

## A Military-Green Biopolitics: The Brazilian Amazon Between Security and Development

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Since the 1960s, the Brazilian defense policy toward the Amazon has been oriented by the security/development binomen. This was simultaneously a directive for the Brazilian authoritarian regime and for US defense doctrine for the Americas. We argue in this paper that despite the structural influence of US hemispherical security and defense strategy, the formulation of an Amazonian defense strategy by the Brazilian military responded to peculiarities attached to local military historical practices regarding civilizational values, concepts of security and development, and geopolitical targets. We claim that Brazilian defense strategy towards the Amazon is a local manifestation of a biopolitical approach to both the forest and its natural resources and to its population. It is our goal to point out that the local version for the duality security/development has been a manifestation of a set of technologies of government in a biopolitical strategy.

**Keywords:** Security/development binomen; Amazon; biopolitics.

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The Amazon has returned to the international headlines. Its always concerning rates of deforestation reached alarming new levels following the beginning of the new administration of Jair Bolsonaro in January 2019. Data from the National Institution of Spatial Research (INPE) indicated that in 2020 9,200 km<sup>2</sup> had been deforested compared with 6,800 km<sup>2</sup> in 2019 (which in turn represented an increase of 50% in relation to 2018) (ESCOBAR, 2020). The records of environmental destruction resulted in significant criticism in Brazil and abroad, denouncing not only the neglect, but also the government's effective commitment to the advance of economic practices which cause environmental destruction, such as agri-business and mining.

The reaction of the Bolsonaro administration was consistent with the configuration of his political and economic support base, investing in the defense of largescale agri-business capital and a radical change in the direction of the Brazilian diplomatic position towards the climate question and the protection of the environment. Since the return to democracy in the second half of the 1980s, Brazil had been very active in the construction of an international environmental regime, acting in a notable manner in the production of global compromises which linked environmental preservation with the right of countries from the Global South to economic development.

Brazilian protagonism was reflected in the holding of crucial diplomatic summits, such as the United Nations Conference on the Environment and Development (ECO-92) and the United Nations Summit on Sustainable Development (Rio+20, in 2012). Indeed, the actual notion of sustainable development owes much to Brazilian diplomatic protagonism, which since the first UN conference on the environment, held in Stockholm in 1972, led the developing countries group to pressurize countries from the capitalist center to ensure that international compromises would guarantee a midpoint between economic development and environmental preservation. The result of this pressure is registered in the Brundtland Report, presented in 1987, which defined the concept of 'sustainable development', understood as the potential to grow economically without compromising natural resources for future generations (BARROS-PATIAU, VARELLA and SCHLEICHER, 2004).

Brazilian diplomatic protagonism was, however, rapidly reversed by the Bolsonaro administration. In a speech at the opening of the 74th session of the United Nations General Assembly in 2019, Jair Bolsonaro spent part of his time defending a patriotic attitude to the Amazon, labelling as 'sensationalist' international denunciations of its deforestation. He also stated that it was 'a fallacy' to see the Amazon as the 'heritage of Humanity' or the 'lung of the world'. In relation to the indigenous peoples, Bolsonaro declared that they were victims of the actions of NGOs who wanted to keep them as 'cavemen'. While positioning himself internationally in defiance of the international environmental system which Brazil had helped build, Bolsonaro worked to re-dimension the domestic political and legal system aimed at managing environmental policy.

Domestic actions and the international positioning of the Bolsonaro administration explain the updating of a constant tension in relation to the Brazilian Amazon: the clash between national-developmental and preservationist postures. Both positions, however, are gradations within the same spectrum represented by the 'security' and 'development' binomen. Our hypothesis here is that the current situation in the Amazon reflects a revising of this binomen, redefining the balance of weight between economic exploitation and preservation of the Amazonian biome.

We propose here an analysis of the security/development binomen based on conceptual suggestions offered by Michel Foucault (1978) in studying the emergence of contemporary 'technologies of government' – from the end of the eighteenth century onwards –, simultaneously aimed at the management of populational contingents and individual disciplinarization. Foucault (2001) gave the name of biopolitics to this set of techniques aimed at promoting a 'surplus' of life and health for the collectivity (bios) at the same time that the dynamics of the circulation of products, people, ideas, and discourses were regulated in such a way to maintain a determined status quo. We understand that the connection between security and development is placed in the field of action of biopolitical practices. We are also in agreement with authors such as Mark Duffield (2007), for whom the biopolitical technologies of government surpass, at the same time, state borders, becoming global tactics aimed at the administration of

populations and ecosystems, with the 'security' and 'development' binomen being the guiding concept of this.

