

SECURITISATION IN THE BRAZIL-COLOMBIA- -PERU TRIPLE BORDER AND THE ROLE OF THE BRAZILIAN ARMY IN THE REGION

A SECURITIZAÇÃO NA TRÍPLICE-FRONTEIRA BRASIL-COLÔMBIA-PERU E O PAPEL DO EXÉRCITO BRASILEIRO NA REGIÃO

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Abstract

In the post-Cold War context, the International Security Studies developed by the Copenhagen School broadened the scope of what constitutes the threat and the debate around the concept of securitisation. Securitisation, understood as a 'speech act', is the manner in which certain sectors construct threats to the existence of a unit, requiring the adoption of measures to counter them. Based on this theoretical frame of reference, this paper has looked at two interrelated issues: the first is the presence of securitisation discourse in the documents that guide National Defence in three countries: Brazil, Colombia and Peru (National Defence Policies and Strategies and National Defence White Papers); the second is the securitisation actions in the Amazon Trapeze, the name by which the region of the triple border is known, especially actions whose main actors are the military organisations of these nations. Thus, the present paper allowed us to understand how the official discourses of these states align with the securitisation practices of the three countries in a sensitive area of the Amazon.

Keywords: Security, Securitisation, Triple Border, Brazilian Army.

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Resumo

A partir do contexto do pós-Guerra Fria, os Estudos de Segurança Internacional, desenvolvidas pela Escola de Copenhague, ampliaram o escopo das ameaças e o debate em torno do conceito de securitização. A securitização, entendida como um 'ato de fala', é onde determinados setores constroem ameaças à existência de uma unidade, demandando a adoção de medidas para contrabalançá-las. Este artigo observou, alicerçado neste referencial teórico, duas questões inter-relacionadas. Primeiro a presença do discurso securitizador nos documentos que norteiam a Defesa Nacional em três países: Brasil, Colômbia e Peru (Políticas e Estratégias Nacionais de Defesa e Livros Brancos de Defesa Nacional). Em seguida, ações de securitização no Trapézio Amazônico, nome pelo qual é conhecida a região da tríplice-fronteira, em especial aquelas que tem como ator principal as organizações militares de cada uma destas nações. Neste enquadramento, o presente artigo permite perceber o alinhamento entre o discurso oficial destes Estados e a prática de securitização dos três países em uma área sensível da Amazônia.

Palavras-chave: Amazônia, Securitização, Tríplice-Fronteira, Exército Brasileiro.

1. Introduction

This study has analysed the securitisation of the Amazon, focusing on the Brazil-Colombia-Peru triple border and on the role of the Brazilian Army, a choice that was motivated by the region's strategic relevance in terms of diplomacy, logistics, security, and defence. The study aims to demonstrate how securitisation influenced the configuration of the region's military structure.

The paper is divided into interrelated sections, the first section being a conceptual analysis of security. The second section addresses the securitisation process and, finally, the third deals with securitisation in the Brazil-Colombia-Peru triple border and the role of the Brazilian Army in the region.

Security is a critical issue for nation states. Throughout history, it has been influenced by facts and factors both at home and abroad. However, the International Security Studies (ISS) that emerged in the post-Second World War period focused on new strategies that came out of the discussion on how to protect the state against domestic and foreign threats (Buzan and Hansen, 2009, p. 33). This began the search for a universal definition of security, which has not been successful to date. Some authors tie the concept of security to a particular referent object (Buzan and Hansen, 2009, p. 37). For others, the concept of security remains undefined and is the subject of an academic debate with significant political repercussions with regard to its content (Herz, 2010a, p. 331).

The triple border region is so named because it encompasses the borders of three Amazonian countries, Brazil, Colombia and Peru. The term Amazon Trapeze was

conceptualised by Chaumeil (2010, pp. 356-357), who states that the name refers to a narrow strip of land in the shape of a trapeze linking the southernmost region of Colombia to the Amazon, encompassing the territories adjacent to Peru and Brazil and extending in a radius of approximately 60 (sixty) kilometres from the point where the three borders intersect (Figure 1). The terms triple border and Amazon Trapeze are used with the same meaning in the literature.



Figure 1 – Brazil-Colombia-Peru triple border

Source: Operations and Management Centre of the Amazon Protection System (CENSIPAM, 2017).

Due to its strategic location at the heart of the Amazon basin and on the banks of the main line of communication, the Amazon/Solimões River (Figure 1), the triple border of Brazil, Colombia and Peru was a theatre for fierce territorial disputes throughout the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries, first between Portuguese and Spanish settlers and, later, between the nations recently liberated from the colonial rule (Peiter et al. 2013, p. 2498).

The stabilisation of the international borders came later, at the onset of the 20th century, with the demarcation of the international boundary between the three countries through the signature of the 1922 Lozano-Salomón Treaty, which outlined the territory's current configuration (Peiter et al. 2013, p. 2498).

The area comprises the Brazilian state of Amazonas, the Department of Amazonas in Colombia, and the Loreto province in Peru. The region is formed by the municipalities

of Tabatinga, Benjamin Constant, and Atalaia do Norte on the Brazilian side, by the municipalities of Leticia and Puerto Nariño in Colombia, and by the districts of Yavari and Ramón Castilla, which belong to the province of Mariscal Ramón Castilla in Peru, where the Iceland and Santa Rosa localities are situated, a few minutes from Tabatinga and Leticia (Peiter et al. 2013, p. 2498).

Securitisation specifically refers to the process of framing an issue in terms of security, that is, as an existential threat (Buzan and Hansen, 2009, p. 214). Thus, it can be inferred that security and securitisation are complementary concepts.

