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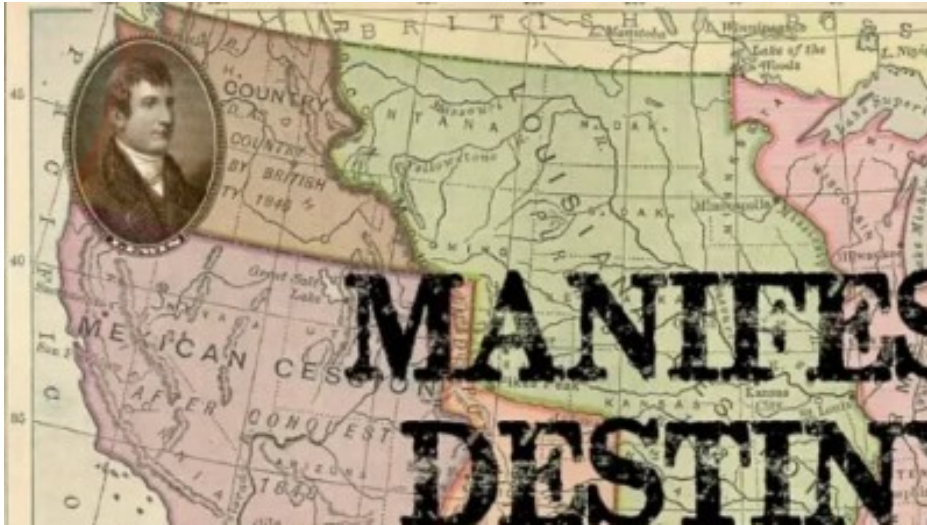
Latin America: between the West and Eurasia

Latin America belongs to the West. But it would be serious for its economic development to consider China and Russia as "threats" and Eurasia as an "enemy" region.



After its independence (1776) the United States began the construction of a powerful presidential republic. One of the doctrines that accompanied its territorial expansion was that of [Manifest Destiny](#). Another, known as [the Monroe Doctrine \(1823\)](#), initially formulated by John Quincy Adams, but concretized by James Monroe, was intended to stop any attempt at European reconquest of the former colonies that had become independent. "America for the Americans" was also transformed into a policy of isolation

of the United States itself from Europe, so that both regions took different paths of economic development and political life.



In what we identify today as Latin America, the first critic of American expansionism was Simón Bolívar. The historian Francisco Pividal dedicated his work [Bolívar: pensamiento precursor del antimperialismo \(1977\)](#) to highlight it. In addition, El Libertador devised Gran Colombia as a first step in the construction of a single Latin American nation without the help of the United States. It was an impossible dream, but the ideal has survived and, without a doubt, CELAC (2011), during the first cycle of progressive governments of the early twenty-first century, concretized that exclusively Latin Americanist integration, although the project ceased to have the strength it had, with the succession of a wave of business-neoliberal governments.

Despite the monroism, during the nineteenth century the economy of Latin America continued to be linked to Europe, while the United States grew in territory even at the expense of Mexico, as well as its area of greatest influence was limited to Central America and the Caribbean. The take-off of the United States occurred at the beginning of the twentieth century. Thus began its imperialist era, which was favored with the I (1914-1918) and II (1939-1945) World Wars, after which the US became the first power in the capitalist world. During this trajectory, Latin America not only reoriented its economy towards the UNITED States, but also became the space of incursion of North American capital, accompanied by direct interventionism, whenever it was necessary to secure its interests in the region. There is a vast historical literature on these subjects. There was no shortage of defenders of this incursion, as did the historian Samuel Flagg Bemis, who

baptized it as "*protective imperialism*" to differentiate it from the "selfish" imperialism of the Europeans, at the same time that he considered that the best policy was that of the "[Good Neighbor](#)", cultivated by F.D. Roosevelt.