In this sense, the definition of an equilibrium between the exploitation and preservation of the Amazon and its inhabitants obeys a biopolitical logic associated with the military, the understanding of which can be advanced by studying state policy towards the Amazon since the military led authoritarian regime (1964-1985). Thus, the 'security' and 'development' binomen in relation to the Amazon has as its operators the Brazilian Armed Forces and their particular vision of the forest. We propose in this way an analytical key to understand the process of change and revision of state policies in relation to the Amazon, based on the plans, programs, and discourse of the Armed Forces and their Amazonian policy.

The article is divided into three sections followed by the final considerations. In the first two, we present the principal projects and programs in the field of defense presented by the Brazilian state for the Amazon, from the 1960s to the present. Following this, we analyze these programs based on the notion of biopolitics and we demonstrate why it is possible to speak of an Amazonian biopolitics based on an analysis of the security/development binomen. Finally, we present some provocations in order to instigate reflection and debate about what we consider to be a new and authentic form of 'governing' the complexity called the Amazon.

### **Amazonian biopolitics**

Michel Foucault (1978) coined the concept of biopolitics to study the transformation of governmental practices in European societies in the urbanization and industrialization process at the end of the eighteenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth. Foucault observed that 'governing' came to simultaneously demand paying attention to the individual body of each member of society and the necessities and specificities of the set of these individualities which came to form 'populations' with their own dynamics. Thus, along with the techniques which aimed to discipline the individual bodies, it was necessary to develop new techniques or technologies aimed at 'regulations of the population', accepting that the set of individuals of a society does not only form an amorphous mass, but a live collective body, with its own dynamics and necessities (FOUCAULT, 1978, p. 141).

In the emerging modern society, industrial capitalism demanded intensive labor. The concentration of millions of people in new industrial cities provoked, however, challenges to governing. Workers collected in degrading conditions and submitted to constant exploitation were converted into potential insurgents. The unsanitary conditions to which they were subjected not only instigated revolt, but also weakened the capacity to work. Problems such as this motivated “Regulatory biopolitics [that] emerged out of the statistical, demographic, economic and epidemiological knowledge through which life was being discovered in its modern societal form, that is, as a series of interconnected natural, social and economic processes operating in and through population” (DUFFIELD, 2007, p. 06).

With the expansion of the industrial capitalist model, first in Europe and afterwards in the Americas and parts of Asia, local versions of biopolitical strategies emerged in order to administer the tension between the unequal production and appropriation of wealth in complex societies and dynamic environments (DUFFIELD 2007; MACIEL and DUARTE, 2019; RODRIGUES 2012a). A fundamental element of the concept of biopolitics is what calls attention to the ‘productive’ forms of the exercise of power, and not only its ‘negative’ forms. For Foucault (1978), the theories of power offered by Western political philosophy are centered on the ‘negative’ effects of power, in other words, the capacity that the exercise of power has to coerce, restrain, silence, and make people die. Without denying this dimension, Foucault (1978) highlighted the ‘positive’ aspect of power; not in the sense of ‘benefit’, but of ‘productive’.

For him, the exercise of power also produces things: behavior, ideas, resistance. For this reason, the government of populations in modern societies not only follows the coercive or negative component, but also the productive, the inductive, the ‘positive’. Thus, biopolitics, as the set of techniques of government operationalized by ‘dispositifs of power’, invests in the formation of the citizen, their identity, productive capacities, interfering in the environment where they live to offer more health and technical abilities – which enables them to work – and at the same time ‘integrates’ society and the economy, avoiding discontent, dissidence, and resistance (FOUCAULT, 2001). For those who, despite biopolitical investments, continue to represent a threat to the economic, political, and social order, there always remains the repressive apparatus, such as the armed forces.

In Brazil, since the nineteenth century, the Armed Forces, especially the Army, have assumed a role not only guaranteeing national sovereignty, but also the task of guaranteeing a determined conception of political and social order, acting as arbitrators in the political sphere which it eventually could intervene in to assure order. The Republic was established in Brazil in 1889 by a military coup led by the Army; the oligarchical regime was overthrown in 1930 by another military coup; Getúlio Vargas' dictatorship was ended in 1945 by military pressure; Juscelino Kubistchek's ability to assume office in 1955 was due to 'legalista' military officers in face of the threat of a new coup; João Goulart's civil government was overthrown by conservative military officers in 1964. The same Armed Forces that had been responsible for the 1964 coup and who led Brazil afterwards coordinated the redemocratization process, formally concluded with the 1988 Constitution and the first presidential elections in three decades held in 1989. In these moments of intervention, the military sought to establish a model of sociability and order based on an idea of supposed 'social and racial harmony' in Brazil, fostering social policies while maintaining tactics of repression.

