

# The Colombian Defense Doctrine evolution, the Western interference and the adjustments of the internal dynamics

*La evolución de la doctrina de defensa en Colombia, la injerencia del Occidente y los ajustes de la dinámica interna*

**Abstract:** Although the Colombian Military Forces (CMF) have historically developed their doctrine following the example of Western countries, the country's history shows how, since the beginning of the military organization, its doctrine has had to change and be adapted to local reality. The CMF Doctrine have acquired differential characteristics, such as the mixed role between the military and the civilian since the times of the Conquest, the policialization of the military and vice-versa, which are intrinsically linked to the development of their functions within the territory. The role of the Colombian Military Forces continues to be mainly internal to counteract the country's security problems; it has been focused on the integrity of the territory and human security in all its dimensions. Despite not being an expeditionary force, the experience and current capabilities of this organization allow their interoperability, which has been focused on peacekeeping operations.

**Keywords:** Doctrine, Policialisation, Internal Security, Human Security, Interoperability, Peacekeeping Operations.

**Resumen:** Aunque las Fuerzas Militares de Colombia históricamente han desarrollado su doctrina siguiendo el ejemplo de países occidentales, la historia del país muestra cómo desde los comienzos de la organización militar su doctrina ha tenido que cambiar y amoldarse a la realidad local. Adquirió características diferenciales como el papel mezclado entre el militar y el civil desde los tiempos de la Conquista, y la policialización del ente militar y viceversa, que está intrínsecamente ligada al desarrollo de sus funciones al interior del territorio. La función de las Fuerzas Militares de Colombia sigue siendo principalmente interna, en aras de contrarrestar la problemática de seguridad del país y ha sido enfocada en la integridad del territorio y la seguridad humana en todas sus dimensiones. A pesar de no ser expedicionaria, la experiencia y capacidades actuales de esta organización le permiten una interoperabilidad, que hasta el momento ha sido enfocada en operaciones de paz.

**Palabras clave:** Doctrina, Policialización, seguridad interna, seguridad humana, interoperabilidad, operaciones de paz.

**Maritza Padilla-Bueno** 

Ejército Nacional de Colombia.  
Bogotá D.C., Colombia.  
King's College London. Department of  
War Studies.  
London, United Kingdom.  
maritza.padilla\_bueno @kcl.ac.uk

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## 1 INTRODUCTION

This article investigates the Doctrine of the Colombian Army, which is theoretically based on doctrines of Western countries, such as the examples used in the framework theories of Huntington and Janowitz about the military profession in the United States and Germany, characterized by being developed under the precepts of expeditionary forces and regular warfare. However, the reality of Colombia has meant that, since the very emergence of the military organization, this doctrine had to be constantly adjusted. In this sense, this article gathers qualitative information from relevant documents regarding the development of the Colombian Army Doctrine to describe historically how, from the time of the Conquest until the latest update in 2018, its development gave rise to its distinctive features.

Military doctrine is understood as the framework that rules what concerns the military forces, characteristics of the profession, its structure, the tasks it performs, and how they should develop from the strategic to the tactical level. Since this framework is logically derived from the State objectives, the Defense Doctrine results from the synergy between political strategy and how, through security, guarantee that this strategy is fulfilled (AVANT, 1993; CALA, 2018; CARDONA-ANGARITA, 2020; PADILLA CEPEDA, 2014; POSEN, 1984a; ROJAS GUEVARA, 2017b).

Academics such as Huntington (1957) in his work “The soldier and the state”, and Janowitz with “The professional soldier”, published in 1960, developed their theories in which they framed the characteristics of the military profession and its doctrine, based on examples from Western countries such as the United States and Germany, which are characterized by expeditionary forces and in a regular war environment. Huntington and Janowitz described the military institution and its characteristics, both in form and concept. These theories long became the benchmark for the development of the professionalization of other military forces.

