de deudas públicas* (1906) in which he essentially stated that although a nation is legally bound to pay its debts, it cannot be forced to do so<sup>17</sup>.

Drago's doctrine was innovative because it rejected categorically the right of military intervention or occupation of a country for the purpose of collecting debts at a time when European powers as well as the United States were carving out empires throughout the globe. The principle had overwhelming support from Latin American leaders, but European nations were unwilling to accept any limitation on their right to recover money invested abroad. In December 1904 President Theodore Roosevelt, in a drastic departure from Drago's proposal, announced that in keeping with the Monroe Doctrine, the United States would intervene directly in conflicts threatened by European countries to enforce legitimate claims in Latin America rather than have the Europeans press their demands militarily. For the next three decades the U.S. government would use this excuse (known as the “Roosevelt Corollary” to the Monroe Doctrine), to justify its intervention throughout the hemisphere.

Thus, it is not surprising that Latin American countries, in an effort to defend their sovereignty from European and U.S. aggression, attempted to get Drago's doctrine accepted as an international law at the Second Hague Convention of 1907<sup>18</sup>. The delegates, who met when the Second Hague Convention convened on June 15, 1907, represented 44 states, an assemblage that included 19 Latin American nations. The Colombian delegation consisted of general Jorge Holguín, general Marceliano Vargas, and Santiago Pérez Triana. Given the latter's well-known opposition to the *Quinquenio*, his selection for this post is surprising, but historian Sergio Elías Ortiz has suggested that his appointment was in recognition of the prestige he enjoyed due to his writings in international journals and his fluency in the various languages that would be spoken at the meeting<sup>19</sup>.

During the conference, the delegates approved regulations relating to the rights and duties of neutral powers and persons in war on land and sea; the laying of automatic submarine contact mines; the status of enemy merchant ships; bombardment by naval forces in wartime; and the establishment of an international prize court. For the Latin Americans,

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16. W. T. Stead, “Introducción,” in *La Doctrina Drago: colección de documentos con una advertencia preliminar de S. Pérez Triana y una introducción de W. T. Stead* (London: Wertheimer, Lea y Cia, 1908), XIV.

17. Juan Manuel Pérez, “Drago Doctrine,” in *Encyclopedia of Latin American History and Culture*, ed. Barbara A. Tenenbaum, Vol. 2 (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1996), 405.

18. It is important to point out that Drago regarded his “Doctrine” as a “principle” and did not take part in the campaign for it to become an “international law.”

19. Sergio Elías Ortiz, *Santiago Pérez*, 95.



however, the most important issue debated concerned the employment of force for the recovery of contracted debts. On July 18, Dr. Drago, as a member of the Argentine delegation, again put forward his principle that no foreign power, including the United States, could use force against another state to collect debts. The U.S. representatives immediately objected. As an alternative they offered the Porter Convention, which stated that when a country defaulted on its debt, it must submit to a court of arbitration to gain a solution as to how much money was owed and how it was to be paid. If the debtor state refused to carry out the court's decision, the creditor state might then resort to military action to force payment<sup>20</sup>. Latin Americans were adamantly opposed to this alternative, and on July 19 Pérez Triana rose to articulate their objections. Among other arguments, he stated:

We proclaim the inviolability of the sovereignty of States in accordance with the Drago Doctrine. In the most serious cases arbitration will not impede wars [...] the establishment of forced collections creates a new danger for peace in the world [...] we reject the use of force. If you ask what is to be done, I reply: If you cannot resolve the problem satisfactorily and with justice, let things take their course [...] national debts are not absolute and what one generation doesn't pay, the following generation will [...] it would be a miracle to assure international creditors against all possibility of loss. It would not be a miracle but a grave error to leave in the hands of the financiers, among whom are some who are not angels, the means to facilitate imperialist wars, more or less masked in their tendencies against weak Nations. From these fires will spring incalculable conflagration.<sup>21</sup>

