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VANDER FINOTTI BOSCO

Between Resistance and Repression: An Analysis of the Securitization of Social
Movements in Brazil and Colombia during the COVID-19 Pandemic

Entre a Resistência e a Repressão: uma análise da Securitização dos Movimentos Sociais no
Brasil e na Colômbia durante a Pandemia de COVID-19

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VANDER FINOTTI BOSCO

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Entre a Resistência e a Repressão: uma análise da Securitização dos Movimentos Sociais no Brasil e na Colômbia durante a Pandemia de COVID-19

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RESUMO

O processo de securitização é um tema muito estudado nas relações internacionais quando pensamos em temáticas que abordam a comunidade internacional como um todo, e coloca em evidência a relação entre locutor (agente securitizador) e ouvinte (Opinião Pública). Este trabalho investiga o papel das redes sociais no processo de securitização de manifestações sociais durante a pandemia de COVID-19, com foco em Brasil e Colômbia. Baseado nos Estudos Securitários Críticos e utilizando Stritzel como ponto de partida para as análises, analisa como os Estados tentam enquadrar movimentos sociais como ameaças à segurança nacional, associando-os a atos terroristas. Utilizando triangulação de dados, a pesquisa examina o impacto das redes sociais na articulação e resistência dos movimentos frente à repressão estatal, empregando análise de mídias digitais e pesquisa de campo para compreender se a teoria de Stritzel, examinada outrora a partir e para o Norte-Global, pode ser utilizada na perspectiva do Sul-Global.

PALAVRAS-CHAVES: Securitização; Segurança Internacional; Movimentos Sociais; Pandemia de COVID-19

ABSTRACT

The securitization process is a widely studied topic in international relations when we think about themes that address the international community and highlight the relationship between the speaker (securitizing agent) and the listener (Public Opinion). This work investigates the role of social media in the securitization of social movements during the COVID-19 pandemic, focusing on Brazil and Colombia. Based on Critical Security Studies and using Stritzel as a starting point for the analyses, it analyzes how States tend to frame social movements as threats to national security, associating them with terrorist acts. Using data triangulation, the research examines the impact of social media on the articulation and resistance of movements in the face of state repression, employing digital media analysis and field research to understand whether Stritzel's theory, previously examined from and for the Global North, can be used from the perspective of the Global South.

KEYWORDS: Securitization; International Security; Social Movements; COVID-19
Pandemic

LIST OF ACRONYMS

CSS - Critical Security Studies

WHO - World Health Organization

UN - United Nations

COVID-19 - CoronaVirus Disease 2019

IACHR - Inter-American Court of Human Rights

WB - World Bank

IR - International Relations

PMSP - Polícia Militar de São Paulo (Military Police of São Paulo)

PMRJ - Polícia Militar do Rio de Janeiro (Military Police of Rio de Janeiro)

ESMAD - Escuadrón Móvil Antidisturbios (Mobile Anti-Riot Squad)

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1 - INTRODUCTION

Social movements are not strange to world history. From the Bastille Day in France in 1789 to the Umbrellas of Hong Kong in 2014; from the Arab Spring in Egypt and Tunisia in 2012 to Winter on Fire in Ukraine in 2013; from the 1960's Stonewall Riots to the Black Lives Matter in the United States in 2020, and the Anti-Lockdown movements in the European Union in 2020, modern and contemporary history has closely observed different social movements over the years and each with its particularity. These singularities are capable of impacting not only the domestic scenario but also having repercussions and an impact on the international scenario.

To Della Porta & Diani (2006), social movements must be understood as social processes, or even waves, subject to the adaptation and incorporation of actors and factors in their surroundings. According to Costanza-Chock (2016) states that these movements can be formed by various distinct individual actors, from collectives to NGOs or even *ad hoc* networks. This volatility in the formation of social movements is due to communication processes. Thus, the communication practices of the time tend to influence the shape and the *modus operandi* of these movements, as well as their interaction with other movements and actors at both domestic and international levels (ZUCKERMAN, 2021). When thinking specifically of contemporary movements, social media is a unique tool for understanding the formation and interaction of these movements (TUFEKCI, 2017).

Moreover, like their precursors, contemporary social movements, primarily those opposing government ideologies, have faced state opposition or support from other countries with vested interests in what chaos may cause. The particularity, however, is how States have decided to deal with these movements, transforming them into a threat to national security. In other words, pending their interests, States have often tried to securitize or support these movements framing them as a topic to be addressed from the national defense strategy or as a common phenomena in political regimes.

Securitizing an issue stands for occasions when the State or a group presents sufficient arguments for an issue to be understood as a threat to national or international security. This process is an argumentative game. *Security is thus a self referential practice because it is in this practice that the issue becomes a security issue – not necessarily because a real existential threat exists but because the issue is presented as such a threat* (BUZAN; WAEVER; WILDE, 1998).

Scholars from the Copenhagen School marked the history of studies in International Security by understanding that both the security process and other topics needed another

perspective besides realism and constructivism. For these scholars, understanding "social construction" should be part of analyses and studies involving international security. Moreover, securitization did not escape this parallel analysis. Thus, according to Silva (2016)

The Copenhagen School introduces us to the concept of securitization as a social construction. If an object is seen as a security issue, it means that there was an argument in this sense, demonstrating in its defence that a particular object is more important than others (SILVA, 2016, p. 4)¹

Although it is a landmark in how the International Security area saw global conjunctures, the Copenhagen school, according to Balzacq (2016), left out some relevant points for analysis. The author highlights that the Copenhagen School, in addition to underestimating the relevance of the audience in the securitization process, also needs to be watchful of the context in which the process takes place. To Balzacq, the securitization process is 1) audience-centred, that is, the audience would play a crucial role in the securitization process, and 2) context-dependent, which indicates the conjuncture in which the process takes place is also capable of influencing the final result. The framework of considering not only the theme and securitizing agent but also public opinion (audience) and the context in which the securitization process is inserted is brought by the Paris School, transforming the analysis even more resounding.

It is necessary to take a step back before delving into the current securitization processes and how social movements fit into them in contemporary times. It is essential to review what is already available in the literature regarding the securitization process and methodologies for analyzing social movements from the international security perspective.

The 21st century brings with it the technological milestone of information. The advancement of the Internet and social media has proven vital to contemporary social movements. If previously, the dissemination of narratives about events was exclusive to a hegemonic group, today, easy access to social media guarantees the possibility of different narratives in a more equitable way. However, the State continues to find it easier to publish its version of the narrative about the facts.

