

The Trinitarian role of the Brazilian Army: bases of a “multitasking” force

El papel trinitario del Ejército Brasileiro: bases de una fuerza “multitarea”

Abstract: In Brazil, the Army has been recurrently employed by the Federal Government to carry out activities that, by its nature, would have traditionally been carried out by other State agencies. However, even though this is admittedly a national problem, there are no signs of change. For this reason, the article aimed to discuss the peculiarities of the Army’s activities in Brazil, highlighting how the functions traditionally performed by the military go far beyond preparing for war. From a methodological perspective, a perspective was adopted based on the concept of strategic culture and the geopolitical conditions of the Brazilian territory, a bibliographic review and consultation of defense documents and military manuals were carried out, which helped to understand the process of building the multitasking profile. As a result, a Trinitarian model of EB performance is proposed, representing a strategic Brazilian culture, which relates the participation of the Army to the process of building the national state.

Keywords: Brazilian Army. Defense. Territorial security. Subsidiary actions.

Resumen: En Brasil, el Ejército ha sido empleado repetidamente por el Gobierno Federal para llevar a cabo actividades que, por su naturaleza, tradicionalmente serían realizadas por otros organismos estatales. Sin embargo, aunque es cierto que esto es un problema, no hay señales de cambio cuando la fuerza se desvía de sus funciones anteriores. Por lo tanto, el artículo tuvo como objetivo discutir las peculiaridades del Ejército Brasileño (EB), destacando cómo las funciones tradicionalmente desempeñadas por los militares van mucho más allá de la preparación para la guerra. Desde el punto de vista metodológico, se adoptó una perspectiva teórica basada en el concepto de cultura estratégica, se realizó una revisión de la literatura y se realizó la consulta de documentos de defensa y manuales militares que ayudaron a comprender el proceso de construcción del perfil multitarea. Como resultado, proponemos un modelo trinitario de desempeño del EB representativo de una cultura estratégica propia brasileña, que relaciona la participación del Ejército con el proceso de construcción del Estado nacional.

Palabras Clave: Ejército 10 / 5000 Resultados de tradução Brasileño. Defensa. Seguridad territorial. Acciones subsidiarias.

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1 Introduction

The goal of this article is to discuss the peculiarities of the Army's activities in Brazil, highlighting how the functions traditionally performed by the Brazilian military go far beyond the preparation for war.

To this end, the authors propose a Trinitarian model of EB's performance considering: a) its primary purpose (to prepare for war); b) its territorial security function (acting as a security force, especially at the borders); and c) its historical participation as a kind of "stronghold of nationality" and "civism school".

The central point that guides the article is the following: why, in Brazil, the Army has been recurrently employed by the Federal Government to carry out activities that, by its nature, would have traditionally been executed by other agencies of the State? Why, even though this is admittedly a problem in diverting the Force from its core functions, are there no signs of change?

Under an approach that integrates ideational factors (strategic culture) and materials (geopolitical constraints), the article is divided into three sections, in addition to the introduction and final considerations. The first will discuss the existence of a strategic Brazilian culture, which relates to the participation of EB in the process of building the national state, as well as the influences of material factors in the geopolitical formulations developed by military personnel in the Army; as a result, the second section will present elements of the formation of the Army's military ethos, giving some outlines to the presence strategy. In the third section we will discuss the central theme of this article: the Trinitarian role of EB.

2 Elements of the Brazilian strategic culture and geopolitical conditions of the territory

The roots of the strategic culture go back to the 1970's¹ in works that seek to understand international security issues from a culturalist approach (REIS, 2013), that is, which consider it relevant to understand ideational aspects in addition to the purely rational choice in the use of military force. Johnston (1995) refers to strategic culture as an integrated system of symbols (arguments, metaphors, etc.) that act in order to establish lasting strategic preferences through the formulation of the effective use of the armed forces in the international scenario.

The strategic culture would be constituted by long-lasting ideational elements - but not immutable - such as tradition, perceptions and preferences. In this sense, a country's geography and history are the most important factors in its strategic culture shaping (DOESER, 2016). It is possible to define strategic culture as the ideational environment that conditions the behavior of the actors when making decisions about the strategic options considered most appropriate and effective (DOESER, 2016; LANTIS, 2002).

¹ The concept of "strategic culture" was first coined in 1977, by Jack L. Snyder, in "The Soviet Strategic Culture: Implications for Nuclear Options". In this work, Snyder defines the concept as a "sum total of ideals, conditional emotional responses, and patterns of habitual behavior that members of the national strategic community have acquired through instruction or imitation and share with each other with regard to nuclear strategy" (JOHNSTON, 1995, p. 36).

This environment would represent a system of ideas and objects, a mindset available to public policy makers. In this case, the traditions, values and beliefs that are interpreted as the "national will" by the decision-making elite in power stand out. In this way, geographical and historical conditions offer the possibilities for decision-making elites to build a particular political agenda, which ends up bringing forth a "national style".

In this way, the concept of strategic culture would serve as a basis for understanding how domestic political conditions and external constraints can influence both the diplomatic, military and economic behavior of States in the international system, as well as the way in which they organize the occupation of national space, establishing points of contact between the security, defense and development agendas.