In this context, the securitisation of the Amazon region has two strong facets: the first relates to environmental securitisation and the fear of foreign interventionism (Buzan and Waever, 2003; Mattos, 1980); the other includes problems related to “new threats”, often of a transnational nature, such as drug trafficking, illegal immigration, biopiracy, among others (Urt and Pinho, 2010, p. 34). Generally speaking, this dynamic has been in place since the 1970s, with the signing of the Treaty for Amazonian Cooperation (1978)¹ (Brasil, 2017a) and, later, with the attempts to strengthen national state presence in the region through the installation of military bases, among other measures (Franchi et al. 2011, p. 37). The regions with twin cities on both sides of the border are a focus of attention for these countries. There are seven twin cities in the Amazon region, one of which is Tabatinga (Amazonas), which is contiguous with Leticia (Colombia) and also faces the town of Santa Rosa (Peru).

The International Security Studies (ISS) approach developed by the Copenhagen School broadened the scope of the threat and its referent objects, focusing on securitisation (Buzan and Hansen, 2009, p. 71). For these authors, the securitisation of these threats by nation states has contributed to the emergence of a new national security mindset that directly reflects the reinforcement of the military presence at the borders of these countries. Following this line of thought, it was necessary to investigate these actions in the Brazil-Colombia-Peru border since the second half of the 20th century.

The investigation relied on a literature and documentary review to select information that would effectively demonstrate the influence of securitisation in the triple border on the role of the Brazilian Army in the region. The method used was the comparison of Brazilian, Peruvian and Colombian defence documents; the identification of spatial/thematic arguments on the region under study; and the subsequent analysis of results.

The paper was based on the concepts of security and securitisation process as developed and discussed by authors such as Buzan and Weaver (2009), Greb (2005) and Villa (2014), with emphasis on the theorists of the Copenhagen School, Buzan and Weaver, and their followers (Motta, 2014, Buzan and Hansen, 2012; Urt, Pinho, 2010; Herz, 2010a).

Their work outlined the elements that constitute securitisation: the referent object, the securitising agent, and the audience (Motta, 2014, p.18), all of which can be found in the securitisation of the triple border region. Thus, we will endeavour to understand how the

¹ Treaty for Amazonian Cooperation. Retrieved from: www2.mre.gov.br/dai/tca.htm [Accessed 11 Mar. 2017]

triple border (referent object) has been dealt with by nation states and by the Brazilian Army (securitising agents), with the consent of the population of the three countries in the area (audience). These steps have been addressed through (i) an investigation of the military's actions in the region, based on a documentary and literature review of newspapers and other productions; (ii) the examination of military manuals - *Glossário das Forças Armadas* [Glossary of the Armed Forces], MD 35-G-01, 4th edition, 2007; *Doutrina Militar Terrestre* [Land Military Doctrine], EB 20-MF – 10.102, (Brasil, 2014a); *Operações* [Operations], EB 20-MF – 10.103; and *Inteligência Militar Terrestre* [Land Military Intelligence], EB 20-MF – 10.107 (Brasil, 2014b); (iii) the examination of official Brazilian documents on the issue, such as the Federal Constitution (FC), the White Paper on National Defence (WPND), the National Defence Policy (NDP), the National Defence Strategy, the National Intelligence Policy (NIP), and the Integrated Border Protection Programme (IBPP); (iv) the examination of the New Defence and Security Policy for Colombia 2015-2018; and (v) the examination of the Peruvian White Paper on Defence and the official journal of the Ministry of Defence of Peru, 2016. Examining these documents consolidated our knowledge of the defence and security directives of these three countries, allowing us to analyse and make inferences on the securitisation of the tri-border area.

Finally, this paper will present the findings obtained from the analysis of the information collected in the sources, contributing new perspectives on the topic at hand.

2. The concepts of Security

The lack of a universally accepted definition of security has led to discussion between authors and states, which have different conceptions and concepts of what the term may entail (Duarte, 2012). In line with this assumption, Amaral (2008) states that “there is no single definition of security, and it is essentially a disputed concept”. Ullman (1983) redefined the concept of security by focusing on non-military threats:

An action or sequence of events that severely threatens, over a relatively short period of time, the quality of life of the inhabitants of a state, or significantly threatens to narrow the range of political choices available to a state or to private non-governmental bodies (people, groups, corporations) within a state (Ullman 1983, p. 133).

In keeping with this statement, Herz (2010a, p. 331) argues that “stances on the concept of security range from the traditional realistic vision to stances that assert that any issue can be a security issue”. Thus, for the author, security encompasses any issues that involve the potential or effective use of physical violence.

Security cannot be analysed without considering Barry Buzan's views on the matter. The author has played a key role in expanding the concept of security by looking at the military, political, economic, *societal*, and environmental sectors as sources of military, political, economic, *societal*, and environmental threats to state security (Williams, 2008).

The author also proposes broadening the “referent objects” of security to encompass the security not only of the state but also of individuals and of the International System against various types of threats.

Jackson-Preece (2011) argues that the issue of security is now the subject of ongoing discussion by states and by the International Community. Thus, the following three approaches to our understanding of security will be addressed. First, the “national security” perspective in which states are both sources of security and the origin of the main threats to it. Second, the “international security” perspective, which envisions a world characterised by a blend of conflict and cooperation in an “anarchic society”; and, finally, the “human security” perspective, for which the security of individuals represents a key global issue that transcends the domestic policy sphere.

Therefore, Buzan’s vision is innovative in comparison to the concept of security advanced by Ullman (1983) because it expands the type of threats and the referent objects of security.

Buzan’s argument is also innovative when compared to Ullman’s because, in addition to expanding the type of threats, it brings other referent objects into the analyst’s field of thought. Despite this new development, the state is still the principal and most relevant referent object. Today, however, primacy no longer implies exclusivity: the expanded Security Studies theory maintains that the state shares its status as the object of security with individuals and with the international system (or even with other subjects/objects) (Amaral, 2008 p. 68).

Haftendorn (1991, p. 3) offers another perspective and states that each concept of security “relates to a different philosophical tradition as well as to a specific historical interpretation of international relations”.

However, Amaral (2008, p. 35) notes that the concept of security is also very closely related to (1) the historical developments in the international system, and (2) the makeup of international actors. Therefore, the idea of security must be considered in relation to the social and political context that gives it meaning.