Pérez Triana's speech, delivered in pure, eloquent French, proved a "true revelation" for the other delegates who were accustomed to hearing orations in barely understandable French, the language of the conference. His address captured their admiration and won great applause. For example, the *Courier de la Conférence*, in its review of the discussion of the Drago Doctrine on July 19, cited Triana's "eloquent and convincing speech" in support of its acceptance<sup>22</sup>. The *London Tribune* on the same date noted that Pérez Triana's oration, "typically short and caustic," had made him "one of the most notable people at the conference." The article continued:

His speech, filled with sarcasm and grand truths, was delivered with the force and passion of the genuine orator. In the name of Latin America he protested against the right of Shylock collective of international finance to employ military and naval force, using extortion to obtain without mercy the payment of bonds that calamity might have

20. "Declaración del General Porter," in *La Doctrina Drago: colección*, 160-162.

21. Santiago Pérez Triana, "Discurso," in *La Doctrina Drago: colección*, 113-118.

22. "Courrier de la Conférence," in *La Doctrina Drago: colección*, 207.

made imposible [...] Financiers are not angels and to give them permission to collect bonds at the expense of those who pay taxes, would incite wars of imperial aggression from which can surge conflagrations of incalculable extension and intensity.<sup>23</sup>

Although the conference failed to adopt the Drago Doctrine as an international law, Pérez Triana returned to London as a figure of world status, for as W. T. Stead proclaimed: "With that formidable orator had appeared a new continent."<sup>24</sup> It was for his participation at the Hague Conference that the contemporary Colombian journal, *Credencial Historia* selected Pérez Triana as Man of the Year for 1907 in its series "Personajes del Año," explaining:

Santiago Pérez Triana in impeccable English pronounced a thunderous speech in support of the thesis of the Argentine Drago. The speech that provoked opposing reaction in favor and against, praised in London and attacked in Bogotá, put into the international forefront for some months the figure of Pérez Triana. Sufficient merit to be considered the most outstanding Colombian of 1907.<sup>25</sup>

## Pérez Triana and the Monroe Doctrine

In the aftermath of the *Quinquenio*, Pérez Triana had full confidence in the newly-formed Republican Union Party that controlled the Colombian government between 1910 and 1914. In 1910 he accepted President Carlos E. Restrepo's appointment as envoy extraordinary and minister plenipotentiary of Colombia to Great Britain. His first challenge in this capacity was to resolve European demands for repayment of an estimated \$4 million dollars in loans contracted during the Reyes regime. The Restrepo government authorized him to refute the claims, and it dispatched José Vicente Concha to London to work with him to resolve the crisis. The two were able to fashion a deal to pay off the debt coupons and restore the credit of the republic in early 1910, but Colombia's continuing need for foreign investment remained an ongoing issue<sup>26</sup>. For the next year, Pérez Triana dedicated himself to dealing with problems of national economy and the development of commercial interchange. The publication of his *Eslabones Suelos* (*Asuntos colombianos*) at the end of 1910 provides a record of his activities. It documents

23. "The Tribune (London), July 19, 1907," in *La Doctrina Drago: colección*, 216.

24. Sergio Elías Ortiz, *Santiago Pérez*, 99. W. T. Stead was an English journalist who was drawn into reform politics and in 1890 began a periodical, *The Review of Reviews*, to which Pérez Triana would be a frequent contributor.

25. "Personajes del año," *Credencial Historia* n.º 175 (2004). There seems to be a discrepancy in the sources as to whether Pérez Triana presented his speeches in French or English at the Conference, but he was capable of using either language fluently. <http://www.revistacredencial.com/credencial/historia/temas/personajes-del-ano-edicion-175> Translated by the author.

26. Eduardo Nieto Caballero, "Santiago Pérez," 23-28.

his efforts to find lessees for the Muzo emerald mines (which he saw as the nation's most pressing need) and to resolve the debts incurred to underwrite the *Ferrocarril de Giradot*.