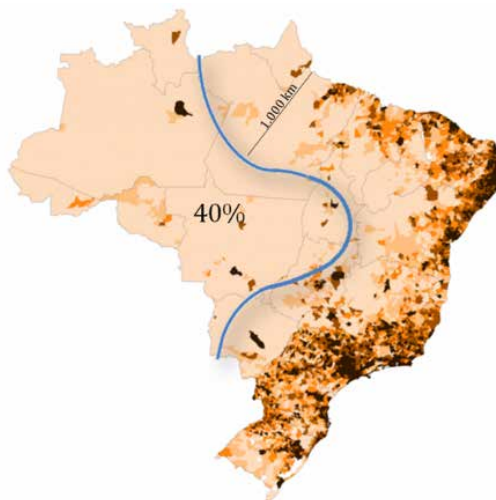
This means that there is always a cultural context that conditions the basic perceptions and preferences that inevitably influence previously the strategic options (REIS, 2013), impacting decision making and "the military doing".

Therefore, recognizing that this culture is not something given, solidified, but is in fact a permanent process of construction and reconstruction, it seems appropriate to discuss how the military in Brazil – state actors with a considerable degree of autonomy – shaped and were shaped by a genuinely national strategic culture.

In search of the elements that would compose a strategic Brazilian culture, it is necessary, initially, to situate Brazil in its geopolitical context.

Brazil is a country of continental dimensions, with approximately seventeen thousand kilometers of borderland with nine South American countries and a French overseas department. Added to this is a coastline of approximately seven thousand kilometers where, within a radius of up to two hundred kilometers away from the coast, approximately 50% of the entire national population is concentrated. It should also be noted that 40% of the entire national territory is more than a thousand kilometers from the coast (figure 1), which, in itself, constitutes an obstacle to the very occupation of the central space, despite all the national effort for the occupation of the "West".

Figure 1 – Brazilian demographic concentration



Source: Adapted by the authors from the "Population Count" Map (IBGE, 2007).

Indeed, the geopolitical thinking of authors such as Travassos, Golbery, Meira Mattos already emphasized the importance of establishing economic links between the coast, the interior areas and the border areas of Brazil with its surroundings. The issue of development, therefore, should be associated with an agenda for cooperation with bordering countries in both the Amazon Basin and the Southern Cone.

Thus, the military's geopolitical formulations traditionally deal with the need for the State to be present in the geographic space of continental dimensions. It is this condition that has been fundamental to understand the Army's strategic stance in the Brazilian context. It should be noted that this condition, in the perspective presented here, can be focused on as Brazil is understood as an inseparable part of a South America also formed by developing countries.

In this sense, there is no way to disregard the characteristics that surround our strategic environment. Brazil is inserted in a region with a low incidence of interstate wars², historical-military factors and the challenges faced by developing countries, contributed, from the point of view of the strategic culture, to the construction of an "look inside". From this perspective, a privileged internal plan and, consequently, a military job associated with public policies such as those of security and development.

Thus, the geopolitical reflection produced in Brazil throughout the 20th century is a typical example of this situation: on the one hand, it was conceived especially by Army officers; on the other hand, the most relevant aspects concern issues such as: occupation of immense empty spaces, project for the integration and development of the country and a project for the construction and consolidation of a cohesive national identity. In short, it deals with integration, development and security, having a privileged space in the debate about internal challenges. An interesting example of this concerns the presence of the Brazilian Army on the border as part of the process of consolidating the limits of the national state. In this sense, it is worth mentioning the creation of military colonies, in the middle of the 19th century, whose purpose was to populate (vivify) the borders, in the hope that they would become population centers until they reached the point of emancipation (BRAZIL, 1959). Due to its geopolitical characteristics and continental dimensions, the idea of defense in Brazil was born intertwined with the notion of development. In this sense, livening the borders expressed, in the words of General Meira Mattos, the mixture between "the weapon of defense and the hoe of the economic fixation of man to the land" (MATTOS, 2011)³.

Consequently, these brief considerations on the military geopolitical conception can be associated with the literature on international security, opening space for a debate that lacks even more depth in strategic studies on the peculiarities of defense in developing coun-

2 For Medeiros Filho (2014), five factors can be pointed out as possible causes of the anomalous pattern of South America in the international system over the last century. The first concerns the peripheral location of the region in relation to major world conflicts. The second factor, derived from the first, refers to the relatively small military power of the countries in the region. The third factor corresponds to the hegemonic presence of the United States as an element of regional stability. The fourth factor refers to the priority given to domestic problems - (internal enemy) to the detriment of external interests. Finally, from a liberal perspective, the role of norms in international relations can be highlighted.

3 Even today, the Army has 24 Special Border Platoons (PEF) in the Military Command of the Amazon alone. Under the motto "Life, Combat and Work", the PEF carry out military activities, such as training, surveillance of points and recognition of areas, in addition to numerous specific tasks in the border areas, such as: support to public agencies, health assistance to women, native populations, among others. In line with the platoons' motto, the soldiers who will serve there are encouraged to take their families, staying there for up to two years.

tries such as Brazil. For example, Mohamed Ayoob (1995) considers that, in addition to the issues of defense *stricto sensu*, developing countries include in their security agenda a set of challenges related to the formation process of these states (state building).