Among the policies aimed at maintaining this internal order are those aimed at the Brazilian Amazon and its inhabitants. Although military attention to the Amazon originated in the colonial and imperial periods and in the First Republic, it was only in the 1950s that more robust initiatives in relation to the Amazon were drafted by the Brazilian state, with the crucial participation of the Armed Forces. After the 1964 coup, the military came to develop and implement plans for the economic integration of the Brazilian Amazon with the rest of the country. We argue in this article that these plans follow a design which allows us to analyze them in biopolitical terms, since they combine 'positive' and 'negative' elements of the exercise of power and had as targets the different populational segments inhabiting the Amazonian space (indigenous peoples, migrants, riverside populations) and control of the natural resources in the region. Simultaneous to military's traditional concern with the military control of the territory, initiatives were developed to organize the economic exploration of the Amazonian biome based on the authoritarian regime's interpretation of the relationship between security and development.

In this context, Brazilian state policy for the Amazon was revised. Our hypothesis is that Brazil's Amazon policy shows how the security/development binomen was operationalized in the country shaping an Amazonian biopolitics that was updated in the post-1985 democratic period, demonstrating the elements of continuity between the doctrine of national security of the authoritarian regime and the defense policies and strategies of the democratic governments. From the speech given by Araújo Castro at the 18th session of the UN General Assembly to that of Jair Bolsonaro, at the 74th session, it is possible to identify the recombination of the elements of security and development. Understanding how these are defined and are related is fundamental to understanding how the Amazon is understood by the state and by Brazilian political, social, and economic forces. This complex understanding of the way of facing the Amazon is always in a dialectic relationship with the structural constraints placed by the international system and the interests and discourses put in movement by other states, NGOs, companies, and international organizations. Amazon is a breadbasket and source of endless natural wealth and cultural diversity, and also a laboratory to analyze the complexity of relations of power in Brazil, and Brazil's relations in the contemporary world.

### **'Integrate not to surrender'**

In a 2013 interview, General Eduardo Villas Bôas, then military commander of Amazonia, declared that "since Amazonia is not integrated with the rest of the country, there is no knowledge of its reality, its potential, in the south. It is as if it were a colony of Brazil" (REIS, 2013). In this interview the general, who was commander of the Army between 2015 and 2019, dealt with themes such as the demarcation of indigenous lands, the presence of NGOs in the environmental field, and the rights of the first peoples, and the role of Armed Forces in the region.

For Villas Bôas (REIS, 2013), the demarcation policy for indigenous land was problematic because it prioritized the delimitation of areas without permitting the economic action of private enterprise in collaboration with the first peoples. Indigenous lands are thus the target of action of the above mentioned NGOs which "often act in a sense opposed to interests of the Brazilian government" (REIS, 2013). In a somewhat cryptic manner, the declaration referred to the action of foreign and Brazilian NGOs (many of them funded by foreign

sources), which updated the traditional fear of the Brazilian Armed Forces of a possible internationalization of the Amazon, or the intervention of foreign powers interested in the mineral wealth and biodiversity of the tropical forest.

The concern with the territorial control of the Amazon comes from colonial times. Between the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, Portugal sought to consolidate its presence in the region through the tactic of building forts in strategic places, such as the mouth of the Amazon. The exploitation of autochthone plants and products interested the Spanish, French, and Dutch in their colonial enterprises. The choice of the physical presence, with military posts and civil colonies, continued to be the principal focus of the Brazilian state's plans for the Amazon after independence.

After the attention given to the Amazon during the economic cycles of latex – 1879-1920 and 1939-1945 – a new wave of interest of the state in the forest emerged in the 1960s, especially after the establishment of the authoritarian regime led by the military in 1964 (SOUZA, 2019). At this time, the idea of 'international greed' coveting the Brazilian Amazon became part of national strategic thought, motivating a set of civil and military programs and initiatives, with the aim of increasing the military and civil presence, as well as integrating the Amazon with the most dynamic economic center of the country, located in the South-Central part of Brazil. In the post-Second World War period, the federal government's attention to the region was initially propelled in 1953 with the creation of the concept of 'Amazônia Legal', including municipalities in the states of Amazonas, Pará, Goiás, Acre, Maranhão, and the then territories of Rondônia, Roraima, and Amapá<sup>1</sup>.