Sheehan (2005, p. 43) had already contributed to the above idea, stating that “security is a socially constructed concept”, which means it is subject to changes arising from material changes in the external environment and in how we think about these issues.

On the other hand, Buzan and Hansen (2012) underline that the new post-Cold War view of the world theorises that security goes beyond the state, focusing not only on the military but also on domestic and cross-border threats.

Security is addressed in official Brazilian National Defence documents such as the Brazilian National Defence Strategy (END), which states that security is traditionally viewed as a confrontation between nations, that is, from the perspective of protection against threats from other political communities or, more simply, as foreign defence (Brasil, 2012a, p. 12). The document also states that the concept of security has gradually been extended to encompass the political, military, economic, psychosocial, scientific and technological,

environmental, and other sectors, in keeping with the broad nature of the threats outlined by Buzan (Brasil, 2012a, p. 12)².

In line with the National Defence Strategy, the *GLOSSÁRIO DAS FORÇAS ARMADAS*, MD 35-G-01, 4th edition, issued by the Ministry of Defence (MD) defines safety as:

(...) the necessary and indispensable guarantee that society and all its members are protected against threats of any nature. This condition results from the establishment and preservation of protective measures that ensure a state of inviolability from hostile acts or influences (Brasil, 2007).

Thus, the concept of security provided in the Brazilian Army document is a broad one.

In the case of Colombia, the document *Política de Defensa y Seguridad para la Nueva Colômbia 2015-2018* (Colombia, 2015) did not define a specific concept of security prior to its usage of the term. However, the first pages, which offer a perspective on the Defence sector, read:

Thus, the present policy reflects the vision of the Defence Sector vis-a-vis the different challenges that must be faced, within the framework of peace and post-conflict in the areas of national defence, citizen security, public security, and the fight against organised crime for the next four years. The Policy presents a diagnosis that supports the formulation of a general objective and nine strategic sectoral objectives that will be developed through different institutional strategic plans. These objectives seek to respond to the challenges and opportunities in the areas that contribute to peace, national defence, citizen security, the fight against organised crime, changes in the sector, international cooperation, risk management, the welfare of members of the armed forces, and protection of the environment; as well as the necessary contributions to the development of the country and the modernisations that will be required for peacebuilding and post-conflict (Colombia, 2015, p. 6).

It should be noted that, in addition to a broad vision, the document mentions citizen security, public security, organised crime, and post-conflict actions with the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), which ties in with the national reality.

The *Política de Estado para la Seguridad y la Defensa Nacional* of Peru is addressed in chapter III of the White Paper on National Defence – *Libro Blanco De La Defensa Nacional* (Peru, 2005). This document defines the concept of security as follows:

Security is the situation in which the State has guaranteed its independence, sovereignty, and integrity, and the population is assured its fundamental rights as set down in the Constitution (Peru, 2005, p. 62).

² (BRASIL, 2012a) states that the Brazilian State understands that “Security is the condition that allows the Nation to preserve its sovereignty and territorial integrity, to promote its national interests, free from pressure or threat, and to guarantee its citizens the exercise of their constitutional rights and obligations” (Brasil, 2012a, p. 8)”. The document goes on to discuss this concept in detail.

Bearing in mind the statements in the documents issued by these three countries, it is clear that there are similarities and differences in their conceptions of security, which confirms the theorists' opinion that the concept of security is far from being standardised or from garnering consensus, and that it varies according to the history of nation states and their conduct in response to current challenges, influencing the employment of defence assets to meet those challenges.

3. The securitisation process

The name "Copenhagen School" was coined in 1996 by Bill McSweeney to designate the group of European researchers spearheaded by Barry Buzan and Ole Wæver, who have been conducting research on the field of security since 1988 under the banner of the Copenhagen Peace and Research Institute (COPRI), which is based in the capital of Denmark and hence greatly influences the majority of Europe (Amaral, 2008, p. 69-70).

One of the central premises of this school is that the word security carries within it the very action of securitising an issue, dealing with it as if it pertains to the area of security (Motta, 2014, p. 24).

The Copenhagen School considers that security threats are socially constructed. This school also states that "securitisation and its criteria are intersubjective practices through which a securitising agent seeks to socially establish an existential threat to the survival of a unit" (Buzan et al. 1998, p. 30).

The post-Cold War context brought with it the perception of threats faced by individuals, groups, regions, ecosystems, civilisations, among others. As a result, a number of issues have been securitised at the local, domestic and global levels - terrorism, epidemics, environmental damage, transnational crime, drug use/production, energy sources, etc. Against this background, the Special Security Conference held in Mexico in 2003, considered a watershed for the issue of security in the western hemisphere, established the Declaration on Security in the Americas, which addresses security from a multidimensional perspective, expanding it by introducing political, social, environmental and health related aspects (Herz, 2010b, p. 605).

Buzan et al. (1998, p. 30) state that security cannot be measured objectively. Thus, an objectivist approach to security is only feasible in the case of unequivocal and immediate threats, such as hostile combat vehicles (CV) crossing a country's border.

International Security scholars see securitisation as a performative utterance. Thus, for Buzan et al. (1998, p. 37) securitisation is a "speech act" in which the words refer to the threats to the existence of a unit, requiring the adoption of measures to counter those threats. When the securitising agent is the nation state, it will, in theory, be capable of meeting those requirements after requesting special powers to do so.

The study of securitisation entails the study of the securitising agent's discourse, which usually makes mention not only of the survival of the unit but also of the list of actions that

must be taken to counter the threats to its existence, which, as Buzan et al. (1998, p. 31) state, is merely a securitisation initiative that may or may not be accepted. Thus, securitisation will occur when the target audience legitimises it and when the threat is concrete, in such a way as to justify non-compliance with the political regulations in force to combat these threats.

Thus, Buzan et al. (1998, p. 29) view securitisation as an intensification of politicisation that deals with “nonpoliticised” issues, and hence not a matter of public policy; “politicised” issues that are a matter of public policy; and, finally, “securitised” issues. Therefore, “‘Security’ is the move that takes politics beyond the established rules of the game and frames the issue either as a special kind of politics or as above politics” (Buzan et al. 1998, p. 38).