According to Ayoob (1995), unlike the classic model of international security, security/insecurity issues in developing countries are defined regarding the vulnerabilities that threaten or have the potential to threaten the very structures of the State. Thus, it is added that the realistic and conservative view of the military is integrated with the main concerns of the ruling elites and concerns issues related to the structures of the State and the government regime, involving challenges related to the legitimacy of institutions and regimes and the need for social cohesion (AYOOB, 1995).

By assuming elements here from a post-colonialist perspective, generally focused on the challenges of underdeveloped and developing countries, it is not intended to assume, under any circumstances, which countries in the region would fit in the definition of failed states, such as those that they have reached the critical level of degradation of state control over the territory, but they face challenges that have been somewhat outgrown in developed countries stemming from a process that we can call “national state building”. Thus, it can be said that the state weaknesses observed in countries in the region are related to the development model itself, marked by socioeconomic and institutional needs, and that generate challenges such as maintaining order and applying the rule of law in portions of their own territories. Our hypothesis would be that such challenges would eventually lead to its Armed Forces playing unorthodox roles in the region.

In this sense, the words of Army General Eduardo Dias da Costa Villas Bôas, Commander of the Brazilian Army, are worth mentioning during the Public Hearing held by the Foreign Affairs and National Defense Committee of the Chamber of Deputies on 07/05/2017. According to him,

“[...] at the same time that we have to be an Army with those characteristics that I referred to, a modern Army, with the capacity for external projection, we have to remain a colonization Army. This is the reality” (BRASIL, 2017, n.p.).

In summary, the perception that seems to have been consolidated among the Brazilian military is that Brazil would be a state still in the process of formation and that the involvement of the military in activities to support national development would be a necessary security factor. From the point of view of the idea of this condition, development, security and integration of the territory would be elements seen as inseparable, as will be exposed in the next section on the elements of the national strategic culture.

3 National vulnerabilities, military *ethos* and presence strategy

The demands for territorial control arising from the historical condition of former colonies and the shared perception of States still in the process of formation seem to have a relevant impact on the Brazilian strategic culture. This “geohistorical” condition is a fundamental factor that ends up giving relevance to internal dimensions, such as the presence strategy,

the control of peripheral regions and the surveillance of borders. Marques (2007), for example, highlights as one of the main traits of the strategic culture of the Brazilian military the importance given to the presence strategy, understood as a fundamental factor for the national integration and territorial integrity of Brazil.

Indeed, in the face of such challenges, the military find themselves imbued with the "republican" mission of contributing to national development that involves the consolidation of internal sovereignty and the territorial integrity of the State. It is an ideational element organic to its institutional culture and which is based on the feeling of incompleteness of the National State - still in process of consolidation (MEDEIROS FILHO, 2020)

In this context, over the last century, EB sought to present itself to society as a kind of "active synthesis of modernization", always ready to lend its degree of professionalism as a support to face the weaknesses observed in the public sphere. As such, the military tend, to make their institution the model of political organization, of their "ethos", the way of thinking seen as more appropriate to national development (FERREIRA, 2004).

Therefore, from that point on, it is necessary to discuss some elements that make up the EB *ethos*. To this end, it is important to highlight the way in which European military professionalism was emulated in South America, especially between 1890 and 1940, which played a fundamental role in the formation of the Army's military ethos, synthesized in the German and French influences (NUNN, 1983). The "tropicalization" of European doctrines based on the roots, values and traditions of the Force provided traces for the formation of the cultural identity of an Army dedicated to acting in the internal space, standing out for establishing a model that aims to make contributions to civic-social issues in the country.

This perception of Brazil as a "limping" state and of "national incompleteness" appears recurrently throughout the process of republican construction, not being exclusive to the military. Gilberto Freyre, for example, suggested, during the "Nation and Army" conference, held at the Army Command and Staff School, in 1948, that: "[...] the truth, however, is that the country where the Army is the only, or almost the only, organized force, it needs urgent organization or reorganization of the set of social and cultural activities to be truly a nation. A disorganized nation is not a nation: it is only a landscape" (FREYRE, 2019, p. 28).

Freyre reveals a dangerous reality, of a society that, realizing in its incipient state the lack of truly national institutions, relies - by collusion - in the Army to fulfill clearly civil responsibilities and obligations. In the following excerpt, Freyre illustrates, in an ironic way, this reality:

Why doesn't the Army solve the meat shortage problem? Or the lack of milk? Or the exploitation of fish and vegetables? Or that of the many suicides? Or that of the many murders? Or the traffic in Rio de Janeiro [...] A brief question will be asked: why doesn't the Army make masses in our churches more popular? [...] If this trend continues, the priests in Brazil will cross their arms for the military to teach the boys the sign of the cross. Teachers will fold their arms so that the military can teach boys geography of Brazil, history of Brazil; chorography of Brazil; for the military to take charge of the moral and civic instruction of the little ones (FREYRE, 2019, p. 26).