In 1966, under the authoritarian regime, the Superintendence of Development in the Amazon (SUDAM) was created. This was a federal agency aimed at coordinating and accompanying the implementation of the programs considered to be priorities by the Brazil state in 'Amazônia Legal'. The Executive Council of SUDAM included presidents of state banks, the ministers

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<sup>1</sup>Since the 1940s three territories were created in the Amazonian region under the administration of the federal government: Rondônia, Roraima, and Amapá. Their direct administration by the federal government indicates the strategic importance attributed to the Amazon region and its frontiers, since the three territories in question border Bolivia (Rondônia), Venezuela and Guyana (Roraima) and French Guiana Francesa and Suriname (Amapá). Rondônia became a state in 1982, Roraima and Amapá in 1988.

of the Economy and Foreign Affairs, and the Chief of the Joint General Staff of the Armed Forces. SUDAM was part of a set of decisions by the authoritarian regime based on the motto 'integrate not to surrender', in other words, connecting 'Amazônia Legal' to the Brazilian economy and life to prevent a foreign invasion. This objective was part of the strategic planning of the regime that was conceived and developed by the Brazilian War College (ESG) centered on the combination between the concepts of 'national security' and 'development'.

It was in the ESG that the influence of the United States doctrine of hemispheric security, aimed at containing communism in the context of the Cold War, was welcomed and adapted in Brazil. The Kennedy and Johnson administrations modelled US policy towards Latin America using a non-exclusively military logic. The Secretary of Defense of the two presidents, Robert S. McNamara, was the person most responsible for developing the concept of strategic relationship in the continent centered, precisely, on the concepts of 'security' and 'development'. For McNamara "in a modernizing society, security means development (...) Security is development. Without development, there can be no security. A developing nation that does not in fact develop simply cannot remain 'secure'" (McNAMARA, 1966, p. 05). McNamara (1966) understood "development" as the "economic, social, and political progress" which promotes "a reasonable standard of living" (McNAMARA, 1966, p. 05). Although not explicitly, it is obvious due to the context of confrontation with China and the Soviet Union, that McNamara is referring to a model of life and development linked to the capitalist bloc. The citations from McNamara are taken from a speech he made in Canada, two years before he left the position of US Secretary of Defense to assume the presidency of the World Bank, a position he would hold until 1981, and where he would apply his thesis of the irreparable connection between 'security' and 'development' (McNAMARA, 1968).

Also in 1966, ESG published its Manual, in which it established the model for the training of officers and high-ranking civilians in the Brazilian state (judges, prosecutors, police chiefs (delegados), diplomats) or holding important positions in civil society (entrepreneurs, journalists, academics, economists, jurists). The document is organized around the connection between security and development (ESG, 1966). After 1964 ESG became the center for the formulation of concepts on

which the authoritarian regime was to be based – such as the definition of ‘national objectives’ – and the center to produce what Dreifuss (1981) called the ‘techno-bureaucracy’ of the regime. The Manual thus came to fulfill the role of standardizing the education of this ‘techno-bureaucracy’. Moreover, the notion of economic ‘development’ with the control of political opposition (whether pacific or armed) became the local version of the hemispheric doctrine defended by the US.

One of those most responsible for the incorporation and adaptation of the security/development binomen in the Brazilian context was General Golbery do Couto e Silva, an intellectual central in the preparation of the political and geopolitical thought of the authoritarian regime. Based on Couto e Silva’s reflections the Doctrine of National Security was published in 1969. The document redefined the fundamental concept of ‘national defense’, moving from the conception of protection against external enemies (other states) to the repression of the ‘internal enemy’, in other words, ‘communism’. ‘Communists’ came to be considered as all outspoken opponents of the regime – communists, liberals, socialists, reformist Catholics, and even nationalist soldiers – whether pacific or violent (urban and rural guerillas) (CUNHA, 2020).

However, the Doctrine did not only establish the repressive means to maintain internal order. Through the association between development and security, “the Doctrine of National Security made a comparison between security and social welfare” (COIMBRA, 2000, p. 10). Therefore, alongside the repressive apparatus established by the regime, there was a concern with the economic development of Brazilian capitalism, with state investment and incentives for Brazilian and foreign private enterprise. The years of greatest repression by the authoritarian regime – between 1968 and 1973 – were also known as the years of the ‘Brazilian miracle’, with a growth of GDP of around 10% a year (VELOSO, VILLELA, and GIAMBIAGI, 2008).