Further, academics such as Weiss y Campbell (1991), Avant (1994), Desch, (1998), Fishel (2000), Cohen (2006), Caforio y Nuciari (2006), Charles Bruneau y Tollefson (2014) added components to these theories that allowed adjusting to the circumstances of the reality in which the Military Forces of other countries were developed. They have mainly added that the military also perform duties related to irregular warfare such as counter-terrorism, humanitarian assistance, urban security and peacekeeping operations (CHARLES BRUNEAU; TOLLEFSON, 2014; MADIWALE; VIRK, 2011; MARTÍNEZ; DURÁN, 2017; VENNESON, 2003; WEISS, 1999). Other scholars such as Lieuwen (1961), Ruhl (1981), Guy (1989), Diamont y Plattner (1996), Sarigil (2011), studied military characteristics specifically for Latin American countries. Due to this Westernization of theories, as well as of those by Huntington and Janowitz, authors such as Arlene Tickner (2003), Sotomayor Velázquez (2004), Acharya and Buzan (2009), Tickner and Blaney (2013) argue that it is necessary to adjust Western theories, in general, to the realities of the non-Western countries where they are applied.

This is the case of Colombia’s Defense Doctrine, inherited from the West and which, due to the country’s historical development and realities such as the internal conflict since the 1960s, had to undergo transformations to meet its own needs. This doctrine is focused on addressing the country’s internal security regarding the basic needs of the population; in other words, irregular warfare, to counter insurgent groups, terrorist attacks and transnational crime.

It is also intended to defend human security, providing humanitarian assistance, urban security and participating in peacekeeping operations.

In this sense, this article hypothesizes that despite its Western roots, the Colombian Doctrine has been adjusted to the country's reality over time. To this end, this article first traces the history of the Colombia's Military Forces constitution, showing from which countries it has acquired doctrine and how it has transformed it according to its needs up to the present day. Secondly, it presents an X-ray of the current Defense Doctrine and finally concludes that, although Colombia's military doctrine has counted on Western contributions, it works only because it has been adjusted to the reality of Colombia's dynamics. This dynamic gives it distinctive characteristics that have led it to become an example for Western countries and organizations such as the United States and the North Atlantic Treaty organization (NATO).

## **2 THE HISTORY OF COLOMBIA IN THE LIGHT OF THE MILITARY DOCTRINE DEVELOPMENT**

In Colombia, the Military Forces constitution dates back to the time of the Conquest in the late 1400s; its roots can be traced back to the Spanish military structures conquered the territory where the country was later constituted. In order to expand into the newly discovered continents, the Spanish Crown offered Spaniards with money to build expeditionary forces to conquer "*Las Indias*" and then settle in exchange for tribute. To that, they appointed Captains or Governors of the expeditionary groups who did not necessarily have military training, and who came from different social backgrounds. These men had to pay the Captains for embarking as well as for their weapons and food. In *Las Indias*, the task of conquering was not very difficult, because, although numerous, the inhabitants of that territory - the Indians - were not experienced in advanced combat techniques or weapons such as gunpowder, swords, armor, or means such as horses or dogs (SANTOS PICO, 2007).

The stage of occupying these territories involved the use of armed force; the conquistadors received from the Spanish Crown the ranks of Admiral, Viceroy or Governor, and the members of their groups began to identify themselves as soldiers. This structure represents the beginning of the military forces and prevailed throughout the Conquest (VALENCIA TOVAR, 1993).

By the 16<sup>th</sup> century, as part of the agreements between Spain and the conquistadors, capitulations were established. These were extensions of territory where each investor in the Conquest became the Governor-Captain, and was allowed to recruit soldiers and earn money in exchange for tribute to the Crown (VALENCIA TOVAR, 1993). After the conquest, the organization allowed soldiers to become landowners and was named *Encomienda*. Each *encomendero* was granted land and a number of Indians between 500 and approximately 2,000. Their mission was to convert the Indians to Catholicism and recruit them. They were under the orders of the Governor-Captains or Viceroys (VALENCIA TOVAR, 1993). The most relevant characteristic of that period as a foundation for the military forces is that the civilian investors and those who had joined their groups gave them military ranks, so they acted as military individuals with the duty of governing. This dynamic interfered with the conception of the Doctrine since the military tasks were both security and State administration.