In that context, as modernization became a project not actually carried out by national society, fragile and politically disorganized (CARVALHO, 2006; FAORO, 2007), EB seemed to be an “organized force in the midst of a lot of disorganization that disturbs us and afflicts” (FREYRE, 2019, p. 27). According to Faoro, the constant guardianship of the Armed Forces, especially the Army, in an “unfinished Republic” represents a state in the process of modernization that brought with it the tensions and contradictions of institutional formations not yet consolidated.

Notably, these historical challenges are not exclusive to Brazil, but it reflects a political perception present in countries in the region throughout the 20th century according to which national armies would constitute a kind of “bulwark of the Republic”, without which countries would be condemned to instability. The following excerpt, extracted from the work of Argentine general Benjamin Rattenbach in the early 1970s, seems to summarize the form of this perception well: “In Latin American countries, political instability is not due to the frequent intervention of the military, but on the contrary, they interfere in domestic politics precisely because of this instability” (RATTENBACH, 1972, p. 117, our translation)⁴.

Therefore, against the background of the image of a State still in the process of consolidation, the idea of development and national defense would be inseparable elements, and the military involvement in non-war activities and in support of national development would be a fundamental factor of the very institution’s identity.

In addition to the “strong arm” of the war, the military dedicates a great deal of effort, in subsidiary actions to support the state, called by the military itself a “helping hand”. These are actions related to the process of building and consolidating the State and overcoming national instabilities, for which EB has sought to lend its model of permanent and stable organization that, in most cases, escape the scope of the war, as we’ll see next.

4 One army, many functions

The central issue discussed here and which is in the title of this article concerns the “multitasking” character played by EB. In other words, it seeks to understand how the historical trajectory and the conditions that made up the regional scenario and the domestic context, end up contributing to the permanence of the peculiarity of the Armed Forces model adopted in Brazil. This issue becomes even more interesting when one realizes that the Army itself has been conducting a process of self-transformation⁵. In other words, in the institution’s decision-making bodies there is a perception of the need to adapt the force model to the new demands imposed at the beginning of the 21st century.

4 Original: [...] En los países latinoamericanos, la inestabilidad política no se debe a la intervención frecuente de los militares, sino al revés, estos interfieren en la política interna precisamente a causa de esa inestabilidad [...].

5 The Army Transformation Conception document, approved through Ordinance No. 1,253, of December 5, 2013, considered “that the desired transformation would be “the result of a set of innovations [...] causing a new concept of organization, articulation, preparation and employment”. And he concluded: “[...] the intention is, with the transformation process, to lead the Army to the level of armed force of a developed country and a global actor, capable of being present, with the necessary promptness, in any area of interest. Brazil’s strategic plan”.

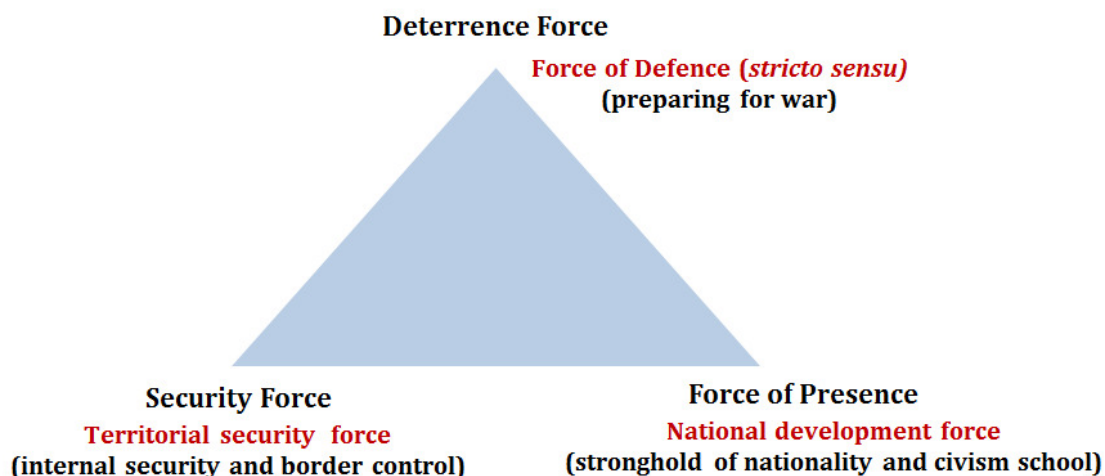
The great challenge that is presented is to meet the desirable demands in a process of military transformation that, in theory, would require leaner forces, centralized, modular and equipped with systems with high technological level, and, at the same time, maintain the necessary presence to the fulfillment of the various missions imposed by the nation, reinforcing the bonds of loyalty between the citizen and the State.

One of these missions concerns the annual training of new recruits who, in addition to preparing for war, contribute to the construction, within society, of a defense mentality, as according to the idea of republican leveling that appears recently prepared: “[...] the Mandatory Military Service is the guarantee of citizen participation as an instrument of mobilization to affirm national unity and contribute to the development of the defense mentality within Brazilian society” (BRASIL, 2020, np).