In this way, when the US doctrine of hemispheric security was updated in the 1960s, based on the logic of security and development, it found in Brazil a favorable field to receive and adapt it. Even before 1964, during Goulart’s administration with progressive characteristics, its foreign policy was organized on the idea of autonomy in the search for international partnership and an orientation to the so-called ‘3D doctrine’ – development, disarmament, and decolonization – announced by the

Minister of Foreign Relations Araújo Castro at the opening of the 18th Session of the General Assembly of the UN. For Castro – and internationally recognized Brazilian thinkers such as the doctor and geographer Josué de Castro –, the question of development signified social justice and overcoming misery and hunger, in an environment of security guaranteed by the abandonment of the arms race and the renunciation, by the powers from the Global North, of colonial claims. The interpretation of development and security among Brazilian conservatives was different, as shown by the work of Couto e Silva. For them, security signified maintenance of the traditional political and economic order, without any resistance, associated with the social policies operated by the state in a paternalist form and linked to the production of sociabilities related to capitalism and shaped by the social inequalities.

It was in this context, and with the incorporation of the security/development binomen, that the Amazon became once again the focus of attention of the Brazilian military. At the end of the 1970s the ‘Zona Franca’ began to operate in Manaus, capital of the state of Amazonas, a tariff exemption area intended to encourage the establishment of vehicle and electronics assembly plants created in 1967. Also in 1967 the protection system for indigenous populations was reformed through the creation of the National Indian Foundation (FUNAI). The state guardianship model for indigenous peoples had been established in 1910, with the Indian Protection Service (SPI). The idealizer and the first director of SPI was an army officer, Marshal Cândido Rondon, celebrated at the time for commanding reconnaissance missions in remote areas of Brazil – such as Pantanal and the Amazon – founding villages, extending the telegraph network and making contact with indigenous populations in order to integrate them in Brazilian society.

The model of the relationship of the Brazilian state with the indigenous populations in the Amazonian space was established by SPI based on three points: the idea that the first peoples needed to be 01. ‘taken into guardianship’, since they were not in a condition to integrate themselves in an autonomous forms, 02. ‘protected’ from the economic action and the possible violations of modern society, and 03. ‘integrated’, in other words, incorporated in Western ‘civilizational’ patterns although maintaining characteristics of their own culture (GOMES, 2009). In 1973 the authoritarian regime published the Indigenous Peoples Statute,

establishing parameters to achieve the three items above. Although the definition of 'indigenous territory' established its inviolability in relation to any advance of non-Indians, the regime reserved the right to intervene in indigenous reserves when there was a need for 'national security', such as a threat of foreign intervention, the discovery of strategic natural resources, or the movements of 'internal enemies' (DUARTE, 1994). It is not a coincidence that in 1972, the Armed Forces began an offensive in the Araguaia River region, in the east of the Amazon, against a guerilla force organized by the Communist Party of Brazil inspired by the Cuban model of revolutionary 'foquismo'. The guerrilla force was decimated and the majority of guerillas were killed in combat or executed after being captured (PAZ, 2008).

Since the security/development tactics combined repression and economic investment, civic-military actions involving medical care, education and provision of infrastructure for target populations, at the end of 1972, General Médici's administration created the Brazilian Agricultural Research (EMBRAPA), a public company aimed at, amongst other objectives, the development of seeds, cultivation techniques, and the preservation of harvests. The first region to receive EMBRAPA projects was the savanna zone which marked the transition from the 'cerrado' to the Amazon forest. This region became an agricultural frontier occupied by farmers from the south of Brazil who received large properties on federal lands and assistance from EMBRAPA specialists to grow soybean or implement extensive cattle ranches. This part of Brazil became the largest producer of soybean in the world, while the same region has the highest rate of deforestation in the Amazon forest. The agricultural frontier of the Brazilian north and center-west also registered a constant conflict between colonists, 'fazendeiros', and miners and the indigenous populations and peasants, resulting in massacres, environmental destruction, and the forced dislocation of the first people (LOUREIRO and PINTO, 2005).

The physical integration of the Amazon with the rest of the country and the increased generation of electric energy were a central part of the authoritarian regime's plans, echoing old projects for constructing railways and establishing waterways. Following the road transport model adopted in Brazil in the 1950s, the authoritarian regime drafted a project to construct an extensive road

called the 'Transamazônica' highway. Intended to link the northeast of Brazil with the Peruvian frontier, crossing the entire Amazon from east to west, the road was opened in 1972, covering 4300 km of the 8000 km originally intended. Along the highway urban modules were established, consisting of residences, local commerce, and lands for cultivation and raising cattle. The authoritarian regime's intention was to 'vivify' the forest, which reflected its stated objective - 'integrate not to surrender'. Most of these urban settlements failed and their populations migrated to other regions in the country. The road is now only partially asphalted and it did not fulfill its colonization and integration role.