As historian James D. Henderson points out, Pérez Triana gave his argument in favor of contracting foreign loans a moral cast by tracing "popular misery [and] the many evils afflicting Colombia" to a lack of personal capital. "Without [money]," he maintained, "moral progress is impossible."<sup>27</sup> Henderson adds that modern studies confirm Pérez's perception that Colombians had very little disposable capital, and that the scarcity of investment capital made it increasingly important that, however distasteful, the country improve its relations with the United States and settle its dispute over recognition of the independence of Panama<sup>28</sup>. After serving for a year as Colombia's minister plenipotentiary to England, Pérez resigned, a move prompted by a severe cerebral attack that left him near death. His doctors traced its cause to overwork and recommended complete rest. Following three months of recuperation, Pérez resumed his work as a writer, host, and gourmet, but he suffered from partial paralysis for the rest of his life<sup>29</sup>.

On abandoning diplomacy Santiago dedicated all of his activity to founding a new journal, *Hispania*, designed to be an outlet for the opinions, desires, and defense of Spanish-speaking people. His broad contacts with public financiers and politicians enable him to amass the necessary sum of pounds sterling needed to begin the enterprise that had been a lifetime goal. The inaugural issue appeared on January 1, 1912. Monthly installments continued until June 1916, completing the entire run of 54 issues arranged in five volumes. Copies of the revista were sent to agents in Argentina, Bolivia, Panama, Chile, Cuba, Ecuador, the United States, El Salvador, Uruguay, Venezuela, and several Colombian cities<sup>30</sup>. Pérez was fortunate that there were Colombians residing in London at that time who were eager to collaborate. Especially essential were the Antioqueño essayist and educator, Baldomero Sanín Cano, who served as co-editor, and Enrique Pérez Lleras, a former Liberal deputy from Barranquilla, whose experience as an editor and journalist in Bogotá prepared him to deal with technical issues arising from the launch of the new journal<sup>31</sup>.

With the collaboration of other Colombians, Spaniards, and Englishmen living in London, each number contained articles dealing with politics, commerce, literature, arts and sciences, and

27. James D. Henderson, *Modernization in Colombia: The Laureano Gómez Years, 1889-1965* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2001), 78.

28. James D. Henderson, *Modernization in Colombia*.

29. Eduardo Nieto Caballero, "Santiago Pérez," 35.

30. Gildardo Castaño Duque, "Revista *Hispania* (1912-1916): presencia cultural en la vida intelectual en América Latina," in *Utopías móviles: nuevos caminos para la historia intelectual en American Latina*, coord. Selnich Vivas Hurtado (Medellín: Universidad de Antioquia, 2014), 50.

31. Two recent publications expand upon the significance of *Hispania*. First, Gildardo Castaño Duque in "Revista *Hispania* (1912-1916): presencia cultural en la vida intelectual en American Latina," provides an overview of the journal and has already been cited, while Rafael Rubiano Muñoz and Juan Guillermo Gómez García in *Años de Vértigo: Baldomero Sanín Cano y la revista Hispania (1912-1916)* focus upon the contributions made by Sanín Cano.

the rights of nations then being debated in parliaments, political circles, and other publications. The editorials and reports written by Pérez Triana had the virtue of creating a new consciousness of problems of international relations. "He takes upon himself," wrote one commentator, "the defense of weak peoples and appears before the concourse of nations as a herald of peace and justice."<sup>32</sup> In March 1912, Pérez Triana published two essays that addressed the Latinization of the Monroe Doctrine. First "Memorandum Sent to the Latin-American Governments" and second, "A Manifest to the Peoples of America: Wanted a Revised and Extended Monroe Doctrine."<sup>33</sup> In both he argued that the great powers in Europe had avoided war between themselves by creating large defensive military and naval forces which in turn forced them to constantly increase taxation of the masses. As a safety valve for potential popular revolts, they had embraced policies of territorial expansion and encouraged large numbers of their inhabitants to immigrate into newly conquered regions in Africa and Southeast Asia.