In 2015, the Inter-American Court of Human Rights (IACHR) condemned the Peruvian State for human rights violations in the case of Galindo Cárdenas y Otros v. Peru due to political opposition demonstrations classified as terrorist acts. IACHR based its conviction on the premise that the constitutional description of terrorism in Peru was generic

¹ Translated by the Author. Original Version: A Escola de Copenhague nos apresenta o conceito de securitização como uma construção social. Se um objeto é visto como um tema de segurança significa que houve uma arguição neste sentido, demonstrando em sua defesa que determinado objeto é mais importante que outros.

and that the lack of a legal basis and the absence of other laws that would help define a terrorist act made the conviction a violation of the Human Rights to Protest. Unfortunately, this legal genericity regarding terrorism is not exclusive to Peru; many Latin American countries have a generic definition of terrorist acts. In South America, Brazil and Colombia are two countries that still have controversial legislation on the subject.

In December 2019, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared the status of a pandemic due to the growing wave of coronavirus cases. COVID-19, as it became known, killed around 15 million people by the end of 2021, having its worst peak between 2020 and 2021. During this period, uncertainties about how to prevent the spread of the disease and when there would be a vaccine that would bring the world back to normality, as well as social problems, rose along with the number of cases. Social discrepancy and difficulties with access to health and essential needs have led the population to a peak of discontentment. Not even the risk of being contaminated with the deadly virus held civil society at home. People took over streets in different countries for various reasons, and protests began.

In Europe, people saw a devastating scenario. Countries with large populations over 60 years old saw their population numbers falling at breakneck speed. However, contrary to this fact, the waves of conservatism resounding on the continent have driven people to the streets against social distancing measures in different countries. Additionally, Fake News helped the Coronavirus nearly wipe out the continent's population. In the United States, the health system collapsed at the same speed as the disease spread. How the State differentiated the treatment of white and non-white people became evident, and the death of George Floyd took Americans to the streets. Floyd raised an anti-white-hegemony wave that echoed worldwide, regardless of the Pandemic's desperation.

In South America, the scenario was not different from the rest of the world. In 2020, Colombia found itself again with the streets taken over by its civilians, even after the "Paro Nacional," which strained relations between civil society and the State in the previous year. While people were dying from COVID-19 due to lack of access to healthcare, the Government was organizing to approve a tax reform that would mainly affect those hardest hit by the Pandemic. Not even the Ceasefire Agreement between the Guerrillas and the Government was enough to reduce the number of politically disappeared people or the seizure of territories. On the contrary, the Colombian militia took action faster than the national Government regarding the imposition of the social distancing measures suggested by the WHO. Colombian ethnic and indigenous groups saw their needs denied by the Government to the detriment of requests from large businesses.

In Brazil, the Government of Jair Bolsonaro did little to support the population during this Pandemic. The President, who characterized the COVID-19 Pandemic as "little flu," did little to move Congress to approve emergency measures to support the most vulnerable population. As in Colombia, in many situations, organized crime was faster than the presidency of the republic in terms of imposing protective measures. The Superior Court had to intervene and give local Governors and Mayors the right to create restrictions to control and prevent the Pandemic. In this scenario of the clash between "Stay at home" and "the country's economy cannot stop" speeches, Brazilians took to the streets for different reasons during the two peak years of the Pandemic.

"No a la Reforma Tributaria," "Vacina Já," "Fora Duque," and "Fora Bolsonaro" were what Colombians and Brazilians shouted during their days of protests in the middle of the Pandemic. The critical situation of the Pandemic, not seen since the Influenza A (H1N1) outbreak, put countries on alert. Brazil, for example, has not seen such a rapid pandemic escalation for a long time, as H1N1 arrived with the vaccination campaign, which had a quick and effective adherence. Nevertheless, all the details that made up the COVID-19 Pandemic justified most state actions as emergency measures to protect against the Pandemic. From urgent votes and presidential approvals without Congress to military force in the street, all in the name of restoring order.

Between 2020 and 2021, in this almost apocalyptic scenario, Brazil and Colombia saw their civilians on the streets, asking for different demands. The State's challenge during this period was to deal with these protesters while trying to overcome a pandemic. The State, which was already treating the Pandemic itself as a threat to national security, began to struggle with understanding whether or not protests in this context were a threat on the same level.

In both countries, there have always been questions and complaints about the State's actions in protests. Historically, there has been a police approach trained and oriented to repress protests, following internationally questioned criteria. In both countries, as well as other countries in Latin America, citizens have already taken cases of excessive police violence to international courts. Prepared to repress acts of vandalism and terrorism during protests, the Brazilian and Colombian military forces follow orders from generic legislation that typifies these types of acts.

The main objective of this research is to understand whether, according to Stritzel's theoretical logic, there were signs of an attempt to securitize social movements during the COVID-19 pandemic in Brazil and Colombia. During 2020 and 2021, more than 11,000

protests took place across the countries, and around 20% of the protests involved higher-than-normal police interactions. Looking at these events and other actions taken by the State, we intend to understand whether it is possible to observe the signs of securitization pointed out by Stritzel.

1.2 - SETTING DIRECTIONS: RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND ELEMENTS FOR REFLECTION

Over time, researchers have studied the securitization process, considering various relevant factors. For example, when scholars consider public opinion as one of the actors involved and its receptiveness to the theme impacts the final result, different tools are incorporated into studies. From Uncle Sam's "We Want You" posters in World War II to current hashtags on social media, different means were used so that the securitization agent could sensitize the other actors involved in the securitization process. However, the most recent milestone in contemporary history still needs to be explored regarding the securitization process.

How does the securitization process work in contemporary times, now that public opinion can have information, accurate or not, in their hands at a click? Social media can influence the results of the securitization process since it manages to impact how the interlocutor receives the message. Nevertheless, how can we identify the real impact that network connections can cause? These questions are apparent when studying securitization in the 21st century. This emphasis on social media is also essential to reflect on whether a securitization process occurs.

Thinking about securitization in the current historical context is to leave room for questioning whether the process is taking place. Usually, researchers study the securitization process by examining its triggers, the actions taken by the State, official government positions, and how the speech is presented to public opinion. What happens now is that the discourse is closer to public opinion in a faster and more evident way. For example, if before, the World Trade Center's fall needed to be televised, and the interlocutor had to watch the news to find out, now the information is a WhatsApp message or a Tweet away from that viewer.

When we reflect on the main research question, "understanding whether, according to Stritzel's theoretical logic, there were signs of an attempt to securitize social movements during the Covid-19 pandemic, in Brazil and Colombia", we can raise other pertinent questions to arrive at in the final answer. This research aims to get as close as possible to the

answer, keeping in mind the stretching movements that Stritzel's theory needs to reflect the specific context in which it will be applied.

Some contextual elements will be essential for a good understanding of this work. Starting with the regional context, Latin America presents particular and similar movements when it comes to social movements. There is a standard guideline for police forces to repress any act of vandalism or terrorism during protests. It is crucial to bring these two concepts, "vandalism" and "terrorism", side by side as they represent part of the legal semantic understanding of most countries in the region, as the legislation on terrorism and acts of vandalism does not clearly define the line that divides the two concepts. Therefore, in general, protests of any size or political reason can be repressed under the justification of a terrorist act.