The initiatives of the authoritarian regime for the Amazon, guided by the security/development binomen, were the expressions of a biopolitics aimed at the Amazonian region and its populations (original or migrants from other parts of Brazil). Like a 'government dispositif', the Amazonian policy of the military combined welfare initiatives (for the indigenous peoples), 'civilizing' actions, capitalist economic development, geopolitical occupation, the development of agricultural technology, military defense, and the repression of the communist 'internal enemy': security and development, welfarism and coercion. As biopolitics, these initiatives were aimed at the management of life – human and natural – in the Amazon, responding to the reception and adaptation of structural elements of the international system of the Cold War. The 'internal colonization' of the Amazon took the form of tacit biopolitics during the authoritarian regime but was not limited to this historical period in Brazil.

### **Monitor not to surrender**

On 28 February 2021, an Indian rocket put into orbit Amazônia 1, a satellite produced by the Institute of Spatial Research (INPE), linked to the Ministry of Science and Technology. According to the team which prepared the satellite, its principal function was to monitor the infrared data and images from the Brazilian Amazon in order to locate foci of deforestation, control the advance of agricultural advance, and monitor underground wealth, amongst other functions. Amazônia 1 was celebrated by INPE and the Bolsonaro administration. It was the first satellite totally designed and produced in Brazil, which guaranteed autonomy in the control of air space, soil, underground, and the water in the Amazon.

However, the process of the electronic surveillance of the forest and its savannas is not something new.

In the 1990s, the Fernando Henrique Cardoso administration funded the project to establish the Amazonian Surveillance System (SIVAM), consisting of land radar, aircraft with mobile radar, and satellite images. At the time, the project caused a controversy, because in addition to overpricing it involved the purchase of equipment from Raytheon, an American company from the military sector, leading to the possibility of the leaking of Brazilian strategic information about the Amazon. SIVAM, which began to operate in the Lula da Silva administration, is a full part of a broader project called the Amazonian Protection System (SIPAM), operated by the Air Force aimed at controlling Amazonian air space, verifying the flux of illegal flights, mainly linked to drug traffic (LOUREIÇÃO, 2006; RODRIGUES, 2012).

Investment in updated remote monitoring technologies was propelled through the publication of the National Defense Strategy (END), in 2008. In the original document and the two revisions made to it – in 2012 and 2020 –, as well as the revisions of the National Defense Policy (PND), the Amazon continued to be important for Brazilian defense policies. Among the mentions of the Amazon in PND 2020, the following is quite illustrative:

2.2.11. The enormous territorial extension of the Brazilian Amazon, its lower demographic density, and the difficulties of mobility in the region, as well as its mineral resources, its hydro-energetic potential and the valuable biodiversity it houses, demand the effective presence of the state, aimed at its defense and its integration with the other regions in the country, contributing to its national development (MINISTÉRIO DA DEFESA, 2020, p. 08).

The above extract has all the elements of the security/development binomen for the Amazon, highlighting the need for the ‘presence of the state’ in an ‘enormous territorial expansion’, little inhabited and isolated from the rest of the country, rich in natural resources and biodiversity, and which needs to be ‘defended’ and ‘integrated’ with the other regions of Brazil for the benefit of ‘national development’. In this way, it is important to highlight that despite the current fiscal crisis of the Brazilian state and the historical discontinuities in investment in the area of national defense, the Amazon has been receiving constant

attention since the 1960s, always aimed at the connection between security and development.

This continuous attention has been maintained even with the changes in the political regime and despite the different political and ideological tendencies in Brasília. In the same year that José Sarney was elected indirectly as the first civil president of Brazil since 1964, the 'Projeto Calha Norte' (Northern Margins Project) was launched aimed at establishing civilian colonies and military bases in land alongside the main rivers in the Amazon region, frontier areas, and strategic towns (FERREIRA, 2010; MYIAMOTO, 2008). In the Cardoso administration it was strengthened as part of SIPAM, while in the Lula da Silva and Dilma Rousseff administrations, the Project, by now transformed into the 'Calha Norte' Program (PCN), came to cover "194 municipalities in the original states [Amazonas, Pará, and Amapá] plus Acre and Rondônia, in a total area of 2,186,252 Km<sup>2</sup> (of which 10,938 Km were in frontier areas)" (FUCCILLE, 2015, p. 141) including ten indigenous peoples (FERREIRA, 2010, p. 206). PCN has constructed infrastructure (roads, ports, bridges) through partnerships between municipalities and the Ministry of Defense. It is important to highlight that the resources are used for civil and military purposes, with a major weight in recent years for initiatives with a civil impact (87% for civil purposes and 13% for military during the Rousseff administration) (FUCCILLE, 2015, p. 141).