Up to the time when Pérez was writing, the Americas had enjoyed immunity from this process. President James Monroe's timely declaration in 1823 had closed the Western Hemisphere to European conquest, but it had not stopped the United States itself from seizing territory belonging to other nations. To eliminate this loophole, Pérez proposed in his "Memorandum" that "The United States and the other Republics of America solemnly declare that conquest is forever proscribed from the continents of America, and let them pledge themselves not to practice or to tolerate the conquest of territory."<sup>34</sup> Pérez Triana suggested that President William Howar Taft had a unique opportunity to amend the Monroe Doctrine since encouraging cordial cooperation between Latin America and the United States was as important in 1912 as in the times of President Monroe. He reiterated that "the exclusion of conquest of territory as a fundamental principle of international life on the American continent should be solemnly proclaimed by all the American nations; they should all pledge themselves to maintain it."

Such a declaration that conquest of territory shall hereafter neither be practiced nor tolerated on the American continent, he added, was "in essence, in full accord with the avowed policy of the United States. Not only would it carry the Monroe principles to their most logical development, but it would also dispel misgivings and distrust throughout the continent." Moreover, he warned: "the sands are running in the glass of Time; tomorrow it may be too late."<sup>35</sup> In an address, "Origin and Significance of the Monroe Doctrine," delivered in London on June .....

32. Sergio Elías Ortiz, *Santiago Pérez*, 110.

33. The "Memorandum" was published in *Hispania* on March 1, 1912 and "A Manifest" (written under Pérez Triana's penname, A. de Manos-Albas) appeared in the March 12 issue of *The Review of Reviews*. Both were reprinted in Santiago Pérez Triana, *The Pan-American Financial Conference of 1915* (London: William Heinemann, 1915). The book lists an Appendix with "A Manifest" in page 115 and the "Memorandum" in the page 135. The citations of the author come from that volume.

34. Santiago Pérez Triana, "Memorandum Sent to the Latin American Governments," in *The Pan-American Financial Conference of 1915*, Santiago Pérez Triana (London: William Heinemann, 1915), 139.

35. Pérez Triana, "A Manifest to the Peoples of America: Wanted a Revised and Extended Monroe Doctrine," in *The Pan-American Financial*, 132.

19, 1913 and reprinted in *Hispania* the following July, Pérez Triana argued that “the acts of violence, usurpation and spoliation” sometimes ascribed to the Monroe Doctrine “stand by themselves and do not affect the sanctity of the creed, as the vice of the pontiff does not sully the purity of the doctrine.” The basis of the doctrine, he continued, was the “conception that representative government is government of the people, by the people and for the people,” and that was what the Holy Alliance in 1823 had wanted to destroy.

The current threat by European Powers to conquer and colonize American territories could likewise bring about the end of democratic and representative government. The Monroe Doctrine, which stood against this intimidation, was “not the property of the United States, nor the property of America, but of those men who seek liberty, whatever their origin throughout the whole world.”<sup>36</sup> Six months later, Pérez Triana explicitly called for the Latinization of the Monroe Doctrine in an essay, “The Pan-American Union” published in *Hispania* on February 1, 1914. Here, Pérez conceded that although the Monroe Doctrine had protected the hemisphere from European expansion, it had not stopped the United States itself from conquering parts of Latin America, actions that had given rise to feelings of distrust that unless dispelled might seriously impair the peace of the continent. It was vital, he argued, to restore cordiality and faith between the United States and Latin Republics if they were to remain safe from European aggression, and he added, “All this may be accomplished without difficulty when the United States and other republics of America solemnly declare that conquest is definitively forbidden in the American continent, binding themselves not to practice nor tolerate the conquest of territories in America.”<sup>37</sup>