In developing countries, national vulnerabilities associated with state weaknesses demand greater participation by the Armed Forces in the various national problems that, due to their organizational and logistical capacity, end up imposing themselves as an “adequate” instrument for the fulfillment of tasks of this nature in border areas, or distant from large urban centers. In the specific case of Brazil, the most varied demands, especially linked to civil defense and public security, giving rise to the greater participation of the Armed Forces due to their logistical capacity and capillarity in the territory.

We will now discuss the central issue of our article: the Trinitarian role of the Brazilian Army. Unlike models of force in developed countries, EB has (even if this is not explicitly categorized in defense documents) two other “state” functions in addition to *stricto sensu* defense (preparing for war): a) **territorial security** (due to the inability of our police to meet intermediate and national and international demands, such as border control); and b) **strength of presence** (stronghold of nationality and civism school), according to the scheme proposed below in figure 2.

Figure 2 – Trinitarian model of EB performance



Source: Authors (2020).

Indeed, it would be up to the Army to prepare the Land Force (F Ter) to fulfill its constitutional mission of defending the country and guaranteeing constitutional powers, law and order. In addition, the Land Force must fulfill the general subsidiary attributions provided for in the complementary legislation, which are: to cooperate with national development and Civil defense, as well as support the country's foreign policy and participate in international peace and humanitarian aid operations. It is noteworthy that the Ground Military Doctrine Fundamentals manual (EB20-MF-10.102) indicates that Ground Force elements can carry out three basic operations: offensive, defensive and cooperation and coordination with agencies.

So, the State requires the EB to have private subsidiary attributions to act, through preventive and repressive actions in the borderland border strip, against cross-border and environmental crimes, alone or in coordination with other organs of the Executive Branch, carrying out, among others, patrolling actions; search of people, land vehicles, boats and aircraft and prisons in *flagrante delicto*. At the same time, cooperate with federal agencies, when necessary, in the repression of crimes, in the national territory, with logistical, intelligence, communications and instruction support; and to cooperate with federal, state and municipal public agencies in the execution of engineering works and services.

Next, we will describe each of the roles that make up the Brazilian Army's trinity of activities. We will start with what constitutes the main function of any armed force: the preparation for war, that is, the possibility of employment against external threats in a situation of armed conflict.

4.1 The Army as a “*stricto sensu* armed force”: deterrence and military transformation

At the end of the first decade of this century, most of the national armies underwent processes of military transformation. It is a fact that seeks, at the same time, transformation and rationalization, in a world in which war is progressively more complex and in which technology plays an increasingly important role. As a consequence, structural changes have been observed in the organization and employment of the Armed Forces.

Roughly speaking, the idea of military modernization originated in the 1970s, from the discussion on Evolution in Military Affairs (EAM) and Revolution in Military Affairs (RAM). In South America, a basic document of this process was the publication, in 2007, of the article “Three Pillars of a Military Transformation” by Chilean brigadier Jaime Covarrubias. The author sought to understand military changes from three levels, which differ by the depth with which these changes are made: adaptation, modernization and transformation.

For Covarrubias (2007), the transformation does not refer only to obtaining new technologies (which would be modernization), but involves deep reforms and changes in orientation in the doctrine and structure of forces. To transform, in synthesis, would mean changing the conceptions of the Force, projecting it into the future. In this way, the Army's transformation process is part of a historic milestone related to the evolution of security and defense thinking in Brazil. In 2009, the Army Commander handed over the “Strong Arm” strategy to the Ministry of Defense (MD), based on four major programs: Protected Amazon, Sentinel of the Fatherland, Strategic Mobility and Brazilian Combatant of the Future.

In the case of Brazil, this process gained momentum after the publication of the National Defense Strategy (END) of 2008. It is necessary to understand the geopolitical context in which this happened. On the one hand, after almost two decades after the end of the Cold War, the world was beginning to experience signs of the return of classical geopolitics, which began after the attacks on the "twin towers" in 2001 and the international financial crisis in 2007. On the other hand, Brazil was rehearsing its first steps towards regional leadership and more protonic actions at the global level. In the Defense realm, Brazil's need to constitute a force consistent with its geopolitical stature was discussed, creating a necessary rearguard to face reactions to Brazilian protagonism.

As presented in the second section of this article, the fact that the country has continental dimensions and borders ten countries imposes the need for it to have structured, equipped and trained Armed Forces, with firepower, reach and lethality that enable it to support the sovereign decisions in international forums. That was the fundamental message contained in END 2008.

Thus, Lima and Medeiros Filho (2019), state that the END was the main driver of some inflections, guiding the Army to organize itself by two fundamental principles: flexibility and elasticity. The first indicates the ability to use force with the minimum of pre-established stiffness, while the second indicates the ability to rapidly expand the dimensioning of forces when circumstances demand it. The authors note that, more recently, three other concepts have been incorporated into defense policies, namely: adaptability, modularity and sustainability (LIMA; MEDEIROS FILHO, 2019).