The existence of multi-ministerial programs, such as SIPAM, does not hide the preponderance of the Ministry of Defense in projects aimed at the Amazon. It has been the military who have coordinated Amazonian initiatives since the 1960s, combining objectives of assistance and support for the civil population and indigenous peoples and economic activities with strictly military objectives. Defending the Amazon thus implied – for the Brazilian military – a connection between occupying, integrating, developing, and monitoring. The consistency and coherence of this vision in relation to defense of the Amazon independent of the political and ideological viewpoint in power at the federal level (RODRIGUES and KALIL, 2020).

For example, it was in the first administration of Lula da Silva that two legal documents, both from 2004, expanded the power of the Armed Forces to act in the Amazon region. The first, Complementary Law 117/04 gave police power

to the Army in the frontier zone (up to 150 km from the frontier) which allowed them to search vehicles and make arrests. Decree nº 5.144/04 authorized the Air Force to intercept and even shoot down aircraft which invaded Brazilian air space. Although these laws applied to all of Brazil, the justification of the government was based on the argument that the Armed Forces need to collaborate with the Federal Police in operations against illicit transnational flows (FUCCILLE, 2015; RODRIGUES, 2012). In turn SIVAM commenced in the Cardoso administration, was implemented in the Lula da Silva administration, and now continues to receive investments from the Bolsonaro administration. Another example is the Special Frontier Platoons, army units of 50 soldiers deployed along the Amazonian frontier with neighboring countries. Mostly composed of soldiers of an indigenous origin, the platoons are advanced army bases which aim to 'vivify' frontiers in thick jungle without land contact with towns in the region. 26 in number, the platoons are an expression of the Armed Forces policy of maintaining a presence and, at the same time, stimulate the concept of integrating indigenous peoples, using the Army itself as an element for socialization and inclusion (DHENIN and CORREA, 2017).

In the Bolsonaro administration, the continuity of military programs for the Amazon – such as SIVAM, the frontier platoons, and the 'Calha Norte' Program – coexist with what Suely de Araújo (2020, p. 02) described as “a complete and total rupture” with the previous environmental policy. For Araújo (2020), Bolsonaro sought to completely modify the federal environmental structure, based on his own ideological perspective and associated with the presidential campaign. From an ideological point of view, the government expresses a denial of climate change and assumes a definition of development opposed to the notion of sustainability, which implies the admission that the economic exploitation of Brazilian biomes necessarily results in environmental destruction. From the political and economic point of view, the changes in the government structure sought to satisfy the agri-business economic groups who are an important political force in the Brazilian Congress.

The changes imposed by the Bolsonaro administration included the extinction of the Ministry of the Environment's special secretariat on climate change and the distribution of positions in agencies linked to this Ministry to officers from the Gendarmerie of São Paulo state in agencies linked to this ministry, such as the

Brazilian Institute of Environment and Natural Resources (IBAMA) and the Chico Mendes Institute of Preservation of Biodiversity (ICMbio) (ARAÚJO, 2020, p. 03). The Brazilian president even considered merging the Ministry of the Environment with the Ministry of Agriculture, a hypothesis which leaves explicit the government's understanding that the environment is subject to decisions in the field of agricultural economics. Protests by expressive sectors of civil society, academia, and public opinion prevented this merger from being implemented, but they did not prevent the undermining of the competencies of the Ministry of the Environment.

In 2019 and 2020, due to the international repercussion of the fires in the Pantanal and Amazon, the Bolsonaro administration came under diplomatic pressure, especially from the European Union. When the commercial agreement between Mercosur and the European Union was announced in September 2019, the French government opposed the signing of this due to Brazil's disrespect of the environmental agenda. A year later, in September 2020, European ambassadors based in Brasília sent a joint letter to the president demanding responses to the increase in deforestation in the Amazon and threatening with possible restrictions on the purchase of Brazilian agri-business products. In the following month, the European Parliament approved a resolution defending that specifically due to the Brazilian case, the commercial agreement between the EU and Brazil should not be signed. The resolution is not compulsory for European states, but until the present France is still refusing to sign the text.

The controversy between the two governments rekindled the discourse cultivated in military spheres since the 1960s about 'international greed' coveting the Amazon and European 'interventionism' in matters that were supposedly of exclusive Brazilian responsibility (RODRIGUES and KALIL, 2020). The concept goes back to Arthur Cezar Ferreira Reis' book 'A Amazônia e a cobiça internacional', published in 1965, when it's author held the position of governor of the state of Amazonas, having been appointed by the president of the authoritarian regime, Marshal Humberto Castelo Branco. The basic logic of the book – which until the present is part of the bibliography on courses on Brazilian advanced military studies – is that it is of foreign interest to occupy the Amazon in search of its substantial natural wealth disguised as a concern with the environment (REIS, 1982; RODRIGUES and KALIL, 2020).