Pérez explained that “the main object of this Pan-American Union is to check the political expansion of Europe, and also to end once and forever all future conquest of American territory by American nations.” He concluded: “In a few words, it will suffice if the United States and the American republics accept Monroe’s declaration carried to its utmost logical development as a fundamental principle of international law for the continent.”<sup>38</sup> In all four essays, Pérez presented a strong case for the Latinization or Pan-Americanization of the Monroe Doctrine as a way to insure hemispheric peace in the face of the division of Europe into two competing power groups: England, France and Russia versus Germany, Austria and Italy. Events soon bore out his concern over the continuing militarization of Europe. On June 28, 1914, the assassinations of the heir to the throne of Austria-Hungary, Franz Ferdinand and his wife Sophie set off the four-year conflict that engulfed the world known as “The Great War.” Deeply troubled by the European conflict, Pérez Triana wrote a letter to Colombia’s newly-elected president, José Vicente Concha that was printed in the November 1, 1914 issue of *Hispania* and published a month later in the New York Times under the headline,

36. *Hispania* Vol: 2 n.º 19 (July 1, 1913): 19: 657.

37. *Hispania* Vol: 3 n.º 26 (February 1, 1914): 26.

38. *Hispania* Vol: 3 n.º 26 (February 1, 1914): 26.

“Noted South American diplomat on Monroe Doctrine of the Future: Santiago Pérez Triana, in a letter to President of Colombia Declares that the Nations of This Continent Must Unite for Resisting not only European but Any Other Kind of Aggression.”<sup>39</sup>

Taking his cue from President Woodrow Wilson’s declaration in Mobile, Alabama in October 1913 that the U.S. would not in future acquire territory on the American continent by means of war or conquest, Pérez urged Concha to raise the need at the next Pan-American congress to expand the Monroe Doctrine so that it would proclaim that the sovereignty of Latin American nations cannot be violated by any nation in the Western Hemisphere or by nations of other continents. To those who might argue that “strength is only the sword,” Pérez responded, “We, the weak have only right for a shield. We have neither sword nor cannon; let us then rally to the right in the firm conviction that right must triumph in the end.”<sup>40</sup> Pérez Triana had another opportunity to expound on his views as a Colombian delegate to the first Pan-American Financial Conference. With the exception of Mexico, representatives of all the Latin American nations as well as the United States attended this conference that met in Washington D. C., May 24 to 29, 1915 to discuss among other matters: public finance, the banking system, financial of public improvements, and the extension of inter-American markets. Pérez Triana, however, was most concerned with hemispheric security. In his first speech, “The Trusteeship of Liberty,” presented at the opening session on May 24, he emphasized that the inhabitants of the Western Hemisphere were the “trustees of the liberties of humanity,” and that “whatever may tend to strengthen the bonds of solidarity amongst the nations of this Continent, like the present effort, will be a step in the right direction.”<sup>41</sup>

In his speech on the following day, “The Inviolability of the Continent,” he reiterated that “we Americans must be prepared to make the inviolability of our continent stronger each day.” Addressing predatory monarchs contemplating imperialism, he proclaimed: “All your people may come in their thousands and in their millions, and we will not only give them a home, but we will crown them with the right of citizenship; but this we tell you, you must come as peaceful multitudes, not as conquering class. We have no place for your flags.”<sup>42</sup> Such prolonged applause followed his remarks, that the other Latin American delegates chose Pérez Triana to represent them at the final banquet of the conference that took place on the evening of May 29. In this talk, Pérez proclaimed that:

Our nations are free, and they shall live wedded to liberty so long as they remain loyal and faithful to the principles of democracy, but that the Americas faced two fundamental sources of dangers: the excess of power running to predatory imperialism and

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39. *Hispania* Vol: 3 n.º 35 (November 1, 1914): 1237; *The New York Times*, New York, December 13, 1914.

40. *Hispania* Vol: 3 n.º 35 (November 1, 1914): 1237; *The New York Times*, New York, December 13, 1914.