Between 1600 and 1700, the new territory called New Granada was administered through the figure of a Military Presidency. Marshal Don Juan de Borja was the first one nominated by the Crown (SANTOS PICO, 2007). In this way, the figure of a military ruler performing civilian roles continued during these periods. By 1718, due to the importance of the territory and the fact that it was constantly under attack, the Bourbon kings transformed it into the New Kingdom of Granada; this status was crucial to shape a more stable and strengthened military organization. In the mid-1700, Charles III made far-reaching reforms to the military forces, strengthening them in terms of men, weapons and fleets of ships to confront the forces of other countries that wanted to occupy the territory (VALENCIA TOVAR, 1993). Towards the end of the century, the then regent Archbishop Antonio Caballero y Góngora restructured and strengthened the military organization once again, as he believed that a tax regime could not survive without the support of a solid military force. To this end, he strengthened points of the State other than Cartagena, the center of government at the time (VALENCIA TOVAR, 1993).

The following period was the pre-independence period, which brought new doctrinal elements. At that time, Spain was fighting France to defend its territory, while the troops in the colony, made up of Spaniards and Creoles, were influenced by the ideas of the French Enlightenment to get emancipated, and were supported by the British. Likewise, the Spanish Crown received the British general Sir Arthur Wellesley to reorganize and train its troops (SANTOS PICO, 2007). The Colony's troops were organized in the same way as the Spanish ones, been preserved to this day. Table 1 shows a comparative example of the organization of the Spanish Army of the time and the Colombian Army as of 2022.

**Table 1 – Comparison of the pre-independence Spanish Army and the 2022 Colombian Army**

Comparison of the pre-independence Spanish Army and the 2022 Colombian Army	
Pre-Independence Spanish Army	Pre-Independence Spanish Army
Captain General	Non-existent
Lieutenant Colonel	General
Marshal	Major General
Brigadier	Brigadier General
Colonel	Colonel Full
Lieutenant Colonel	Lieutenant Colonel
Chief	Commander
Captain	Captain
Lieutenant	Lieutenant
Second Lieutenant	Warrant Officer
Major Sergeant	Major Sergeant
Second Sergeant, Vice Sergeant, First Sergeant	Second Sergeant, First Sergeant
Second Cable, First Cable	First Cable, Second Cable
Soldier	Soldier

Source: VALENCIA TOVAR, 1993, p. 73

This comparative table is relevant in the sense that it shows how the Colombian military organization from the pre-independence period keeps its Western roots, here from Spain.

Then during Independence, proclaimed on 20 July 1810, which did not become effective immediately, but only nine years later through the Battle of Boyacá, and then 14 more years until the final Battle of Ayacucho. During this period of insurrection, the military institution was characterized as improvised, mostly made up by Creoles and natives from the middle and lower classes. This period is considered the starting point of the Colombian military forces and their schools (CARDONA-ANGARITA, 2020).

The next period is the Republic, and is mainly characterized by the organization of the militias and the creation of the National Guard Volunteer Battalion, which in addition to Creole soldiers also included Spanish soldiers who swore allegiance to the new Republic. Lieutenant Colonel Antonio Baraya was appointed Commander, and this unit is historically considered the first army of Colombia (SANTOS PICO, 2007). Another event that characterizes the organization by that time is the presence of Simón Bolívar, who arrived in Cartagena in 1812 and not only became a leader, but also brought to military doctrine the lessons learned from his studies in Spain, France and Great Britain. For Bolívar, war should be conducted under the offensive principle in order to protect the territory. He also contributed his political vision through the Cartagena Manifestos, in which he set out his centralist political ideal and the damage caused by Federalism to the Republic (MARTÍNEZ et al., 2019). That period makes evident the military interference in political thought between centralism and federalism; in fact, political parties in Colombia were born from the military, following these two guidelines (VALENCIA TOVAR, 1993). Likewise, in that period Bolívar reaffirmed the dual function of the military as defenders and administrators of the territory, a military and political function that had been maintained since the Conquest.

Subsequently, other relevant military leaders appeared, such as Francisco José de Caldas, who contributed to military thought by conceptualizing the subjective values of military virtues such as the soldier's glory, courage, obedience, moderation, the value of truth and love for the Homeland. For Caldas, the main virtue of a soldier is military honor (SANTOS PICO, 2007).