This generic legal understanding leads us to one of the points that we need to ask ourselves if we want to understand the securitization of the issue in Latin America, with our eyes focused on Brazil and Colombia. Are the movements we see on the part of the state force in protests actions taken by the securitizing agent, or is it just the police force that, unprepared and with a generic understanding of what a terrorist act would be, treats the event as a threat to national security?

When considering how to answer the research question, we need to observe the specificity of the contexts. As explained, in general, there is already a tendency for the police force to repress a terrorist act during protests, even without a clear definition of what that would be. However, the historical period's context adds another layer to the study. Many countries treated the COVID19 Pandemic as a threat to national security. Another question arises when considering this pandemic context, in which the main recommendation was to avoid crowds. Did authorities base the repression during protests on the understanding that social movements were a threat to national security, or was the gathering of people during a pandemic the threat in question?

In addition to the regional elements that interact with the reflections that can be made based on this study's question, other elements can be raised between the historical period and theory. The information technology framework becomes relevant for understanding the securitization process. The ease of accessing and disseminating information (true or false) impacts how the securitization agent needs to think about its strategy. With this in mind, can we observe these signs of movement towards securitization through how the securitizing agent communicates on social media?

The main research question added to the elements for reflection exposed above serves as a starting point for the debates in this work. In reflectivist practice, field experiences and discoveries throughout the studies unfold the initial research question, leading the work to express reality better. The joint use of theory and field practices is a crucial point of this study, mainly when reflecting on the questions that unfold as one delves deeper into the context studied. These developments and their answers help to build the foundations for answering the main research question.

1.3 - POSITIONING WITHIN THE THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK: CONTEXTUALIZING AND FRAMING THE RESEARCH

According to Hedley Bull (1977), without security against violence, there is no society. The author and the English School are known for their efforts and work to understand security as inherent in society. Although Bull and the English School provide essential work and have opened the way for relevant discussions on the subject, Critical Security Studies (CSS) act precisely in the gaps left by these scholars. CSS, by devoting its efforts to understanding security beyond non-military tools and concepts, fills the voids that Bull's more traditionalist view could not. This is a crucial aspect that underscores the importance of CSS in our understanding of security.

Critical security studies, a product of the post-Cold War era, offer a unique perspective on security. Unlike the more Realist-Traditionalist bias theories, CSS seeks to re-conceptualize security by bridging theory and practice. This approach, as Williams (2004) points out, led to the creation of a methodological framework that redefines security on three bases, a departure from traditional security studies (see Table 1).

Table 1 - Bases on what the concept of security would entail within the CSS according to Williams 2004

Bases	Description
Focused	theory and practice of security should promote emancipatory politics;
Deeper	security is understood as a derivative concept inasmuch as different understandings of world politics will deliver different conceptions of what security means and who are its ultimate referents;

Broader the threat and use of military force is neither the only (or necessarily most important) threat to security, nor the only means of providing security

Elaborated by the author.

As discussed in the next chapter, CSS understands the concept of security more broadly, from addressing the concept broadly to considering what elements and tools should be utilized in this process. Williams (2004) argues that CSS would have a theoretical and political engagement. On the one hand, it would be committed to understanding how to exhaust the ontology, epistemology, and praxis of security as a form of emancipation. However, on the other hand, it began to incorporate elements beyond traditional militarism, bringing civilian daily life into the academy's understanding.

CSS would commit to standing firm as its central mission as a form of opposition to dominant security understandings and practices. According to Williams (2004), this prioritization of minority discourses within security studies gives CSS four main tasks in the contemporary context: "*to provide critiques of traditional theory, to explore the meanings and implications of critical theories, to investigate security issues from critical perspectives, and to re-vision security in specific places.*" (WILLIAMS, 2004. p. 137). This task of reviewing security in specific places is, for the author, the most arduous of all. However, advances in how CSS incorporates methodological practices and understandings from other areas of knowledge leave it at an advantage over different currents, such as the English School.

In short, for CSS, the method is experimental. Observing what science has already produced and provided and analyzing what can be helpful or not. As in bricolage, the method can be the combination of various techniques and practices that best match the context and interests of the research, not intending to justify the author's point but to seek the most honest answer possible. This experimental character of the CSS approach does not mean a loss of methodological coherence. On the contrary, this character allows the author to cover gaps that the heterodox use of the methodology could leave behind.

Thus, methods go beyond just being the bridge between theory and technical instruments. Instead, they come to be understood as a practice. In this understanding, methods are a synonym for "doing," which goes beyond explaining the theory. As Aradau et al. (2015) pointed out, *critical security research is about understanding security as practice in the broadest sense* (p. 3). Traditionally, scholars are invited to prove their findings using heterodox methodologies. Prestige and recognition of the work are linked to the use of

methodologies that, in a way, sanitize the points presented. This habitus for CSS is one of the central problems in how much research is conducted.

It is not the objective of this research to discuss the theoretical debate in constructing the gaps that CSS decides to focus its works on. However, it is necessary to clarify our position within the theoretical analysis framework. We start from the same logic as the CSS that the exclusive use of heterodox methodologies impairs how research sees the world. For this reason, we decided to use approaches allowing us to scrutinize from different sources of knowledge, inside and outside International Security and International Relations.

Within the academy, both in applied social sciences generally and in the area of international security specifically, some works deal with the Securitization of social movements. Even though it did not specifically use the terms established within the area of studies of International Relations, these works debate how the State tends to treat social movements as a threat to national security or the sovereignty of the State². Meanwhile, only some studies have discussed or used social media in this process³. It has to be taken into consideration that the massive use of social media is a highly new advent, but that, in the last decade, has been a sine qua nonelement for social movements. Whether to summon people to the streets or to criticize acts of the State, social media has increasingly been one of the active forms of public opinion participation in debates involving State action.

From this perspective, this study talks with different authors who investigate the securitization process and the actuation of the State in the repression of social movements. This approach outlines the elements of different areas that interact and can help us find the answer to the research question. This connection with work from other areas, mainly those on

² Ribeiro, E. & Borba, J. (2015) 'Protesto político na América Latina: tendências recentes e determinantes individuais' *Opinião Pública*, 21(1), 188-216.

Mitchell, D. (2003) *The right to the city: Social justice and the fight for public space* (New York, Guilford Press).

Maricato, E., Rolnik, R., Harvey, D., Zizek, S. & al., e. (2013) *Cidades rebeldes: passe livre e as manifestações que tomaram as ruas do Brasil*. (São Paulo, Boitempo & Carta Maior).

Gohn, M. G. (2016) 'Manifestações de protesto nas ruas no Brasil a partir de Junho de 2013: novíssimos sujeitos em cena' *Revista Diálogo Educacional*, 16(47), 125-146.

Alvarado Alcázar, A. (2020) 'La criminalización de la protesta social: Un estado de la cuestión'. *Rupturas*, 10(1), 25-43.

Palma, Maurício. (2020). *The Securitization of Protests as a Challenge to Democracy*. 10.22350/9786587340784.