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The Cold War affirmed the continental hegemony of the United States, which resumed monroism especially in the wake of the Cuban Revolution (1959), to align the continent in anti-communism, under the diplomacy of the OAS. During the 1960s and 1970s, U.S. interventions were frequent, to establish military dictatorships that multiplied in Latin America. Supposedly "*protective imperialism*" was to serve to modernize Latin American economies and strengthen democracies, something that evidently did not happen. However, the "[developmentalism](#)" of the time, thanks to the impulse of the States, served to affirm a sui generis Latin American capitalism, built on the extreme concentration of wealth and the generalized precariousness of the living and working conditions of the population.

In the 1980s neoliberalism penetrated Latin America with the help of the IMF and in the 1990s it became widespread as the only admissible economic way, when socialism collapsed. Transnational globalization and the unipolar hegemony of the US prevailed. But it could not be avoided that, over the decades, a new world arose, with the powerful development of China and Russia at the head. Slowly multilateralism and relative multipolarity gained strength. Latin America took advantage of these processes and today has diversified markets and even economic relations with China and Russia grew, displacing INTERESTS OF THE UNITED STATES.

The conflict in Ukraine has become a turning point in contemporary human history. The powers involved seem to seek to divide the Earth into two camps: that of "freedom" and "democracy" in the West, versus that of "autocracies" and "dictatorships" in Eurasia. It is a Manichean division of the world. Nor is it a "Clash of Civilizations," as Samuel Huntington conceived it in a famous book (1996). [President Joe Biden said at the business roundtable's quarterly meeting of CEOs](#): "There's going to be a new world order and we have to lead it."; and delivered his important ["State of the Union Address"](#) to Congress, in which he exposes the efforts that his country will make for that leadership and among which it is worth highlighting the meaning he gives to social and tax policies, something that is far from the conservative and backward mentalities of the Latin American economic elites that advocate for small States, social and tax cuts.



MAP OF THE IMPERIAL FEDERATION OF THE WORLD showing the extent of the BRITISH EMPIRE IN 1886. Statistical information provided by Captain J.C.R. COLOMA. Red British territories

But to all this is added the effort for what can be considered as a "neo-monroism". It is best expressed in the ["2022 Position Statement"](#), presented by Army Gen. Laura Richardson, commander of U.S. Southern Command, to the Senate Armed Services Committee, a document that should be read seriously in Latin America. There it warns that the continent is under the "assault" of a series of transversal and cross-border challenges that directly "threaten" the US; whereas China and Russia, which are seen as "threats" to

the US, "are aggressively expanding their influence in our neighbourhood"; whereas particularly China "challenges US influence" economically, diplomatically, technologically, it and militarily; while Russia is the "most immediate threat," it increases its commitments in the hemisphere and intensifies instability "through its ties with Venezuela, entrenchment in Cuba and Nicaragua, and extensive disinformation operations"; to all of which are added the transnational criminal organizations (TCOs) that "operate almost unopposed and open a path of corruption and violence"; and all this in the face of the "fragile state institutions of the region". It is recommended to use "all available levers" to strengthen alliances with the countries of the hemisphere and important tools such as security cooperation programs to "train and equip the armed forces of our partners."



US military bases in Latin America

Latin America belongs to the West. But it would be serious for its economic development to consider China and Russia as "threats" and Eurasia as an "enemy" region. In a world that has changed and that enters an era of multipolar and, in addition, multicultural geography, Latin America has defined itself as a region of peace and has no interference in the disputes for hegemony between the great powers. It can forge its own security and development strategies on the basis of *Latin Americanism*, which postulates sovereignty and independence, alien, at this point, to the old theses of the cold war and traditional monroism. In this regard, [the international definitions assumed by the president of Mexico, Andrés Manuel López Obrador](#) guide the new Latin Americanist positions for the present, since all the countries of the region are interested in having solid and profitable ties with the United States itself and with any other country or region, which can

contribute to the effective overcoming of underdevelopment, to create better living and working conditions for the population.

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