That period was also influenced by other European officers who contributed to the cause of independence. For example, Antonio Nariño, a politician and military man who translated the rights of man from France to defend Cundinamarca, counted on the collaboration of the French officer Antonio Bailly. Another Frenchman who contributed at the time was Manuel Roergaz De Serviez, an instructor who brought with him the doctrine of the places where he had previously served, such as England and Prussia (VALENCIA TOVAR, 1993). These contributions are relevant to this article, because they display the Western currents, and how the pattern of combination between military-political (like Bolívar) or political-military (like Nariño) continues.

As the Republic administration was decentralized, the military organization also resulted in a disconnection between the Provinces, which allowed Spain to reconquer it. The Spanish officer in charge of this task was Pablo Morillo, and at the time it was labelled as the "regime of terror, due to the violence inflicted by this military officer and his subordinates, to successfully reconquest it" (MARTÍNEZ et al., 2019, p. 45; SANTOS PICO, 2007, p. 88, free translation). This violent era gave rise to the first subversive movements fighting again for freedom. An interesting characteristic

is that these groups that emerged around the territory were supported by the civil and ecclesiastical authorities, as well as society at all levels (VALENCIA TOVAR, 1993).

Bolívar returned to New Granada and began his Liberation Campaign in 1819. He gathered the remaining troops of New Granada, the subversive groups that had been formed, used the support of the people for logistics, and asked for help from the British Legion. Other nationalities were also present in these mixed troops, such as Poles, French and Italians (MARTÍNEZ et al., 2019).

Bolívar won the victory and all the Commanders who had accompanied him in the battles for independence were appointed Governors of the provinces. Francisco de Paula Santander was appointed Vice-President, and this was seminal not only for the military organization, but also for constructing the State, because he started organizing the laws and promoted education. At that time, the military forces left their Spanish doctrine and switched to the French one, which governed them throughout the 14th century (MARTÍNEZ et al., 2019; ROJAS GUEVARA, 2017a). It is valuable for the argument of this article that, regardless of the doctrine followed by the military of the time, whether Spanish, French or British, the military organization was also adjusted to govern and create the Nation State.

The Republic consolidation is characterized by a series of civil wars entailing from a permanent dispute between Federalism and Centralism. This caused the military institution to flip over its doctrine to counteract the internal problems. The institution was in constant reorganization to effectively consolidate the State. These characteristics that have been maintained to this day (GÓMEZ, 2016; MARTÍNEZ et al., 2019).

By 1830 the territory continued to be reorganized; some provinces separated, others united, and what had become Gran Colombia was dissolved. The Republic of New Granada and a Constitution appeared, becoming crucial to the military forces that had been reorganized. A regular Army and a National Guard were established, as well as conscription for men of 18 to 36 years old. The National Guard was constituted as a complementary body to the Army, and was composed of volunteer civilians who wore the uniform and supported public order issues (CEBALLOS GÓMEZ, 2011; ESQUIVEL TRIANA, 2009; LA ROSA; MEJÍA, 2017).

Paradoxically, Santander as president (1832-1837), after all this time the government was in the hands of the Military, withdrew almost all support for the troops and removed them from the political arena. However, throughout the 19th century, the Military continued to take on political positions, while the landowners took military positions. This relationship between landowners and the military power affected civil wars since soldiers were forced by their landowner to fight in defense of their political affiliation (Federalist or Centralist). This dynamic of bipartisan wars caused the decline of the military doctrine (BARRIGA, 1852; PINZÓN, 1856).

As civil wars went on, each passing government weakened the military organization. Some reduced its budget and pension, such as General José María Obando (1853-1854), while others reduced the troops, such as Manuel María Mallarino (1855-1857). The central Army was reduced to such an extent that they suffered defeats, and landowners began to build private armies (ATEHORTÚA, 2001; CEBALLOS GÓMEZ, 2011; PLAZAS OLARTE, 1993; SANCLEMENTE, 1858).

In the following period - from 1863 to 1865 - the United States of Colombia was formed. In 1863 a new Constitution was established, and continued the weakening of the

military. Three different corps were created: the Gendarmerie that was like the Police; the Municipal Guard that had the roles of infantry, cavalry and artillery; and, finally, the Civilian Companies that were in charge of public order issues. Military training was provided only if necessary and the service was voluntary (MARTÍNEZ et al., 2019).