³ TAVARES, Francisco Mata Machado; RORIZ, João Henrique Ribeiro. *Antes de junho, as ruas de maio: apreensões de ativistas goianienses sobre o Estado e a política institucional*. 2014. Disponível em: Acesso em 18 out. 2014.

VREESIWIJK, A. M. D. FINOTTI B, V. As "Manifestações de Junho" e as Redes Sociais na Perspectiva da Análise do Discurso. In: Anna Maria Dias Vreeswijk; Evandson Paiva Ferreira. (Org.). *Ensino Médio Pesquisa*. Ied.Goiânia: Editora Espaço Acadêmico, 2019, v. 1, p. 7-233.

ZUCKERMAN, Ethan. "Cute Cats to the Rescue? Participatory Media and Political Expression, 2013. Disponível em: <http://ethanzuckerman.com/papers/cutecats2013.pdf>. Acesso em: 14 fev. 2021.

social media and the sociology of social movements, helps us understand different aspects of the events related to state repression and understood as a measure of national security.

Concerning our understanding of Securitization, we started from the assumption that public opinion is one of the actors involved in this process. Therefore, biases that do not include the participation of non-state actors in the process, such as Traditionalists, were excluded. More specifically, we will consider the securitization process involving non-state actors' active participation as agents in this process. Stritzel (2014) will consider the securitization process in a scrutiny way, presenting it in detail in the next chapter and absorbing its nuances and stages.

1.4 - ON THE METHODOLOGY

This work's leading theoretical and methodological framework is the Reflexivism approach of Stritzel (2014). To enhance the debates in this work, we use various research methods that embrace different approaches. To nurture the debates satisfactorily with information on the subject studied, we collected data on the topic and conducted bibliographical studies to guide discussions on the specificities of the research object. Added to Stritzel's logical chain, we will have data on the protests in both countries during 2020 - 2021. Combined with Stritzel's logic, we will have data regarding the number of protests in our countries from 2020 to 2021.

The collection of data on the protests that occurred in both countries during the period studied was considered relevant for the research. This allows us to examine the foundations of the elements that make up the security process more closely. This approach helps us obtain precise information about the events and arguments used by actors in the securitization process. This way, we will use Stritzel's theoretical logic as a basis for these reflections and the collected data as inputs to orientate the discussions.

The following subsections present the methods, the approach for data collection, and its structures. It is worth highlighting that the data and its collection are not the high point of this research. The construction of the database, its structure, and the debate on the observed numbers will be present in this study. However, the main objective is to unite the theoretical and informational elements in a more in-depth debate. In this way, theory and collected data will have separate spaces where they will be analyzed and debated. Nevertheless, a space will be dedicated to uniting all the perspectives for a more excellent reflection on the studied topic.

1.4.1 - REFLEXIVISM AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

According to Jackson (2011), reflexivism is a theoretical aspect that has been inserted in International Relations for a long time. The author identifies that reflexivist logic can be seen within IR since Carr, with the debate on ideology and utopia. Reflexivism is a theoretical typology that can be considered as a "middle-way" as it incorporates different theoretical elements but significantly differs the researcher's positioning in relation to the research subject.

Reflexivism stands in direct contrast to neopositivism. It asserts that the researcher's position and involvement significantly influence the findings. This is because the social context and circumstances in which the researcher operates are inseparable from scientific production. The implicit and explicit conditions in scientific production are intertwined with the findings and must be acknowledged and comprehended as part of the result.

This transfactualist trait of reflexivism is crucial, as it brings to light elements beyond the studied phenomenon, uncovering hidden and silenced aspects. In essence, there is no world 'out there'; the researcher is an integral part of the world, influencing its nature and how it is perceived. Jackson (2011) highlights that feminist studies are a prime example of the application of reflexivist logic, as they excel in observing the implicit and explicit context.

Stritzel's choice of reflexivism is essential precisely because it demonstrates the importance of placing the actors involved as parts of the study. Both the actors studied and how they relate and understand each other, highlighting their implicit and explicit logic and practices, as well as the place from which these actors are observed (the researcher who builds the study). Oliveira (2014) adds that a significant marker of reflexivism is understanding that *what we know is inseparable from the place where we are located when we produce knowledge* (OLIVEIRA, 2014. P. 124)⁴, thus understanding that the connections between actors, their contexts and positions also need to be observed in the place where knowledge is produced.

1.4.2 - METHODOLOGICAL CHOICES

When considering assertive ways to use the methodological flexibility proposed by CSS, the primary working method will be triangulation triangulation. Social movements and protests are complex activities to work with in terms of data collection. Whether due to a lack of quantitative data, because these data are offered by few sources and, generally, with

⁴ "o que sabemos é inseparável do lugar onde estamos situados quando produzimos conhecimento". Translated by the Author.

significant bias, or because the conditions for obtaining qualitative data are challenging. Della Porta (2014) defines Triangulation as a method used in analyzing protests and social movements when it is necessary to join data from different sources to have a better understanding with less bias. Using Multiple Methods in research and data collection can help better understand different perspectives of social movements and their activities. The main objective of using multiple methods is to achieve, through the different existing barriers, an understanding of the *relationship between time, space and protests* (AYOUB; WALLACE; ZEPEDA-MILLÁN, 2014. p. 67)

The logic of Triangulation, which will be explained in more detail later in this chapter, uses different sources and methods to obtain data throughout this work. The aim is to supplement the missing information or gaps found throughout the research. Thus, within Triangulation, we include practices of observational participation and analysis of social networks and flirt with specific methodologies for analyzing online social movements.

1.4.3 - WHAT IS TRIANGULATION AND HOW TO USE IT?

The main idea behind this concept is to gather sources, data, and theories from different points of view and add them to create a better understanding of the scenario. In addition, this methodology helps to overcome barriers created by biases inherent in using a single method or theory (Della Porta, 2014). This methodology's primary objective is to better understand the relationship between time, space, and social movements.

One of the main challenges when studying social movements is that the *analyst rarely knows the universe of cases from which to sample randomly* (AYOUB; WALLACE; ZEPEDA-MILLÁN, 2014. p. 72). Triangulation, a mixed-method methodology, is more helpful for complex data collection field research. Furthermore, scholars once said that *Triangulation of methods ultimately produces stronger theories than multiple replications and permutations of the same method* (Tarrow et al., 2002. p. 319 Apud. AYOUB; WALLACE; ZEPEDA-MILLÁN, 2014. p. 72).

In general terms, researchers mix qualitative and quantitative methods in four different research stages: 1) Research design; 2) Data Collection; 3) Analysis; 4) data interpretation (Creswell; Clark, 2011 Apud. AYOUB; WALLACE; ZEPEDA-MILLÁN, 2014. p. 68). Once the researcher identifies that Triangulation will be necessary to answer the research questions, the scholar must choose the type of "mix of methods" that best suits the research. Among the forms of research with mixed methods, the three main types are Convergent Parallel, Explanatory Sequential, and Exploratory Sequential. All three types of methods use

quantitative and qualitative data. The difference between them is how this data is incorporated throughout the research.