Buzan et al. (1998, p. 31) believe that securitisation should not only be avoided, in most cases it should be discouraged so that a discussion can be had within the context of normal politics. This stance is a normative part of the theory, which consists in limiting the expansion of the security agenda that results from considering the “politics of existential threats” the focus of security studies. However, the authors underline that there are facilitating conditions, specific to each thematic sector, under which the speech act is successful with regard to its objects, narrowing the chances of a successful securitisation initiative (Buzan et al. 1998, p. 31).

Buzan and Hansen (2012) warn that if securitisation is based on friend-enemy tension, its complement, desecuritisation, lies in the relaxation of that same tension, which makes it impossible for such an act to be based solely on discursive representation, requiring a more complex process of questioning and transforming perceived threats among the actors involved.

Security analysis involves three types of units that constitute the securitisation process, according to the criteria provided by Buzan et al. (1998, p.36): referent objects, securitising actors, and functional actors, as defined below.

The referent object is what the author refers to as an existential threat. Usually, the nation state takes on this role, which is directly related to the threat to its survival and to the maintenance of sovereignty. For the author, referent objects that refer to limited collectives, such as states, nations, or civilisations are more likely to be accepted than broader referent objects (Buzan et al. 1998, p. 36).

The military is full of functional actors who influence the dynamics of the sector, but they are neither referent objects nor securitising actors. Many of these actors influence the dynamics of a sector. They usually stand out for their ability to exert significant pressure on the state’s strategy regarding war purchases, balance of payments, issues related to the use of military force, and the production capabilities required for military mobilisation. For example, armed forces, government agencies, armament industries, and intergovernmental and non-governmental organisations (Buzan et al., 1998, p. 55) are some of those actors.

Finally, securitising actors are the authors of securitisation acts who use security structures to draw attention to the need to take emergency measures in order to protect a given referent object from the threat they have identified (Buzan et al. 1998, p. 55).

For Duque (2008, p. 42), the theory of securitisation advanced by the Copenhagen School takes the focus off the state by making a distinction between referent object and securitising agent and by adopting non-state referent objects. The author recognises, however, that in most cases the actions to combat the threats perceived by society are still determined by the state, which can be treated, at the very least, as a functional actor in this analysis.

Duque (2008, p. 41) stresses that securitising actors can be separate from referent objects, explaining that, for example, when the state is the referent object, the government can speak on its behalf, and, in this case, coincides with the securitising agent. On the other hand, there are referent objects other than the state, such as the environment, for which the distinction between referent object and securitising agent becomes crucial to the realisation that the government, although it may adopt the securitisation rhetoric, is not speaking in its own name, that is, on behalf of the state.

Based on this assumption, securitisation seeks to explain how the dynamics of regional security policies, which may or may not be a response to concrete threats, affect nation states. Thus, the security rhetoric issue brings forth two implicit arguments: without security against the threats to its existence, society would be in an undesirable position, and a specific price must be paid to combat this threat (Amaral, 2008, p. 73).

4. Securitisation in the Brazil-Colombia-Peru triple border and the role of the Brazilian Army in the region

South America is the region that changed the least with the end of the Cold War. However, several changes occurred at the time that influenced the conception of security in the region (Buzan & Waever, 2009, p. 320).

In order to understand securitisation and its relationship with security in the Brazil-Colombia-Peru triple border, it is necessary to list the threats identified in the defence documents of the countries under analysis (Table 1).

Table 1 - Summary of threats (Brazil-Colombia-Peru)

Threats	Brazil	Colombia	Peru
Terrorism	X*	X	X
ADM	X*	X	X
Espionage	X		X
State failure		X	

Table 1 - Summary of threats (Brazil-Colombia-Peru) (cont.)

Threats	Brazil	Colombia	Peru
Organised crime	X	X	X
Sabotage	X		
Foreign interference	X*	X	X
Acts contrary to national sovereignty	X*	X	X
Pandemics			
Cyber attacks	X*	X	
Corruption	X	X	
Acts contrary to the rule of law	X*	X	X
Cross-border crime	X**	X	X
Environmental crime	X**	X	X

Key:

* Threats identified in the NDP and NDS

** ** Crimes that require ground force intervention when committed in the border area, according to Complementary Law No. 97/1999, as amended by Complementary Law No. 117/2004 and 136/2010.

Source: Brasil (2012a); PNI (2016); Colômbia (2015); Peru (2005).

The Brazilian government issued Decree No. 8.793 of 29 June 2016, which establishes the National Intelligence Policy (Brasil, 2016a). This document lists the threats that can potentially endanger the integrity of society and the state and the national security of Brazil. The criterion for the selection of threats was based on the list outlined by the United Nations and was used for all states. In addition to this list of threats, threats were also retrieved from the NDP and the NDS, as well as from the National Intelligence Policy (Brasil, 2016a) established by Decree No. 8.793 of 29 June 2016. The Brazilian state listed 14 threats that meet the defined criterion, namely: terrorism, Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD), espionage, organised crime, state failure, sabotage, foreign interference, actions against national sovereignty, pandemics, cyber attacks, corruption, actions against the democratic rule of law, cross-border crime, and environmental crime (Table 1). As for terrorism, the country defined this type of threat through Law No. 13.260, which regulates the issue in Brazil (Brasil, 2016d).

Transnational crimes committed at the Brazilian borders are classified according to two types: crimes against the person, which include drug trafficking, arms and ammunition

trafficking, and human trafficking; and financial crimes such as money laundering and corruption (Cossul & Jaeger, 2016, p. 141).

The harsh geographic conditions of the border regions, the scarcity of resources, the deficient structures of the agencies responsible for the region, the low number of checkpoints, the low number of federal agents, and corruption are some of the contributing factors that weaken the control exercised by the state (Santana, 2012, p. 4).