This era of doctrinal structural weakening of the military force ended in 1886 with the arrival of President Rafael Núñez, who ruled three times (1880-1882, 1884-1886, 1887-1888). Núñez was valuable to the Republic and the military forces because he created the 1886 Constitution that remained in force until 1991. Through the Constitution, he introduced centralized government, established a permanent Public Force, called the National Army and the National Police, and determined that all citizens were obliged to take up arms to defend the Nation (ATEHORTÚA, 2001; GONZÁLES, 2006).

From this moment on, starts a new era in the evolution of the military forces for the defense of the country. For the sake of professionalization, President Núñez brought a series of military missions from different countries to contribute to modernization from France. Such missions came from the United States and Chile (ATEHORTÚA, 2001; PINZÓN BUENO; RODRÍGUEZ URIBE, 2016) However, discussions between political parties continued to affect the military profession, since politicians continued to interfere, for example, in issues such as promotions that which were granted based on political affiliation (GONZÁLES; BETANCOURT MONTOYA, 2018; MARTÍNEZ et al., 2019). This modernization process was also influenced by the fact that, being in peacetime, the tasks of the military were more policeized<sup>1</sup> and military training was scarce (MARTÍNEZ et al., 2019; PINZÓN BUENO; RODRÍGUEZ URIBE, 2016). The policeization of the Military Forces and the militarization of the Police in Colombia are traits that emerged from the beginning of the organizations, and have been maintained to this day. The military not only work within the country, but also secures urban and rural areas, and contributes to citizen security.

Then came the Republican period, accompanied by another injection of modernization for the military forces. President Rafael Reyes (1904-1909), who led the country in a period of post-civil wars and calm, considered the military forces essential for internal stabilization and to guarantee state sovereignty. In this sense, Reyes elaborated a statute in which he gave the State the monopoly of arms, through its military force, and increased military education through academies. For example, the Naval School was created. He also defined that the military should be in favor of the State and not of any party affiliation, and designated Battalions for the construction of infrastructure and other works to cover the basic needs of the population (ATEHORTÚA, 2001, 2009; PEÑA, 2016; SANTOS PICO, 2007). In order to continue with the modernization of the military forces, Reyes appointed General Rafael Uribe as his Minister of War. General Uribe brought other military missions from Peru and Chile. Modernization included compulsory military service, a State-funded reserve system, the War College was organized, the chain of command, the General Staff, the Military Health service, and the Army was given a Divisionary organization (ARANCIBIA CLAVEL, 2002; ATEHORTÚA, 2001; CAMACHO ARANGO, 2016; CARDONA-ANGARITA, 2020; PADILLA CEPEDA, 2014; PIZARRO, 2018; ROJAS GUEVARA, 2017a).

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<sup>1</sup> The term “policialization” defined by Salazar (2009, p. 11) is used to refer to the assignment of police tasks to the military, but police militarization can also occur.

At the end of the military missions that extended until 1929, the military forces achieved changes that shaped them into what they are today: centralized, with coverage in the national territory, an established line of command, and focused on tasks to counter internal problems. In addition to this, in the 1930s other events took place that helped to further demarcate the organization. In the first place, Enrique Olaya Herrera (1930-1934) as the first president of the Liberal party after 44 years of conservative governments, decided that the military should be apolitical; to that, he prohibited members of the Military Forces and the National Police from voting, a decision that is maintained to this day (ATEHORTÚA, 2001). On the other hand, during that period the Army was charged with making its presence felt and developing remote areas of the country through military colonies. These were towns founded by the military and their families, especially in the departments of Caquetá, Amazonas and Putumayo. To that, they built roads that communicated with the center of the country, helped improve the navigability of rivers, taught indigenous communities to read and write, and established defense points. In short, they were assigned the task of developing and building a Nation State (MARTÍNEZ et al., 2019). Liberal guerrilla groups also emerged in that decade because of disagreements over land distribution and more than four decades of conservative governments. Between 1932-1933 Peru invaded the Colombian territory, leading to a war (ÁLVAREZ ESTRADA, 2015; MARTÍNEZ et al., 2019; PIZARRO, 2018). On the one hand, the war with Peru unveiled the need for adequate armament, air and naval capacity. The emergence of guerrilla groups set the trend in counterinsurgency doctrine and stabilization of public security.