Sequential mixed-method research can be designed in two ways: 1) Exploratory and 2) Explanatory. As the method's name says, qualitative and quantitative data are used sequentially, as if the research were divided into phases. Each phase is based on one of the data types (a quantitative and a qualitative phase). For the exploratory sequential method, the researcher qualitatively explores the theme at the first moment and then proceeds to the quantitative phase. The genesis of this method is that with qualitative data, a basis for generalizations is created that will be explored further with quantitative data in the second phase of the research.

Like the sequential exploratory method, the sequential explanatory method is divided into phases using a data type. The difference between the two is the sequential order in which this usage happens. For the sequential explanatory method, the scholar only proceeds to the phase with qualitative data after analyzing the results of the quantitative data collected. The strength of this sequential method is that it analyzes the interaction mechanisms with quantitative data from qualitative data. This method makes it possible to clarify how quantifiable variables interact in the studied context.

Unlike those mentioned above, the Parallel Convergent method does not divide the process into phases. That is, one type of data is not explored to proceed to the exploration of another type. Instead, quantitative and qualitative data are collected, analyzed, and compared using this method. The core of this method is that the comparison between these two types of data (quantitative and qualitative) can help confirm or refute what was the researcher's hypothesis.

Ayoub, Wallace, and Zepeda-Millán (2014) put in their work the different forms and methods of Triangulation, an example of the comparison Ferree et al. (2002) made about social movement discourses regarding abortion in Germany and the United States. Thinking that this work aims to analyze whether there was a securitization process of social movements in Brazil and Colombia during the COVID-19 Pandemic and how the discourses around this theme were shaped, the Parallel Convergent methodology will be used as a basis for the design and shooting of this research.

Like any methodological theory, Triangulation and the theories of Multiple-Methods Research present criticisms about its feasibility and reliability, in addition to facing problems along its constructions. One of the biggest challenges for the researcher willing to use Triangulation is understanding at least a little about different theoretical and methodological

contributions from different currents. In addition, researchers must be familiar with different ways of collecting and analyzing data.

Ayoub, Wallace, and Zepeda-Millán (2014) highlight that:

[...] researchers should be capable of identifying the types of questions in their study that are best answered qualitatively and understand the different ways they can gather and analyze qualitative data, including the various types of coding techniques and data analysis programs that can be used (AYOUB; WALLACE; ZEPEDA-MILLÁN, 2014. p. 74–75)

When discussing methodological analysis to understand and analyze social movements, the logic of thinking about Triangulation is the same as that used by these movements in their creation/actions. Contemporary social movements are plural, using different sources and ways of positioning themselves. Contemporary activism is in different contexts and places at the same time. That said, just as social movements draw from different sources of knowledge for their actions, the contemporary researcher interested in the topic has to know how to use different sources of information to get a complete picture of the facts. Thus, triangulating is to think academically from the same logic that the contemporary social movement thinks.

Balzaq (2014) summarizes triangulation within security studies to get around the main methodological problems found in the studies. The author points out that triangulation is the union of the best practices of the methodologies most used in security studies, Discourse Analysis, and Process-Tracing. According to the author, this combination helps to cover the gaps that using a single method tends to leave. For instance, discourse analysis helps to understand how securitization operates while leaving room for why and when it was successful.

To a certain degree, Balzaq (2014) agrees with Ayoub et al. (2014), pointing out four types of triangulation cited by Denzi in 1970 in his work *The Research Act in Sociology*. According to the author, the forms of triangulation would be:

[...] (1) data triangulation (series of data are gathered from different sources, at different times, in various situations, and sometimes by many researchers); (2) investigator triangulation (data are not only collected but also interpreted by different researchers); (3) theoretical triangulation (bringing together more than one theoretical apparatus in order to make sense of the data); and (4) methodological triangulation (articulating a set of different methods

in order to gain a greater comprehension of a phenomenon).
(BALZAQ, 2015. P.377 - 378)

In short, triangulation is a way of bringing more elements of analysis to the table. However, it is necessary that these elements are used extensively and observed both in parallel and in combination. In this work, we use almost all types of triangulation. Different Brazilian and Colombian researchers collected the data for writing chapter 3. At times, the interpretation of the data collected was also subject to the perceptions of the researchers who collected them.

1.5 - THEORY AND EMPIRICAL EVIDENCE

To understand the securitization process, we need to gather information about the actors involved, their power relations, and the scenario they are immersed in. Following the logic of the research question that guides this study, we assume that the State, Brazilian or Colombian, represents the Securitizing Agent, and the threat would be the protests between 2020 and 2021. In both Brazil and Colombia, there is a history of the use of police force against protesters. This characterization of the protester as a threat is not a new movement in either country. In general, both countries tend to use a large police contingent targeting movements led by indigenous peoples, black people, labor movements, and students. The Military Police in Brazil and ESMAD⁵ in Colombia are police forces known for representing the state military apparatus when it comes to combat between civilians and military personnel in protests.

The issue is considered politicized in both countries since there have already been debates about the "limits of a protest" or how this right should be exercised. For years, this has been the speech used by the State to justify the great use of police force against protesters. Justifying the use of excessive police force in itself is not a sign of securitization. However, the continued use of extreme force in a politicized issue and the cohesive narrative about justifications and threats draw attention to a possible effort toward securitization. Given this tendency to understand protests as a threat, our referent object would be the actors who called for protests and actions during the pandemic, regardless of the theme and/or demands.

⁵ In 2023, ESMAD underwent a structural reform, which had been one of President Petro's campaign promises, and was renamed Unidad Nacional de Diálogo y Maintenance del Orden (UNDMO)

1.5.1 - DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS: UNDERSTANDING THE EVENTS AND THE SCENARIO

This research delves into the impact of social media and the technological revolution on securitization. To this end, we compiled a database of protests during the study years, using it as a guide for our content searches and analyses on social media. This database provided a wealth of information about the protests in both countries, forming the basis for our subsequent analysis of publications on the subject.

The database on protests was a collective effort created during a research internship at the Universidad Externado de Colombia at the Faculty of Finance, Government, and International Relations (FIGRE). The database generally follows the model and standards already created by the Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project (ACLED) with added information from researchers in the field. The researchers were mainly located in Colombia, the country with the most data tabulations without additional information.

Among the information collected, we were able to point out:

1. The number of events that took place within the studied period
2. Groups and Organizations responsible for organizing the events
3. Military forces that interacted with the organizing actors
4. Region of the country and city of the events
5. Press vehicles that reported on the event
6. Fatalities
7. Size of the event (based on number of people)
8. Disorder Type (Categorization of the interaction between the actors involved)

With the information observed in the database, the study moved to a second data collection and analysis phase. Once the events were categorized, the information was used to guide the search for data relating to publications made on the social network "X" (formerly Twitter). We understand that the securitization process goes beyond the use of police force. How the securitizing agent's speech is made and how it is received by public opinion is also part of the process. Therefore, we understand the importance of a parallel analysis, which observes the events and how the speeches about them were formulated.