The same criteria were used for Colombia and Peru, with the exception of the threats listed in the National Intelligence Policy due to access restrictions. Thus, in the case of Colombia and Peru, the only threats that did not align with the threats to the Brazilian State listed in the NDP, the NDS and the NIP were sabotage and espionage (Table 1).

From the regional perspective, at the Special Security Conference held in Mexico in 2003 Colombian representatives highlighted the threat posed by illegal armed groups, drug trafficking, and terrorism, whereas the Argentine and Brazilian authorities focused on poverty as a threat (Herz, 2010b, p. 605).

The Declaration of Bridgetown (OAS, 2002) issued by the General Assembly of the Organisation of American States (OAS) recognised this updated definition of security, stating that “security threats, concerns and other challenges in the hemispheric context are of diverse nature and multidimensional scope, and that the traditional concept and approach must be expanded to encompass new and non-traditional threats, which include political, economic, social, health, and environmental aspects”. The Declaration also recognised that hemispheric security is affected differently by traditional threats and by the following new threats, concerns and other challenges of a diverse nature: (i) terrorism, transnational organised crime (TOC), the global drug problem, corruption, asset laundering, illicit trafficking in weapons, and the connections among them; (ii) extreme poverty and social exclusion of broad sectors of the population, which also affect stability and democracy. Extreme poverty erodes social cohesion and undermines the security of states; (iii) natural and man-made disasters, HIV/AIDS and other diseases, other health risks, and environmental degradation; (iv) trafficking in persons; (v) attacks to cyber security; (vi) the potential for damage to arise in the event of an accident or incident during the maritime transport of potentially hazardous materials, including petroleum and radioactive materials and toxic waste; and (vii) the possibility of access, possession, and use of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery by terrorists (OAS, 2003).

Hence, it can be deduced that international security in the South American region has acquired new focus from regional security bodies (RSB) and regional national states concerned with the expansion of the factors that destabilise regional security, such as the new threats posed by non-state actors in an increasingly volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous environment.

Contextualising the concepts presented within the current security framework in the Amazon triple border (Brazil-Colombia-Peru) has allowed us to verify that the key elements

of securitisation are present in this strategic portion of the western Amazon arc, and that they constitute the essential triad of the phenomenon of securitisation.

Thus, the object, represented by the various threats listed above, is present to a greater or lesser extent in the three countries that share this border.

The securitising agent is also present in the region. The various national states, and these border countries in particular, are the main actors who present the objects as potential threats to national security, aiming to obtain the proper authorisations from their societies to effectively adopt the exceptional measures required to restrict, as much as possible, the freedom of action of those threats.

The most emblematic case concerns Colombia and Peru. Due to the delicate situations that these countries have experienced in terms of national security, their governments, by delivering their securitisation speeches to their populations, are authorised by their societies to implement emergency security measures, such as: tightening border controls, tightening controls in ports and airports, restricting free movement in some parts of those countries, among others, with the purpose of strengthening the national security of its population.

From the same security perspective, Shin (2015, p. 44) argues that the South American subcontinent faces serious problems regarding the fragility of the rule of law and the high rates of societal violence. In line with Shin, Orcar Medeiros Filho (2014, p. 22-23) confirms that the greatest threats do not stem from the policies adopted by the state, but from the inability to adopt efficient public policies to tackle social vulnerabilities. If that is the case, the main problems do not lie with the borders and are not linked to defence issues, but rather are at the borders and are linked to security issues. The author sees the societal aspect as a trigger for the threats, compelling the state to use other tools to resolve the hurdles at the border.

Due to the volatile and uncertain environment that characterises the Amazon Trapeze region, where threats are part of a web of complex relationships, it is necessary to analyse the framework documents for the defence policies of the three countries under review in order to verify if any concrete actions or measures to counter the threats listed above have realised the discursive act.

As for the Brazilian State, Article 142 of the Federal Constitution states that the armed forces are to be used in the defence of the homeland, to guarantee the constitutional powers, and, on the initiative of either of the above, to guarantee law and order (Brasil, 1988). These missions attributed to the armed forces describe in clear terms the constitutional use of those forces as a guarantor of national defence and of the security of Brazilian society.

The National Defence Policy (Brasil, 2012a) sets the National Defence goals and provides guidance to the state on how to achieve those goals. For its part, the National Defence Strategy (Brasil, 2012a) establishes how to comply with the provisions of the NDP. What these documents have in common is that they pave the way for building the defence that Brazil requires. A modern defence based on democratic principles, in possession of the capabilities that will allow it to meet the needs of a nation with an abundance of riches, inhabiting a turbulent and unpredictable world like today's (Brasil, 2012a, p. 5).

Published jointly for the first time, the document on Policy and Strategy also aims to achieve one of the main goals of national defence: raising the awareness of the Brazilian society about the impact this sector's issues have on the country. These documents are based on a common assumption: that defence should not be limited to the military or the government. On the contrary, it should be a concern for the whole of society (Brasil, 2012a, p. 5). This proves that the issue has become politicised in the country, and reinforces the need for a discussion in which Brazilian society must decide what model of defence the nation should adopt.

The wording of the NDP already lists 10 of the 14 threats directly or indirectly, and actions have been planned to counteract each of those threats. Let us analyse them. Brazil considers that international terrorism constitutes a risk to world peace and security. Thus, the nation emphatically condemns terrorist actions while seeking to implement the resolutions of the United Nations Organisation (UN), recognising the need for international cooperation to prevent and combat terrorist threats (Brasil, 2012a, p. 14). Thus, in 2013, the Brazilian Army established the Special Operations Command (C Op Esp)³, formerly Special Operations Brigade (Bda Op Esp). This command has forces with strategic mobility that are able to deploy to all areas of the national territory. The 3rd Special Forces Company has been trained to operate in the Amazonian environment and is also stationed in the city of Manaus.

With regard to cyber threats, Brazil foresees the development of technologies that will allow the planning and execution of cyber defence activities under the Ministry of Defence that contribute to national cyber security: a modular cyber defence system and a security system for computational environments. This objective is currently achieved through the *Diretriz para a Implantação do Comando de Defesa Cibernética* [Guideline for the Implementation of the Cyber Defence Command]⁴ (Brasil, 2016c).