In the following decades, in the second mandate of Alfonso López Pumarejo (1934-1938 and 1942-1945), he removed several Generals from office so that they would not interfere in politics, and reduced the troops. In opposition, he appointed a General as Minister of War - an office traditionally held by a civilian (ATEHORTÚA, 2001). In the following mandate of Mariano Ospina Pérez (1946-1950), due to outbreaks of violence throughout the country, he decided to appoint military persons as mayors and governors in more than 200 cities and municipalities (ATEHORTÚA, 2001) During both governments and in those decades in general, the military continued to fulfill other roles in government or governing. This practice, as we have seen during the development of this article, was born from the very moment of the conquest. Although the Colombian Army has developed based on the Western doctrine, it has its own characteristics such as this mix of military and political roles.

Another event that marks the military doctrine in Colombia is its participation in the Korean War (1950-1953), where experiences in organization and counterinsurgency were gathered, mainly from the United States. Some Colombian Military Officers such as Álvaro Valencia Tobar and Alberto Ruiz Novoa understand that the U.S. military organization, its advantages and also how relations with the civilian population help in the counterinsurgency fight, the fact of winning minds and hearts and the advantages it provides in war (CARDONA-ANGARITA, 2020; GARCÍA, 2003; LEAL BUITRAGO, 2002; MELÉNDEZ CAMARGO, 2015; ROJAS GUEVARA, 2017; SANTOS PICO, 2007; SILVA *et al.*, 2018; VALENCIA TOVAR, 1993). The author, however, considers it relevant to highlight that, although these lessons learned from Korea have caused the formal inclusion of the theme of “winning minds and hearts” into the Doctrine, history shows that the role of meeting the basic needs of the population has been inherent in the Colombian Military Forces since their beginnings.



The second half of 1900 begins with the military government of Rojas Pinilla (1953-1957), seminal for several reasons: unlike the trend in the subcontinent of civilian and military dictatorships, in Colombia, due to the discrepancies between the Liberal and Conservative parties, these parties decided to hand over the power to the military, headed by General Rojas Pinilla, to cease violence. During this mandate, the church and civilians did not lose political participation and, in doctrinal terms, although the military forces “were governing”, they stopped supporting political parties and began to support the government and devote themselves to their public order function (DE MONCADA, 2007; RAMÍREZ, 2001; VALENCIA TOVAR; GARCÍA, 2003).

This government ended with the birth of the National Front, an agreement of the political parties to share power alternating every four years. The first President of this agreement was Alberto Lleras Camargo (1958-1962), who in a speech at the *Teatro Patria* on May 9, 1958 expressed that the military should concentrate on managing the war, and the politicians on politics. According to Pizarro (2018), this speech caused the “divorce” between the military and politicians in the country. Since then, the civilians of the Colombian elite believed that internal order was the responsibility exclusively of the security forces. This disconnect caused the weakening in the fight against the guerrillas, and the military ended up performing tasks that were the primary responsibility of other government entities, such as education and health (ATEHORTÚA, 2001; BRUNEAU; GOETZE JR., 2019; LEAL BUITRAGO, 2002; PIZARRO, 2018; VALENCIA TOVAR; GARCÍA, 2003).

The next government was that of Guillermo León Valencia (1962-1966), significant for military doctrine since he appointed Alberto Ruiz Novoa, who had participated in the Korean War, as Minister of War, along with other military staff such as Álvaro Valencia Tovar and Gabriel Puyana. These military officers were called the *Desarrollistas*, and with the knowledge brought from Korea they contributed to the modernization of the Army (LEAL BUITRAGO, 2002; PIZARRO, 2018). The 1960s had other relevant characteristics in the security dynamics in Colombia, which marked the path of doctrinal development until today, such as the birth of the guerrillas of the Revolutionary Armed Forces (Farc), the National Liberation Army (ELN) and the People’s Liberation Army (EPL), added with the increase in marijuana and coca crops. In order to fight these crimes, Minister Ruiz Novoa created the *Plan Lasso*, a military strategy to integrate military activities with society, contribute to the country’s development and avoid Communism (ATEHORTÚA, 2001; COMANDO...,1962; LEAL BUITRAGO, 2002; SANTOS PICO, 2007).