One of the reactions of the Bolsonaro to the supposed international 'greed' was the transformation of the Nation Council on the Amazon – between 1995 and February 2020 linked to the Ministry of the Environment – into the National Council for Amazônia Legal linked to the Vice-Presidency of the Republic. Headed by the vice-president General Hamilton Mourão, the Council included in its first formation twelve colonels from the Army and three from the Air Force, linked to the Ministry of Defense, the 'Casa Civil', the Secretariat of Strategic Affairs, and the Institutional Security Office of the Presidency. No representatives were included from either the National Indian Foundation (FUNAI) or from IBAMA (VALENTE, 2020). The motto of the current Council, as published on its webpage is 'Protecting and Preserving the Amazon is developing Brazil'<sup>2</sup>. It should be noted that the concepts of 'protection' (associated with the concept of 'security') and of 'development' have been updated. The security/development binomen has been connected with the idea of 'preservation', a concession to environmental discourse and the international protection regime of which Brazil was one of the principal architects at a different moment of national diplomatic posture. While the Amazonian policy of the Bolsonaro administration helped to isolate Brazil commercially and diplomatically (PEREIRA, 2020), the federal government updated the government of space and Amazonian populations based on a military logic. However, this logic is biopolitics and not only geopolitics as military conduct might suggest.

### Final remarks

Programs for the Amazon, guided by the security/development binomen are thus state policies, indicating the consistency over the last five decades which the Amazon has occupied in Brazilian military (and defense) thinking. Military initiatives for the Amazon, however, are not guided by a vision strictly focused on the traditional presence in frontiers and their fortification. The Brazilian perspective of the Amazon reflects the broader interpretation of 'national defense' which can be analyzed in terms of 'biopolitical dispositif'. In a more subtle form, and in Foucaultian terms, more 'economic' because it is more efficient, the exercise of power over the Amazon (territory and population) combines welfare and coercive

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<sup>2</sup>Available at <<https://www.gov.br/planalto/pt-br/conheca-a-vice-presidencia/conselho-da-amazonia>>. Accessed on March, 09, 2021.

elements, social policies and the military presence, the use of the capacity to offer services by the military and the imposition of Western civilizational model on populations with distinct practices and cultural matrixes.

In a biopolitical perspective, the defense policy for the Brazilian Amazon is not simply a 'defense policy'. Defined in traditional terms, a defense policy is understood as the operationalization, with the use of military means, of a state strategy designed to guarantee sovereignty over a territory. Both due to the characteristics of the Brazilian Armed Forces – with their identity as an inducer and guarantor of order and 'civilization' – and the particularities of the Amazon and due to the nature of the structural influences in a Cold War context, what is configured as a defense policy/state policy is imminently biopolitical. This happens because what is in play is not only geopolitical control over the Amazon, but the economic administration of natural wealth – living and inanimate –, the government of the first peoples who do not belong to the Western civilizational model, the control of populations connected to the Brazilian and global economy, the regulation of the presence of Brazilian and foreign NGOs, and surveillance of airspace and rivers, amongst other challenges.

'Governing the Amazon' is not resumed to traditional geopolitical elements, it is more similar to a version of biopolitical technologies of government adapted to the unique case represented by the Amazon. In this sense, the security/development binomen is made explicit as biopolitical tactics. Involved in this is the regulation of a complex territory inhabited by a diversified population, with legal and illegal activities in constant feedback, the exploitation of natural resources with different characteristics, and international attention always being present. The Amazonian case and Brazilian state policies for the Amazon are thus examples of how biopolitical technologies of government gained new dimensions detached from the initial implications studied by Foucault. Now, projected in global dynamics, biopolitical tactics gain a new configuration.

We argue here that Brazilian military and defense policies for the Amazon have been, since the 1960s at least, in tune with the biopolitical technologies of government. Economic development plans, integration programs for indigenous populations, projects for physical and economic integration with the rest of Brazil and the world, the physical presence of the military with the use of soldiers of an

indigenous origin, and remote tracking with advanced technology show us an Amazonian biopolitics. The security/development binomen is the key to understanding how biopolitics develops for the Amazon. In play for the Brazilian state are its military and defense policies for the Amazon, not only occupying, but vivifying in the broadest sense: mapping, monitoring, and propelling forms of life (bios) and the actions of this life in governmental parameters. The immensity of the Amazon and the diversity of people who live there continue, however, to resist and challenge this desire to govern.

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