In the face of the threats arising from failed states, organised crime, foreign interference, acts contrary to national sovereignty, acts contrary to the rule of law, cross-border crimes and environmental crimes, the Brazilian Army has stationed the Solimões Border Command/8th Jungle Infantry Battalion (CFSOL/8ºBIS)⁵, which was implemented in its current format in 1992, in the city of Tabatinga (Figure 2); however, this was not the first Brazilian military organisation in the city. The command also has two Special Border Platoons (SBP) stationed near the border with Peru, in the towns of Palmeiras do Javari and Estirão do Ecuador (see lower red oval in Figure 2) and two SBP stationed on the Colombian border, in the towns of Vila Bitencourt and Ipiranga (see upper red oval in Figure 2). These squads rely on the presence of elements from other government agencies, such as the Federal Police (FP), to intensify the presence of the Brazilian state in the region, restricting the freedom of action of the non-state actors that create the threats in this border strip. It should be noted that the presence of representatives from other government agencies in the SBP is in keeping with directive I, § 2 of the Integrated Border Protection Programme - IBPP (Brasil, 2016b).

³ <http://www.copesp.eb.mil.br/index.php/institucional-2> (Brasil, 2017b), [Accessed 11 March 2017]

⁴ Order No. 519-EME of 14 December 2016, published in Army Bulletin no. 51/2016 of 23 December 2016 (Brasil, 2016c).

⁵ <http://www.8bis.eb.mil.br/> (Brasil, 2017c), [Accessed 11 March 2017]



Figure 2 - Location of the Special Border Platoons

Source: (Mendel, 2000)

It is also worth noting that the Brazilian defence documents emphasise the importance of reinforcing security in the Brazilian border strip. Thus, the White Paper on National Defence (LBDN) stresses that a country's security is affected by the degree of instability of the region that surrounds it, thus the country also seeks to strengthen its military cooperation with neighbouring states (Brasil, 2012a). This is done by conducting combined military operations with Colombia and Peru, respectively, effectively contributing to increase security in the Brazilian Amazon border.

Thus, the Brazilian army has the human and material resources required to counteract the threats present in the triple border region. In addition to these resources, brigade operational systems and a border surveillance and monitoring system are also available; as well as forces that have tactical and strategic mobility, especially Strategic Deployment Forces and the forces stationed in the Amazon; missiles and anti-aircraft radars for counter-air defence (Brasil, 2012b, pp. 64-65).

This confirms that the discourse that securitised the threats in the triple border region in the NDP and the NDS has turned into concrete actions to combat those threats, demonstrating

that this securitising discourse has become material, contributing to increase national security in this strategic area, although that security still presents deficiencies in some respects.

As for the Colombian State, only two of the threats listed do not correspond to the threats outlined in the Brazilian defence documents, bearing in mind that the National Intelligence Policy was also considered in the case of Brazil (2016a). In a similar fashion as the corresponding Brazilian documents, the *Política de Defensa e Seguridad para La Nueva Colombia 2015-2018* includes discursive acts that have been put into action by the Colombian Army to counter regional threats.

The **fight against Organized Crime**, which takes place within the framework of public security, occupies a high priority on the sectoral agenda, as it brings together a wide range of **threats**, such as armed groups operating outside the law and organised crime structures that give rise to a broad spectrum of crimes, such as drug trafficking, terrorism, illegal exploitation of natural resources, criminal mining, and smuggling (Colombia, 2015, p. 10).

Colombia has defined 5 strategies to combat the threat posed by drug trafficking: (i) the comprehensive eradication of illicit crops; (ii) the reinforcement of maritime, fluvial, aerial, and terrestrial interdiction; (iii) the reinforcement of the investigation, judicialisation, extinction of property rights and asset laundering; (iv) the comprehensive prevention of production, trafficking, consumption of psychoactive substances and promotion of violent environments; (v) international cooperation. Similarly, in the fight against smuggling, efforts will be made to expand and improve international cooperation (Colombia, 2015, p. 21).

In line with this need for international cooperation, strategic objective no. 7 of the *Política de Defensa e Seguridad para La Nueva Colombia 2015-2018* foresees the deepening of bilateral cooperation with third countries, especially border nations such as Brazil and Peru, coordinating against common threats on security and defence in the region (Colombia, 2015, p. 28).

With regard to the defence of natural resources and the environment against environmental crimes, another common threat for Colombia and Brazil, strategic objective no. 8 of the *Política de Defensa e Seguridad para La Nueva Colombia 2015-2018* provides that Law Enforcement will continue to participate in the protection of biodiversity and the environment, which are considered national strategic assets (Colombia, 2015, p. 29). The government's concern with the environment contributes to the priority status assigned to the fight against environmental crime along with other threats in the current Colombian Defence and Security Policy.

The Colombian State has military units stationed in the border area, turning the official discourse to combat new threats into concrete action. The most important military unit in the region is the 26th Jungle Infantry Brigade stationed in the city of Leticia. This Large Unit was reactivated on 31 January 2016, which confirms that military garrisons were stationed there prior to that date. This brigade comprises the 50th Jungle Infantry Battalion, the 74th

Counter-guerrilla Battalion, and the 26th ASPC Battalion⁶. This brigade has tasks similar to those of the Brazilian Army's CFSol/8ºBIS.

Like the Brazilian Army, it includes a Special Operations Brigade⁷ with strategic mobility that can be deployed to the triple border region. This force has the capabilities to conduct irregular warfare in enemy territory and within its own territory.

In addition to this, the Colombian Army has adopted cyber protection measures and has participated in knowledge exchanges with third countries such as Israel⁸.

Finally, aware of the imminent cybernetic threat facing the world today, the MND created the Joint Cyber Command (CCOC) under the General Military Forces Command, which will be the main body developing cyber defence in the country. Thus, the CCOC will continue to conduct a study to identify and catalogue critical digital infrastructures, an attack on which would constitute a direct attack on national sovereignty. Furthermore, the country's deterrence capabilities in cyberspace will be reinforced, guaranteeing the use of the electromagnetic spectrum (Colombia, 2015, p. 24).