Between 1960 and 1970, several decrees were issued (1963, 1968 and 1974) that contributed to the increase in military salaries, special bonuses and concessions in the pension system. Likewise, in the 1970s the United States allocated an aid budget to Latin American military forces for training and equipment, and 10% of that budget went to Colombia (ATEHORTÚA, 2001).

In the 1980s, the military doctrine was focused, on the one hand, on counterinsurgency in rural and urban areas, as guerrilla violence intensified through terrorism such as the attack on the Palace of Justice in 1985. Drug cartels were also involved in the attack, supporting it with money to prevent their extradition. On the other hand, the military began their participation in peacekeeping operations. In 1982 they were assigned to the Multinational Observer Force intended to maintain the peace treaty between Egypt and Israel, participation that remains until today (BRUNEAU; GOETZE JR., 2019; MARTÍNEZ *et al.*, 2019).

In the 1990s the violence of guerrillas and drug cartels continued. Security was completely deteriorated, to the point that citizens could not move within the country, foreign investment declined, Colombia became a failed State. The Army suffered the greatest operational setbacks, such as the FARC attack on the *Las Delicias* base, which resulted in the death of 27 soldiers and the kidnapping of 60 other ones. During the Presidency of Andrés Pastrana (1998-2002), the government begins peace negotiations with the Farc, without success as this group continued attacking the population. President Pastrana then ordered the military forces to reoccupy the territory that had been set aside by the government for these talks. As a result of all these events, from 1999 to 2006 the military forces had to undergo a transformation to overcome this security issue. Modernization focused on training, doctrine revision, campaign strategies, and increased skills. All that together with international cooperation, as the drug problem is transnational (BRUNEAU; GOETZE JR., 2019; MARTÍNEZ *et al.*, 2019; PINZÓN, 2016; PIZARRO, 2018; ROJAS GUEVARA, 2017a).

In this regard, the U.S. government approved a cooperation package to fight drug trafficking. This aid was delivered through the *Plan Colombia* in which there were contributions from the USA and Colombia (BRUNEAU; GOETZE JR., 2019; GONZÁLEZ; BETANCOURT MONTOYA, 2018; PADILLA CEPEDA, 2014; PINZÓN, 2016; PIZARRO, 2018). The Plan allowed the reengineering of the military forces as regards equipment and training, and also meant a contribution to doctrine, for example, in the rotary wing and fixed wing field. However, the doctrinal contribution of the United States was adjusted to the Colombian operational needs.

Between 2002 and 2006, the first government of President Álvaro Uribe created the Democratic Security Policy, focused on the consolidation of the territory, protection of the population, elimination of drug trafficking, and maintenance of the strategic deterrent capacity, which served as a new impulse for the modernization of the military forces. The defense tax was reinforced, enabling advances such as the expansion of troops, improvement in training and equipment, an increase in salary, creation of military units, and the strengthening of Army aviation (BRUNEAU; GOETZE JR., 2019; PIZARRO, 2018; SANTOS PICO, 2007).

In doctrinal terms, this evolution provided flexibility to the Army, greater mobility, increased intelligence capabilities to achieve a meaningful understanding of the nature and purpose of the enemy, aiming at their disarmament and demobilization (PIZARRO, 2018). This boost to the military forces served for them to gradually gain control of the territory, recovering security and investment. The doctrine was strengthened in joint operations, boosting the coordination between the Army, Navy and Air Force, added to inter-institutional cooperation, aligning the military and political objectives (PINZÓN, 2016; PIZARRO, 2018; SANTOS PICO, 2007).