1.5.2 - SOCIAL MEDIA AS A NEW POSSIBILITY FOR SECURITIZATION

Since current social movements use social media to convene participants and communicate their motivations, an analysis of securitization must respect the importance of

these networks as a way of disseminating discourse. Social networks present the main difference between the securitization context explored by Strizel and today.

Currently, the securitizing agent's effort to propagate discourse about the threat faces the barrier of ease of opposition discourses. If, before the milestone of the technological revolution, the securitizing agent could go on national television and communicate with public opinion, defending why the referring object represents a threat, today, the space for disseminating the discourse is much broader. Access to the national television network continues to be limited to some actors. However, social media allows speeches opposing the securitizing agent to reach the same audience as a televised speech.

Bearing in mind these current factors that directly impact the securitization process, it would be essential to understand how social media movements were in terms of posts on the topic within the period studied. Among all the social media available on the Internet, the chosen one as the object of data collection was the "X", formerly Twitter.

Some factors were decisive in choosing Twitter as the chosen source of information. Twitter can be considered as a neutral environment in both countries. This is because, although extremely popular in the United States, this social media continues to have medium relevance but a balanced predominance of actors in South America. In both Brazil and Colombia, Facebook was a politically active network during the years studied. However, the use of (far) right-wing movements tends to bias the tone and reception of posts.

Another reason we chose Twitter was the limitation of text space. Until the end of 2021, Twitter had a character limit of 140. This helped us ensure that publications had a maximum size limitation. The character limit was also important since the text had to be direct and concise to deliver the message within the established limits. On top of all these factors, Twitter is a network known as a gateway to viral content. Content goes viral on Twitter and tends to expand to other networks.

The sources of information chosen within Twitter were chosen based on the actors involved in the protests relevant to the study. The selected publications met the criteria regarding publication date, profile verification, the minimum number of likes, and keywords. The profiles selected as official sources were official State profiles with the platform's verification seal. In both countries, profiles of police forces and the current president were selected. Publications made by media outlets and civilians were also extracted following relevance criteria.

Nahon (2013) points out that characterizing a social media post as viral is complex. Many likes do not necessarily mean that the post has gone viral. To "go viral," a publication

needs to reach audiences different from those who usually follow the profile that made the post. Verified profiles tend to have greater visibility because of their number of followers and because their publications are suggested to non-followers through the algorithm.

As our objective is to understand how this new form of communication interacts with the speech made by the Securitizing Agent, the publications do not necessarily need to have been viral. Official government profiles will be our primary source of information regarding the tone used by the Securitizing Agent. Although it does not necessarily represent virility, publications with a significant interaction volume will also be considered.

The information collected about the events and publications on Twitter will serve as a source for an analysis of the cases studied. The data will be analyzed separately and in parallel. The objective of these analyses is to show the context of the events and how speeches were made. From this, we will discuss whether what was seen was, in fact, a securitization movement or just the regular way the state forces deal with protests.

1.6 - ON THE STRUCTURE: CHAPTERS OVERVIEW AND CONTENT ANALYSIS

The securitization process implies the relationship between the speaker and the interlocutor. The technological framework does not change this rule; it just adds a new tool for this process. As we will see in Chapter 2, the way of treating the concept of security has changed with world history, mainly as civilians started to interact more with decision-makers. To understand how current social media impacts the securitization process is to update how Studies in International Security are done.

Aiming to understand whether or not there was this movement from the State to securitize social movements, this work is divided into five chapters. Before delving into the data collected on the case studies, a chapter is devoted to reviewing the bibliography and defining the methodological practices applied during the research.

In Chapter 2, what has already been discussed about security and securitization is reviewed, and the understandings used in this work are defined. This chapter also establishes the understanding of the securitization process and its main elements for analysis. Discussions about the meanings of key concepts for this study are carried out, and conceptual markers are defined. The chapter discusses the translation and triangulation concepts, and (de)colonial markers that serve as a starting point for the analyses that will be carried out throughout the work.

In Chapter 3, we delve deeper into the scenario studied. We found the primary data and initial considerations about the events that guided our case studies there. The chapter

presents the initial basis for defining the data collected in this research and discusses securitization based on quantitative data. Nevertheless, in this chapter, we draw parallels with the grammatical structures used by Securitization Agents and their correlations with Stritzel's logic.

Chapter 4 is dedicated to a comprehensive analysis of the securitizing Agent's speech in relation to the referring object, as presented on Twitter (X), and the practice on the streets during protest days. This chapter, which includes data from the previous chapter, provides a detailed understanding of the securitization process. It also brings parallel analyses of both countries, as well as specific observations of each case.

Chapter 5 is a culmination of our study, where we present the main observation points and our final considerations. This chapter encapsulates the main insights from the study and provides a comprehensive analysis of everything that was observed, serving as a key reference point for future research in this field.

2 - CONCEPTUAL REVIEW

This chapter aims to revisit the formation of understandings about the securitization process from the thinkers of the Copenhagen School. There is a resumption of how thinking on the subject was constructed within that School and the central internal debates that generated the applications and forms of analysis we have today. The concept of Securitization and the understanding of Securitization as a translation used by the Copenhagen School are also revisited to better base the empirical analyses that this work will carry out, mainly during the chapters on case studies.

2.1 - SECURITIZATION THEORY AND THE COPENHAGEN SCHOOL

A pioneer in the debate on transforming a topic into a critical issue for national security (Securitization), the so-called Copenhagen School emerged in the 1990s based on the writings and provocations made within the Conflict and Peace Research Institute (COPRI). At first, Barry Buzan, Ole Waever, and Jaap de Wilde were their main precursors.

The main focus of this strand of security studies was to understand more critically the concepts already exposed by other schools and to work more thoroughly on the details of Securitization and its processes. Unfortunately, the so-called first generation of the Copenhagen School (Buzan, Waever, Wilde) needed to rework the concept of Securitization satisfactorily however, leaving methodological gaps on their conceptualization of security for the coming scholars.

This movement of leaving questions to be answered by the next generations brought bonuses and burdens to how the Copenhagen School understands the concept of Securitization. If, on the one hand, we had different authors understanding and incorporating new factors and theories to the concept of Securitization, and new ways of studying this process were being developed, on the other hand, this lack of "standard methodology" inherent to the Copenhagen School left the second generation of authors with enough freedom to have different interpretations. In short, the Copenhagen School ended up giving little or no direction on how the scholar should understand it as a method, which could have made it clearer how to study Securitization from the perspective of the Copenhagen School (STRITZEL, 2014).