In 2012, EB instituted the "Brazilian Army Strength Project" (PROFORÇA), with the task of establishing, in an integrated manner, the bases for the Transformation of the Brazilian Army, considering three time frames: 2015, 2022 and 2030. Based on called "Transformation Vectors" (Science & Technology, Doctrine, Education & Culture, Engineering, Management, Logistics, Budget & Finance, Preparation & Employment and Human Resources). The Proforça resulted in the "Conception of Transformation of the Army 2013-2022".

In operational terms, what was sought was to restructure the force, adapting it to the context of the 21st century and contributing to generate a credible deterrence capacity. To this end, several projects were designed, among which we highlight, for the meaning they represent for the war of the future, Astros 2020, Cyber Defense and the Integrated Border Monitoring System (SISFRON).

The ASTROS 2020 Strategic Project aims to provide F Ter with means capable of providing long-range fire support, with high precision and lethality. The Project involves the development of two new armaments: the guided rocket, using the design of the current SS-40 rocket, of the rocket family of the ASTROS II system, in use by the Brazilian Army, and the tactical cruise missile with a 300 km range; in addition to specialized units in the Guarnição de Formosa (GO).

Cyber Defense aims to enable EB to fight in a new dimension of war: cyberspace. It should be noted that it was from the 2008 National Defense Strategy (END), which was revised in 2012, that there was a division of responsibilities between the three Brazilian Armed Forces, each of which has a strategic Defense sector, namely: nuclear (Navy), space (Air Force) and cyber (EB). Henceforth, cybernetics was part of an important movement of technologi-

cal innovation in the Army. It should be noted that, in that context, the transformation process came to understand that the current military doctrine was based on outdated conceptions of an army from the industrial era. Thus, the Army needed to be transformed into an institution of the “Information Age”, which should be based on information technology (IT) tools.

Therefore, in 2010, the Cyber Defense Center (CDCiber) was created. Despite operating within the Army Headquarters, CDCiber had military personnel from different forces. In 2014, CDCiber became part of the structure of the Cyber Defense Command (ComDCiber), which, in 2018, began operating at the facilities of Fort Rondon, where the Army’s Communications and Electronic Warfare Command already operates.

Thus, the Integrated Border Monitoring System (Sisfron) is composed of an integrated set of technological resources, such as surveillance and monitoring systems, information technology, electronic warfare and intelligence that, allied with infrastructure projects, will reduce vulnerabilities in the borderland. In this way, Sisfron intends to strengthen EB’s capacity for action in the border strip, an area of 16,886 kilometers in length, allowing the monitoring, mobility and presence capabilities present in the National Defense Strategy to be met.

Regarding this last program, despite being located here in the field of “Deterrence force”, it is observed, due to the nature of the threat faced, that the surveillance system has proved to be another tool to face security threats (problems “in ”Frontier) than geopolitical threats “ frontier ”problems. Alsina Junior (2018), for example, suggests that the concern with aspects related to transnational crime and the porosity of frontiers in the face of drug trafficking is the main reason that would have led EB to conceive Sisfron, so that it would be more subordinate to the dimension of security than the defense of strict sense.

It should be noted that the debate on the transformation of EB originates in a context of international projection in Brazil that suggested new military capabilities that would raise the Brazilian deterrent to another level, from the regional to the extra-regional. Such a process constituted a unique opportunity to advance in the discussion of the main mission of the armed forces, that is, the preparation for war. The moment is important to resume the discussion about tensions generated between the internal vocation.

4.2 The Army as a territorial security force: playing the role of a middleman force

The Army reaches the 21st century and the presence strategy, in its internal formulations, still prevails in a continental country. It was in this way that the capacities necessary for the EB of 2030 were listed in the document “Process of Transformation of the Army” presented by the General Staff of the Army (EME). It is worth noting that, despite the intention to transform, a key cultural perception in the Force still remained: “helping to conclude the occupation and integration into the Brazilian nation of practically half of the national territory corresponding to the Amazon” (BRASIL, 2010, p. 26).

The EME document verbatim signals three historical tasks for the Army, all geopolitical. First, the aforementioned need to occupy “empty spaces” in the Amazon. The second, related to the South American environment and the condition of having seventeen thousand kilometers of border with ten countries of the region. Finally, the need to project power internationally with

consistency capable of ensuring national interests, including being able to pacification and stabilization of South American neighbors in crisis.

However, it is the domestic plan and its implications for the articulation of public policies, the function that most involves and absorbs the Army. The Army's geopolitical formulators indicate, as noted in the first section, that the military has historically worked in the occupation of "empty spaces" that may exist in the national territory and in its extensions in order to fulfill its constitutional destination and subsidiary actions and, therefore, in the containment of eventual urban crises and the like in the dense problem of public security in Brazil.

According to Lima and Medeiros Filho (2018), between 1992 and 2017 there were 132 GLO operations in different situations that involved major events, international conferences, police and trucker strikes, among others, with approximately 60 in the area of security. public. It is noteworthy that this participation represented an average of 15 operations per presidential cycle between the years 1995 and 2017 (LIMA; MEDEIROS FILHO, 2018).