The *Consolidation Plan* was created for the military and other government entities to be present in remote areas of the country. This coordination was through the use of the Doctrine of Integral Action focused on the protection of the civilian population and their basic needs. The Integral Action, vital to create stable conditions for the consolidation of territorial control, won the “minds and hearts” by improving the logistical skills of the military forces, and teaching the ability to build, for example, highways, bridges and parks. The Colombian experience in this civil-military doctrine has been studied by organizations such as NATO,

and constitutes a case study with lessons learned that can be used by other countries in armed conflict (PINZÓN, 2016; PIZARRO, 2018). That Action is a particular characteristic of the Colombian military doctrine.

These doctrinal changes allowed the military forces to subdue the guerrilla groups. After 2010, the door was opened to the next government to negotiate peace agreements with the Farc (BRUNEAU; GOETZE JR., 2019; PIZARRO, 2018). In 2011, the Ministry of Defense created a strategy for the reengineering of the military forces, establishing the Strategic Review and Innovation Committees (Crei). The objective of this restructuring was to achieve visible, decisive, lethal, integrated, interoperable military forces to fulfill multi-missions in response to any threat. Also, structural changes in organization, technology, personnel management and doctrine (CASTILLO CASTAÑEDA; NIÑO GONZÁLEZ, 2020; ROJAS GUEVARA, 2017a, 2017b).

The Crei programmed a 3-stage transformation process. The first one from 2014 to 2018 focused on the military offensive, guaranteeing security and defense, and becoming a regional and hemispheric model. The second from 2018 to 2022 focused on interoperability and capabilities aligned to international standards. The third stage from 2022-2030 to achieve a Multi-mission Force, which faces all types of threats related to the Constitution (FERNANDEZ-OSORIO *et al.*, 2019; ROJAS GUEVARA, 2017b).

Within this transformation, considering that the peace negotiations would change the dynamics of the internal armed conflict, existing for more than 60 years, and faced with a new situation of a possible post-conflict and the existence of transnational crime, in 2015 the *Minerva Plan* was created for the renewal of the Army doctrine, which was called *Damascus*. This was the latest doctrinal change to the Army, adjusted so that the military maneuver can adapt to the constant changes in the operational environment and attached to more efficiently meet national objectives (CASTILLO CASTAÑEDA; NIÑO GONZÁLEZ, 2020; CIRO GÓMEZ; CORREA HENAO, 2014; FERNANDEZ-OSORIO *et al.*, 2019; GONZÁLEZ; BETANCOURT MONTOYA, 2018; SÁNCHEZ *et al.*, 2017; SILVA *et al.*, 2018).

Finally, a part of this doctrine that for this article is noteworthy are the adjustments made to tasks toward favoring the civilian population, such as the coordination with other governmental entities, and the contributions of civilians to the public security and defense policy (SILVA *et al.*, 2018). According to authors such as Sánchez *et al.* (2017) and González and Betancourt Montoya (2018), this trend of incorporating human security in its seven dimensions (economic, food, health, environmental, personal, community and political security) has been promoted by the United Nations, among others, since 2009. However, this text disagrees with this argument because, as the history of the doctrine in Colombia shows, human security has always been part of its tasks. What has happened in the doctrine is that guides or more organizations have been added.

### 3 CONCLUSIONS

This article has described how the Colombian military organization has historically developed its doctrine. It shows that, differently from the framework theories of Huntington and Janowitz in which the military profession and its doctrine are described based on Western examples, the doctrine of the Colombian Army confirms the proposed hypothesis of how, despite

having been created under a Western legacy and continuing to receive Western legacies, up to now it has to adjust to the internal dynamics of the country. This doctrine has differentiating characteristics such as the mix role between the military and the civilian since the times of the Conquest, which has generated a military role practice in the fulfillment of tasks that in principle should be of other governmental institutions. This has also led to the policeization of the military and vice versa, linked to the fact that since its beginnings the military organization has worked in the inlands of the territory. Its function continues to be mainly internal: work on the country's security issues focused on the integrity of the territory and human security in all its dimensions. Despite not being an expeditionary force, the experience and current capabilities of the Colombian Military Forces ensures its interoperability, which has been focused on peacekeeping operations.

Finally, it is necessary to continue researching on the origin and development of the doctrine of military organizations in Latin America, since distinguishing their roots and progress allows understanding their essence and making the right public policy decisions for their operation in balance with the Nation and the international dynamics.

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