[...] This has led to very diverse applications, interpretations, misrepresentations, modifications and critique in recent years, and Waever himself is honest enough to admit that his own reflections on Securitization are marked by several tensions, anomalies and contradictions. (Stritzel, 2014. p. 12)

The Copenhagen School's approach to Securitization draws from different sources. If, on the one hand, we have Barry Buzan, who flirts with paradigms of realism (mainly in his European version); on the other hand, we have Ole Waever, who has stronger influences of post-structuralism. Although Waever was the author with the most significant influence on the first generation of the Copenhagen School, the junction in which its three prominent thinkers took elements from different theoretical currents to build a school that could better understand reality is the primary milestone of this theoretical approach. We then have a framework in which security is both understood as a "reason of state" (a realist view of security) and as part of a "speech act" (STRITZEL, 2014). At this point, we have to understand that security is not a concept of the State, and for the State, the Copenhagen School puts other elements in this intersubjective process. For this approach, we now have the interaction between the speaker and the interlocutor. State and Population start to "negotiate" what security is and what is a priority within this concept.

In essence, in the reading of the Copenhagen School, Securitization combines the radicalization of a realist conceptualization of 'security' understood as *ragione di stato* with the claim that security is a 'speech act.' [...] in the collaborative works of the Copenhagen School a much stronger emphasis can be found on an intersubjective conceptualization of producing security, in which a speaker and an audience 'negotiate' the implementation of 'security' measures. (Stritzel, 2014. p. 12)

By understanding that the State is no longer the sole star of this process, the Copenhagen School begins to analyze and assign roles and responsibilities to each actor involved. In 1952, in his writing *National Security as an Ambiguous Symbol*, Arnold Wolfers highlighted that decision makers/state leaders and the Population have their roles delimited in this securitization process. The first, the leader, is responsible for understanding the threat. The leader, in his position, lists values that deserve protection, the estimated level of security to protect them, the actions for protection, and sacrifices that can be made for this guarantee of safety. It is up to the Population (audience) to consent or not with the justifications, means, and measures to be taken to protect the indicated values. By agreeing with the securitizing Discourse, the Population permits the State to act and agrees with additional burdens resulting from this process (STRITZEL, 2014).

2.1.1 - SECURITY: AN UNIVERSAL CONCEPT?

We need a security issue treated as a priority for Securitization to materialize. In that case, it is necessary to understand what this security concept encompasses and if it is a

consensus among the different schools. The concept is not universal, and each ideological strand has considerations about what it covers or can be covered. Concerning the Copenhagen School, it is necessary to understand that this concept of security is in an area where security must be read as a "state of exception." Moreover, it is in this area that all the movement around the threat occurs. This characterization of security allows the subjects to be treated outside the law or guided by specific policies for "extraordinary cases."

From its perspective, the Copenhagen School presents an extremely rigid security concept with a traditionalist bias. In 1995, when Wæver clarified the traditionalist bias in his understanding of the concept, the author explained why he chose this. For Wæver, the concept of security carries a historical aspect that imposes barriers that cannot escape. Still looking for a justification for the use of such a rigid concept, in 1998, together with Buzan, the authors will try to expose that this use is precisely so that the Copenhagen School can explore and criticize the concept of security (STRITZEL, 2014).

By choosing the traditionalist approach to understanding security, Wæver and the first generation of Copenhagen School authors created controversy within the School. A debate was made between the different generations of authors about how the School, which goes beyond traditionalism in other aspects of security studies, establishes a rigid and retrograde concept in its understanding. The debates go beyond questions about why to use this concept and reach the counter-arguments for the justifications used by Wæver and Buzan. Now, if the idea of security by itself brings the importance of historical understanding, why is this same factor not considered by the authors since the concept of security has already changed over the centuries?

Rothschild (1995), Arends (2008), and other authors from the Copenhagen School have already commented on this evolution in security understanding. For them, the socio-political context and the sets of different actors involved in specific processes impact what is understood by security. *Security is thus always 'a political construction in specific contexts'* (Stritzel, 2014, p. 16).

In fact, throughout history, we have already observed this movement of change in the concept of security. The historical and local context helps us to understand this process, its motives, and what results. An example of this movement was the strategy used by the United States of America to present specific actions as palatable to its civilians. In the United States, the idea of altering what the term encompassed came from the need to combine the "evolution of democracy" with the State's "will" to dominate. As democracy became more present in the lives of civilians, and as they became more up-to-date in what their representatives agreed and

authorized, a concept was needed to make some subjects more palatable. Thus, the context that matters of the State, mainly those of Congress, would pass through civilians and could impact (re)elections gave the State the notion of the need to have a more comprehensive concept that could better justify warlike and belligerent actions. At the same time, the ideals of security and national interest undergo evolutions according to the conjuncture of the time.

With Cold War, the understanding of security underwent yet another remodeling. At this point in world history, the concept of security has a dichotomy created from the unfolding events. Security unfolds in two strands: Peace Studies and Security Studies. First, security was understood from the unfolding of events and non-violent means. On the other hand, Security Studies sought to study the so-called "world problems" from a global perspective, involving the security of the international community and the different States. Both strands were state-centric, with the human being as the focal point, which means that for both, it was up to the State to identify the needs and weaknesses of the human being and act where its presence was crucial for the existence of humanity.

The concept of security changed with the end of the Cold War and the historical context. In the current scenario, the security concept needed a more malleable notion to understand and encompass contemporary challenges since the two World Wars and the Cold War generated impacts that did not exist before. For example, tensions in the Middle East or East Asia entered this new group of situations requiring coverage. In addition, contemporary States had to deal with other national and international security concerns that did not involve only other States. Still, Non-State actors, such as Organized Crime, Terrorists, Insurgent Groups, Etc, needed to be included in the security concept.

All of these movements that have historically shaped the concept of security and its applications have resulted in a tendency among contemporary international security scholars to incorporate both military and non-military elements into their perspectives. Creating a multidimensional and broader understanding of security, encompassing factors ranging from human and food security to military security.

With this multidimensional and broader reading of security, the concept begins to be understood as a practice, which depends on the context and how it was structured. This movement of understanding security as a context-dependent practice is essential to delimit that the concept of security has the same flexibility and needs to be read as such.

It is important to understand security as a practice, mainly who practices it, but it must be clear that it is not a uniform, cohesive and universal concept. The Copenhagen School fails by presenting an understanding of security that appears to be of minor complexity and

imposing a notion of universality and rigidity of understanding. This false notion of universality makes the concept continue to be understood traditionally as *ragione di stato* and allows it to be malleable only in events of significant radicalization.

In short, the concept of security itself is broad and context-dependent. As a result, security understandings and practices will vary in different ways or situations. It is essential to keep this factor in mind when thinking about security, but one must uphold the malleability of the concept too. For example, not having well-defined notions of space-time that govern the understanding of the concept can lead to spurious correlations or those that do not meet the reality of a given location. This is because this exacerbated malleability of understanding the concept can change how it historically determines itself.