It should be noted that Brazil is the only South American country that does not have a permanent middleman force (Gendarmeria, Carabineros, National Guard, National Police, etc.). This fact turns out to be a vulnerability to the national security model insofar as the country does not have a force specifically dedicated to combating intermediary threats, which cross national borders, easily connecting the external to the internal environment. Ideally, the scenario would raise a debate about the creation of a national intermediary force in the face of a shortage of human resources or the inability of the federal, highway, military police or even due to the ad hoc (episodic) nature of the National Security Force or "National guard". Such conditions contribute for the Army to remain acting as a territorial security force, especially at the borders.

Alsina Júnior (2018) states that the central question is to know how much the Armed Forces can be prepared for constabular functions without risking their primary function.

"The weakness of the State has a double effect: it allows the proliferation of domestic dissensions while making the accumulation of warlike and organizational means more complex to conduct military campaigns against external enemies more complex" (ALSINA JUNIOR, 2018, p. 156).

The missions related to the sphere of security in the face of transnational crime and border porosity are related to aspects such as, for example, the modernization of the troops' equipment, new command and control measures and the acquisition of VBTP Guarani (ALSINA JUNIOR, 2018).

The fact is that this condition places the debate on military planning in Brazil facing a dilemma: to maintain the role of the Army as a territorial guard, assuming "ad hoc" functions of a police nature or would it be more effective to invest in the permanent "National Security Force" that had budgetary, human and material resources and capillarity throughout the national territory?

4.3 Army as a force of presence and national development (bastion of nationality and school of civism)

The third and most controversial of the EB's functions concerns the involvement of the Force in activities to support national development, as well as its belief in the status of a stronghold

of nationality. As seen in the first section, this is an issue that has its origin in the Brazilian military strategic culture, which constitutes linking security, territorial integration and development.

The presence of the Army throughout the national territory is a process that sought to legitimize itself along with the ordering territoriality of the State throughout history. For EB, actions such as Luiz Alves de Lima e Silva (Duque de Caxias) in the pacification of rebellions that occurred during the Regency Period and at the beginning of the Second Reign, would support the role of the military as agglutinators in the Brazilian territory (GONZALES, 2008)

Thus, the condition of a stronghold of nationality remains latent in the Institution and in society, if not as hegemonic thinking, certainly permeating subtle sectors and mentalities. Gonzales (2008) stresses that, to prove this observation, it is enough to follow the justifications and the so-called “ideas-force” on the official page or in internal publications for dissemination of the Earth Force. In this sense, the author highlights the excerpt from the periodical “Noticiário do Exército”, published in April 2006:

Today's Army is a synthesis of its historical trajectory: the same people in arms committed to national integration and progress. The “Strong Arm” that guarantees sovereignty, law and order. The “Friendly Hand” in which the Nation finds support in difficult moments [...] Brazilian Army: yesterday, today and always, the same mission (EXÉRCITO BRASILEIRO, 2006 apud GONZALES, 2008, p. 57, author’s highlighting). (own translation)

In addition to an excerpt from the institutional article “The origins of the Brazilian Army”, published on EB’s own website:

After Independence, in 1822, the performance of the Brazilian Army, internally, was decisive in **defeating all attempts at territorial and social fragmentation** in the country. The **maintenance of national unity**, painfully bequeathed by our ancestors, is due to their actions, in particular, from the performance of **Duque de Caxias**. Thus, **yesterday, as today, the need for national security and integration prevailed**, reflecting the sovereign will of the people, expressed, as an intangible ideal, in the Brazilian Constitutions of all times. (EXÉRCITO BRASILEIRO, 2007 apud GONZALES, 2008, p. 57, author’s highlighting). (own translation)

The idea of integration between security and development of the territory, in the two quotations above, would appear as a strong point of the Army’s performance throughout the history of the Empire and the Republic. A revealing aspect of this stance would be the fact that Duque de Caxias, “the great articulator of national unity”, was elevated to patron of the Institution.

Thus, the arguments of the Armed Forces are that in some regions they would represent the only meaning of *Brazilianness* and the presence of the State, acting as the main vector of national cohesion and unity and that the feeling of exclusivity, of being present, would translate an idea of “omnipresence”, of “power over the State” (GONZALES, 2008).

This would be an explanation for the fact that the Army, in certain contexts, takes on roles that would belong to other sectors of national life, causing, “on the one hand, an accom-

modation of political power, represented by the convenience and connivance of the State with this type of action and, on the other hand, a distortion in the role of each power and its respective responsibility for the conduct of public policies in the country" (GONZALES, 2008).

Another relevant aspect of the strategic military culture that supports and justifies, over time, the national presence of the Army and its status as a stronghold of nationality, is what we call here the "Civism School".