In light of the above, it can be deduced that, similar to Brazil, Colombia securitised the threats to its triple border by adopting concrete actions to combat those threats, intensifying the presence of the state, which it did by expanding the military structure in the region.

The Peruvian government's discursive act is realised in the White Book on Peruvian Defence (Peru, 2005), which outlines, much like the corresponding Brazilian and Colombian documents, the threats that affect the state, particularly those directed at the region of the triple border, with the exception of espionage and sabotage, for the same reasons as the Colombian analysis.

These threats are transnational and go beyond the state's ability to control them, requiring the use of international cooperation mechanisms to mitigate these deficiencies (Peru, 2005, p. 27).

Thus, the Sixth Policy defined in the National Agreement, which guides Peruvian action abroad, provides for the creation of associations with neighbouring countries to set down common policies on the fight against terrorism, drug trafficking, and on environmental defence. This is in keeping with the Brazilian and Colombian policy guidelines to strengthen cooperation and regional integration as a means of effectively combating the threats at the border of these nations (Peru, 2005, p. 32). The validity of the triple agreement between Brazil, Colombia, and Peru regarding the control of illegal activities in the Amazon's rivers realises these guidelines, the aim of which is to strengthen the actions to combat new threats in the area.

⁶ <http://www.sextadivision.mil.co/?idcategoria=90049> (Brasil, 2017a) [Accessed 11 March 2017].

⁷ <http://www.ejercito.mil.co/?idcategoria=85> (Brasil, 2017b) [Accessed 11 March 2017].

⁸ <http://www.webinfomil.com/2014/06/colombia-e-israel-exponen-avances.html> (Brasil, 2017c) [Accessed 11 March 2017].

The military plays an important role in achieving these directives. A Peruvian military structure has been present in the region since 5 January 1864, with the creation of a naval base in Iquitos⁹ to secure fluvial control over the region.

A comparison of the Peruvian, Brazilian and Colombian military forces found that the last two have forces for land operations, whereas Peru only has a force for riverine operations (Figure 3). Although the discursive act of the Peruvian defence document contemplates actions similar to those analysed, the armed forces have to deal with more pressing issues, and security in the Brazil-Colombia-Peru triple border has been placed on the backburner. Looking at how the Military Regions of the Peruvian Army are distributed, it can be seen that most of the ground troops are located in areas opposite to the triple border.

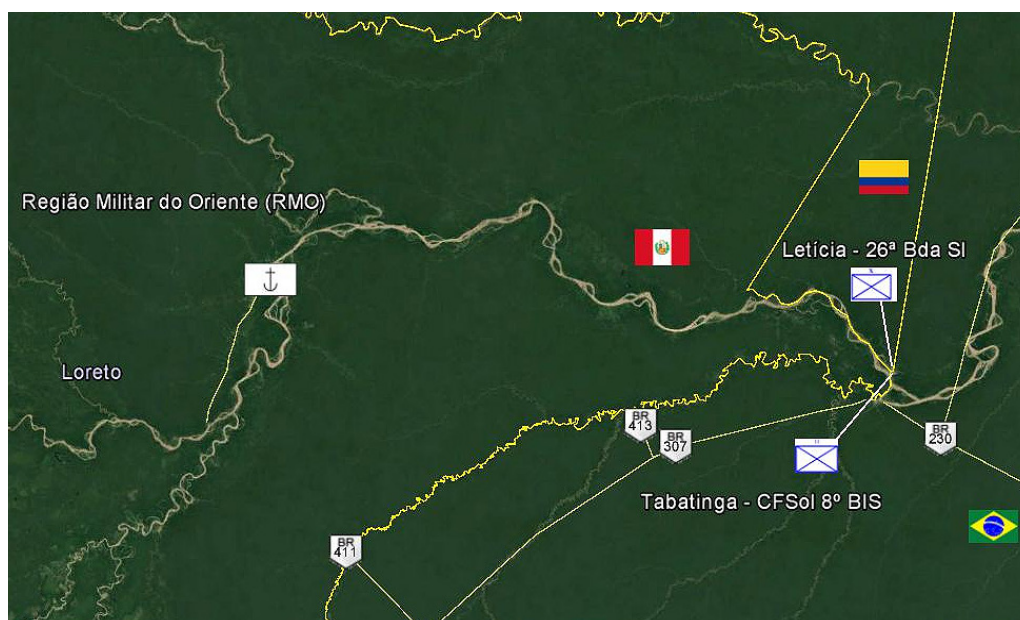


Figure 3 - Military organisations in the triple border

Source: prepared by authors.

Currently, the main potential sources of conflict for the Peruvian state are Bolivia, Chile, and Ecuador. It should be noted that the Peruvian state lost part of its territory in the 19th century in the wake of the Pacific War against Chile (Peru, 2005, p. 79). Peru filed a lawsuit against the country with the International Court of Justice (ICJ) in January 2008, requesting arbitration in the matter of the maritime border with Chile. The decision was made public on 27 January 2014 and, of the 38,000 km² disputed, Peru obtained approximately 20,000 km² and Chile maintained sovereignty over an area with fishing resources (United Nations, 2014 cited in Amador et al., 2015, p. 133).

⁹ <https://www.marina.mil.pe/page/comoperama> (Brasil, 2017) [Accessed 11 March 2017]

This situation influenced the deployment of Peruvian ground forces to the south, to the area of responsibility of the Southern Military Region (SMR) (Table 2), increasing the military personnel stationed in the area to deter any hostilities on the part of Chile.