41. Santiago Pérez Triana, “The Trusteeship of Liberty,” in *The Pan-American Financial*, 44-47.

42. Santiago Pérez Triana, “The Inviolability of the Continent,” in *The Pan-American Financial*, 56.

abuse of sovereignty. Imperialism grows apace with the consciousness of power, and sovereignty entails moral obligations [...] The mantle of liberty that should protect the whole continent and insure each and every sovereignty should never be a cloak of immunity for misery and crime.<sup>43</sup>

There is no doubt that Pérez Triana had distinguished himself at the Pan-American Financial Conference, for he continued to serve as a spokesman for the Latin American delegates on a post-conference tour arranged for them by the American government. The tour included visiting the key cities of Philadelphia, St. Louis, Detroit, and Boston where they were feted by local dignitaries. At each stop, Pérez offered a speech focusing on United States-Latin American cooperation. At the Algonquin Club in Boston, he made a strong plea for the expansion of the Monroe Doctrine, stating that "it should be enacted and covenanted among all the nations of the continent that the territory of the American nations is no longer a subject for conquest whether from within or from without the continent."<sup>44</sup> In short, his speech amounted to a proposal that the Monroe Doctrine should be transformed into a hemispheric union that would embrace both the United States and the republics of Latin America.

Following his return to London, Pérez Triana continued to promote his ideas in *Hispania* and in the book, already cited, *The Pan-American Financial Conference*. In an essay, "Pan-Americanism," he wrote that "Pan-Americanism—the real, the genuin—rests primarily upon the Monroe Doctrine." Pointing out the need to strengthen the Monroe Doctrine so that all threat of territorial conquest in the Western Hemisphere would disappear, he concluded, "In that endeavor the American nations are now and thenceforth united. The United States has led the way: we shall never in the future, acquire an inch of territory by conquest."<sup>45</sup> In spite of his failing health, Pérez also turned his energies to supporting the Allied cause in the Great War. Following the lead of the United States and like most of Latin America, the Colombian government declared its neutrality in the conflict, but from his residence in England, Pérez was free to express his strongly held beliefs. In July 1915 he published *Some Aspects of the War* (London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1915), a collection of thirteen essays in English, originally written in Spanish, that was unswervingly critical of the German war effort. This book received high praise in both the American and English press. As the critic for the *Saturday Review* observed, there were many parts of the book worth reading, especially as "Señor Triana is one of the most deeply informed men on some subjects and a personality whose force and charm has been felt and recognized by all his friends."<sup>46</sup>

43. Santiago Pérez Triana, "Predatory Imperialism and the Abuse of Sovereignty," in *The Pan-American Financial*, 57-64.

44. Santiago Pérez Triana, "The Monroe Doctrine," in *The Pan American Financial*, 99-113. *The New York Times* reprinted key points of this speech in its article "Urges a Covenant to Guard Americas," published on June 13, 1915.

45. Santiago Pérez Triana, "Pan-Americanism," in *Pan-American Financial Conference*, 29.

46. Cited in the *Book Review Digest* n.º 12 (1918): 662.

## Conclusion

For the next seven months Pérez continued to edit and write essays for *Hispania* despite his failing health. In March 1916 he moved his family from London to his country house in Riverdale Cowley, Middlesex. Now nearly completely blind and suffering from heart disease and diabetes, he was aware that he had not long to live. He died at age 58 on May 23, 1915. Given his international celebrity, Pérez Triana's passing prompted lavish obituaries in Colombian, North American, and European newspapers. Representative was the notice appearing in the *New York Times* on May 26, 1916, with the headline, "Santiago P. Triana Dead: He advocated that the Western Hemisphere be Retained by Americans."<sup>47</sup> As these obituaries pointed out, while living abroad Perez had published books, poems and essays in addition to playing an important role in Colombian politics. From an international standpoint, however, his most significant contributions were his support of the Drago Doctrine at the 1907 Hague Conference, his essays published in *Hispania*, and his influential speeches that called for the Pan-Americanization of the Monroe Doctrine at the Pan-American Financial Conference in 1915, efforts that contributed to the improvement in U.S.-Latin American relations and supported the on-going maneuvers of Latin American countries to provide a "soft balance" to the unipolar power then wielded by the United States.

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