Gonzales (2008) suggests that the concern with the citizen's moral and civic formation is a marked feature in the institution. To this end, it refers to the so-called Military Instruction Schools - created in 1998 with the aim of being an alternative to the provision of mandatory military service - highlighting text available on the official website of EB and which guides the functioning of these schools:

[Military Instruction Schools] should constitute centers for the dissemination of civism, citizenship and patriotism [...]. Moral and civic education will be an object of constant concern in the training of personnel in order to develop the spiritual and moral values of nationality, the feeling of obligations towards the Homeland and understanding of basic institutions that govern society, such as family, government, church and the Armed Forces (EXÉRCITO BRASILEIRO apud GONZALES, 2008, p. 119-120, author's highlighting).

The feeling of responsibility in solving Brazilian problems is something that has been gradually built up in school benches during military life. It should be noted, for example, that the military study of Geography and Geopolitics⁶ seeks to offer the officer a Cartesian method⁷ that is capable of assessing the National Power or the Power of a given region, through the articulation of physiographic, economic, psychosocial, political and scientific-technological issues that impact national development. Therefore, from training at the Military Academy of Agulhas Negras (AMAN), passing through the School for the Improvement of Officers (EsAO) and arriving at the High Military Studies Courses, given at the Army Command and Staff School (ECEME), "the method" is a lens - a particular (mindset) - from which the military interacts with reality and seeks answers to complex national problems.

Therefore, the educational process is a conceptual key to understanding the relationship of responsibility / instrumentality of the military with the development of Brazil. Such a relationship takes place from a perspective where the officer is trained nurturing the belief that he is not only an arms professional, but also part of the nation's managerial-decision-making vanguard. In this way, the idea of a "military power" in Brazil is maintained, according to the constant perspective of the work "Fundamentals of National Power" of the *Escola Superior de Guerra* (2019), as part of a complex synthesis that is inserted in several dimensions - "expressions of power" - and that contribute to national security and development.

6 The discipline of Geography was removed from the AMAN curriculum in 2013, being replaced by the discipline of Geopolitics that started to be taught in 2016.

7 The method of the Geographic Area Survey (LGA) is taught to Cadet and becomes a *modus operandi* approach throughout a military career. It is worth noting that the selection process for the Army Command and General Staff School (ECEME) is composed exclusively of issues of History and Geography and has the "method" as its key element. For the military, the method gives a particular look at reality, a "mindset".

To this end, the "arms professional" seeks to deal not only with pragmatic and, say, "tougher" issues of power, but also be able to apply his more persuasive or "soft" character. For the military, the involvement of the Force in "non-war" activities, which touch on the expressions of national power mentioned above, would bring them closer to public opinion, a condition considered fundamental for the increase in the stock of confidence that society places in the Armed Forces. In this sense, the EB has devoted, in recent decades, special attention to themes that concern the "image of the Force", and its relationship with society, in general, and with the media, in particular.

Indeed, there are several examples of the EB involvement in activities that do not concern military issues. There are several situations that the military doctrine of the Army starts to accommodate. In the military perspective, such activities constitute opportunities to associate the image of the Army and its quality standard, with that discussed notion of a stronghold of nationality and a school of civism. In this sense, there has been a movement towards greater integration of the Armed Forces in interagency operations with public security bodies, Civil Defense, Health Surveillance, non-governmental organizations, the Federal Police, among others. It can be exemplified with some recent situations such as *Operação Acolhida*, which seeks to act facing the humanitarian crisis in the context of the Venezuelan migration to Roraima.

5 Final considerations

The condition of a developing country-continent is essential in answering the question proposed in the article. Thus, future debates can also assess the extent to which the combination of material (geopolitical) and ideational (strategic culture) factors would "condemn" EB to remain attached to the tripod presented in the text.

Be that as it may, two aspects call attention to the response to the problem proposed in the introduction. On the one hand a) the middleman force function, used especially in the most peripheral and border regions; and, on the other hand, b) the political significance of EB as a "stronghold of nationality".

In relation to the first, due to the inability of the security forces to meet intermediary demands of a national and international nature, such as border control, the EB has exercised the function of territorial security force, which is generally carried out in other countries by middleman forces. In this case, in addition to historical and institutional aspects, it is necessary to highlight the geographical characteristics of a country of continental dimensions that require a herculean effort to maintain its internal and international security. The historical presence of Army units in the border region, especially through the Special Border Platoons (PEF), ends up representing an element of employment economics (capillarity, logistics).

Regarding the second aspect, it is a long historical process in which the Army has been called upon to participate in the process of building the National State itself, which often involves the institution's participation as an instrument of stabilization.

The Army reaches the 21st century and the strategy of the national presence and conflict pacification remains symbiotically related to national development and the role of a civic school. The "territorial precariousness" of the material and human resources available to the State, in the inte-

rior and border exchange areas, keeps the Army's role in the dissemination of civic values active through conscription, the Tiros de Guerra, NPORs and CPORs.

The fact is that we have a unique challenge for the Armed Forces in Brazil. The big question that arises is: what to make of the Army of the future: focused exclusively on what is its primary function (war) or continue to meet the demands arising from our state weaknesses? The answer is not as obvious as it seems, according to the elements discussed in the text. If not: who would actually take care of the other two bases of the tripod if the Armed Forces started to dedicate themselves solely and exclusively to their core function: the preparation for war?

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