Table 2 - Distribution of ground troops by Military Region

RRMM	SEDE	AREA GEOGRÁFICA
REGIÓN MILITAR DEL NORTE (RMN)	PIURA	TUMBES, PIURA, ANCASH LAMBAYEQUE, LA LIBERTAD, CAJAMARCA, AMAZONAS.
REGIÓN MILITAR DEL CENTRO (RMC)	LIMA	LIMA, ICA, SAN MARTÍN, HUANUCO, PASCO, JUNÍN, HUANCANELICA, AYACUCHO, UCAYALI Y LA PROVINCIA CONSTITUCIONAL DEL CALLAO.
REGIÓN MILITAR DEL SUR (RMS)	AREQUIPA	TACNA, MOQUEGUA, AREQUIPA, PUNO, CUZCO, APURIMAC Y MADRE DE DIOS.
REGIÓN MILITAR DEL ORIENTE (RMO)	IQUITOS	LORETO.

Source: (Peru, 2005, p. 94)

The 1995 Cenepa War between Peru and Ecuador contributed to the “discourse” laid down in the Peruvian Defence White Paper of 2005, which led Peru to deploy a large military force to the northern region, within the area of responsibility of the Northern Military Region (NMR) (Table 2), strengthening the military presence in the region to inhibit any state or non-state actions by Ecuador against Peruvian territory. Nevertheless, actions have been implemented by these countries to re-establish mutual trust, such as the Peru-Ecuador Comprehensive Agreement on Border Integration and Development (Peru, 2005, p. 37).

With regard to Colombia, the presence of NMR military troops realises the Peruvian state’s discursive act, which aims to counter the threats derived from the Colombian guerrilla (Table 2), as contextualized below:

Both Peru and Colombia face common challenges that stem from their geographical proximity and common history, their Andean context, the protection of the Amazon, the fight against drug trafficking, terrorism and corruption, social and economic development, and the affirmation of the State’s presence in the shared border (Peru, 2005, p. 35).

In light of the above, it can be partially concluded that the Peruvian government’s discursive act prioritises the Chilean and Ecuadorian border over the triple border, as most of its ground combat assets (personnel and equipment) are distributed along that border.

Next, a summary will be presented of the official discourses of the border region countries and their concrete actions (Table 3), from which can be deduced that, in the case of Peru,

less measures have been taken to counter the existing threats than in the case of Brazil and Colombia.

Table 3 - Discourses versus Concrete Actions

	BRAZIL.	COLOMBIA	PERU
Official discourse	<u>NDP</u> • From a defence perspective, paying greater attention to the areas where the political and economic authorities and the majority of the Brazilian population are located, as well as to the Amazon and to the South Atlantic (item 2.2.1.2) • At the regional level, increasing cooperation with South American countries (item 2.3.9) • Strengthening cooperation and integration mechanisms in the region (item 2.3.11) <u>NDS</u> • Guideline 1: Deterring the concentration of hostile forces in the land borders and within the boundaries of Brazilian jurisdictional waters, and preventing those forces from using the national airspace. • Guideline 3: Developing capabilities to monitor and control the Brazilian air space, territory and jurisdictional waters. • Guideline 9: Increasing the presence of Navy, Army and Air Force units at the borders. • Guideline 10: Prioritising the Amazon region. • Guideline 18: Stimulating South American integration.	<u>Defence and Security Policy for New Colombia 2015-2018</u> • Strategic Objectives # 4: Fighting new forms of organised crime that threaten the security and operation of the state. • Strategic Objectives # 5: Guaranteeing the sovereignty and integrity of the national territory by protecting the national interests	<u>White Paper on Defence</u> • Increasing bilateral arrangements between the Armed Forces operating in the region (item 5) • Establishing common policies on democracy and governance, world peace, terrorism, drug trafficking, corruption, environmental protection/defence • Increasing cooperation and integration among the countries in the region to protect the Amazon • Controlling illegal activities in the border rivers
Concrete Actions	• Increasing the military personnel in the border region (CFSol /8º BIS -Tabatinga) • Special Operations Command • Cyber Defence Command • Implementing SIPAM¹	• Increased military structure through the reactivation/ creation of new military units, such as: • 26th Bda Inf SI • 50th BIS • 74th Counterguerrilla Battalion • 26th ASPC Battalion (Leticia) • Special Operations Brigade	• Implementing the Eastern Military Region (EMR) • Creating the Naval Base (Iquitos) • Signing the Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation for the Surveillance and Protection of the Amazon

¹ The Amazon Protection System is linked to the Brazilian Ministry of Defence (MD) and is managed by the Operational and Management Centre of the Amazon Protection System (CENSIPAM). The SIPAM is an organisation that produces and delivers technical information, and is responsible for integrating and generating information to articulate, plan, and coordinate government actions in the Legal Amazon, aiming at the protection, inclusion and sustainable development of the region (Brasil, 2017d).

Source: Elaborated by authors

Conclusions

The present study aimed to broaden the reflection on the securitisation of the Amazon Triple Border (Brazil-Colombia-Peru) and the Brazilian Army operations in the region. Securitisation has garnered attention in recent years due to the changes in the world, particularly in the post-Cold War, when threats became diffuse, complex, and multidimensional, involving a variety of aspects and actors. This new reality has led nation states to rebuild their understanding of threats, introducing issues such as the environment, which directly affects the Amazon region.

In conclusion, this paper has found that the notion of securitisation is relevant to the reflection on state actions in the current security context in the region of the Amazon Trapeze border.

Furthermore, the securitisation discourse has mainly influenced the Brazilian and Peruvian defence documents. In the case of Colombia, a series of concrete actions were conducted through the deployment of military units.

Especially with regard to Brazilian military thinking, in addition to a strong presence in defence documents, securitisation can also be seen in the intensification of the “presence deployment strategy” in the region and in the corresponding increase in number of Border Command personnel (CFSOL/8ºBIS) and their Special Border Platoons.

The challenges of the triple border are characterised by the presence of state and non-state actors and foreign multidimensional threats that have contributed to strengthen the securitisation discourse on the region as a whole; and in actions to increase military presence at the borders, particularly of Brazil and Colombia.

Finally, it should be noted that only through the integration of efforts between these countries can security in this area become more effective, generating positive results for regional security, which will reflect the achievement of these nations’ national strategic objectives.

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