2.1.2 - SECURITY AS A SPEECH ACT

If establishing unanimity among Copenhagen School thinkers regarding the concept of security was already difficult, the debate on security as a speech act is even more complicated. Moreover, this understanding alone has led this School's authors to different thoughts and interpretations of analysis cases, confusing securitization scholars.

Within this perspective of securitization studies, there is a debate about security as a speech act. To understand security as a speech act is to assume that this is an intersubjective process and that there are factors that go beyond the act of "expressing oneself." Each author within the Copenhagen School has their way of understanding this concept of security as a speech act, but practically all of them work with this understanding.

As it is a theory that starts from the gaps left by other theorists to start their discussions, many primary references come from other critical schools, such as the School of Paris. Balzacq, for example, is one of the scholars of the School of Paris who guided the debate on the concept of security within the School of Copenhagen. Balzacq argues that the securitization process must be context-dependent and audience-centered. Meaning that the securitization process goes through the idea that the context shapes the notion of security and that the convincing process to become something *ragione di stato* goes through the speaker-interlocutor relationship.

Balzacq (2005), goes further. The author distinguishes between strategic action and discourse in understanding security as a speech act. Discourse⁶ is the manner that the

⁶ Although authors' and schools' understandings of discourse and discursive practice differ, for this work, we will use CSS scholars' understanding. For CSS scholars, discourse and practice can be understood as actions of the same type and not as distinct things. Speech is the practice of communicating an idea to the listener. In the case

communication is made. It is usually direct, intelligible, and unquestionable and is the tool for capturing public opinion (audience). On the other hand, strategic actions are the adaptations made to the instrument (Discourse) to ensure persuasion. On the one hand, the speech must be direct and intelligible, but it is necessary to ensure that it is done in a way that communicates with the audience without making noise. On the other hand, it is noteworthy that, in this moment of persuasion from the speaker to the interlocutor, the clarity of the arguments to guarantee that the audience will understand why certain measures must be taken is crucial to the securitizing process.

However, Balzacq's understanding of security as a speech act is not universal within the Copenhagen School. Perhaps this is one of the main points of attention for new scholars of the School since this non-existence of a cohesive definition of speech act has already generated controversy of authors defining this understanding in different ways in the same book. For better or for worse, this freedom to elaborate knowledge that the Copenhagen School gives to authors makes this understanding of security regarding speech act as a bricolage of different theories from other areas beyond security studies. From linguistic studies to sociology, passing through philosophy, the main authors of the Copenhagen School raise traits in their understandings that pick up concepts from Bourdieu, Hannah Arendt, Butler, Derrida, and John L. Austin, among others.

Because they flirt with different sources, the authors have differing views on what security would be as a speech act. What we have are understandings that end up being familiar to most authors. It is noticed that for most authors, the "act of speech" is more than just trying to describe something as a threat or point it out as such; it is about the junction of a whole process, which goes from the externalization of speech, the form with which it is made until the reception of the audience. This totality is what formalizes and finalizes the securitization process. Just as there is no consensus on understanding security as a speech act, there is no consensus on when to use this understanding or when to apply each notion inherent in the speaker-interlocutor relational process. We tend to understand that there is a balance between the different actors and their performance within this process.

of securitization, the discourse, or discursive practice, would be the action of the Securitizing Agent to communicate public opinion as to why the Referent Object is a threat.

2.1.3 - SECURITIZATION THEORY FOR THE COPENHAGEN SCHOOL: STRUCTURE AND APPLICATION

With the passage of time and the evolution of studies, it is possible to raise some base points for different authors of the Copenhagen School that serve as a structure for the securitization process. It comes to the understanding that Securitization would be an intersubjective process in which the securitizing actor (speaker) performs a speech to an audience (interlocutor). Thus, three main elements can be listed: 1) the speech act, 2) the securitizing actor, and 3) the audience.

Fleeing from what was proposed by scholars in the field of linguistics, who argued that the speech act would be conditioned to the existence of all determining theoretical factors, the Copenhagen School comes to understand that there is no way to achieve this perfect standard within security. However, still, the speech act can exist. Then, the "facilitating conditions" are created, which would be more abrasive elements to arrive at the existence of the speech act. In this authorial model of the Copenhagen School, we have a process divided into three parts. 1) how the speech is made, 2) the securitizing agent and its power relations, and 3) the audience.

Even with three main elements and divisions of the speech act process defined, the Copenhagen School leaves room for theoretical problems. Defining the elements and phases of the process but not defining or explaining how each part performs its function creates problems for applying the theory in empirical analysis. Stritzel (2014) raises that:

[...] Due to the insufficient theoretical exposition of Securitization, it is ultimately not clear how to analyse securitizations. [...]
[...] a central problem of applying the conceptual ideas of the Copenhagen School to empirical analysis concerns the fundamental question of what to study. [...] (STRITZEL, 2014. p. 34-35)

Stritzel (2014) argues that the Copenhagen School needs to present clear arguments that help scholars define and understand securitization theory practically. For the author, questions such as "when an issue moved from political normality to exceptionality" and "when a securitization movement was successful in relation to continuing a securitizing movement" are crucial for applying the theory empirically. However, there are no clear answers to these questions. These uncertainties create a field in which an issue is either in the "realm of politics" or in the "realm of security," and this duality of how to be in or leave one realm for another continues to be a point without visibility within the understandings of the School of Copenhagen.

In summary, from its creation to the main writings of the first generation of Copenhagen School thinkers, some problems can be listed. First, the understanding behind the main concepts needed to be elaborated or justified more, creating vague conceptual reflections that can hinder the precise understanding of the dynamics of Securitization. That first point leads to the second. There is a range of tensions and contradictions within this school analysis, mainly because of this trend of very eclectic use of theories and conceptual reflections. In addition, there still needs to be empirical applicability of the securitization theory, mainly caused by the need for more clarity in guiding questions.

2.2 - REFLECTIONS ON SECURITIZATION THEORY AT THE POST-COPENHAGEN SCHOOL AND ITS RELATIONS WITH DISCOURSE

As seen in the previous subtopic, the first generation of CS faced problems in clearly defining concepts and applicability related to the securitization process. The second generation, with strong influence by neo- or post-Marxism, focused on working on the gaps left by the previous generation.

Thinking from the perspective of studies in International Relations and Security Studies, the second generation of scholars at the School of Copenhagen brings with them the notion of discourses from the reflectionist perspective. Questions were raised by the reflectionist bias about the actual applicability of understanding Discourse within IR and how it would be possible to calculate the impacts and intentions of politicians in different discourses and situations, apart from the countless theories of how to analyze and understand Discourse. This entire universe of debates about Discourse provides a basis for reflection on how the complexities of this phenomenon called "discourse" can be explored through different analytical lenses that, even in opposite biases, can be crucial in understanding the securitization process. Stritzel (2014) argues that securitization theory can be seen as a discourse analysis lens with a specific bias for understanding security studies.

Authors in the neo- or post-Marxist view tend to understand discourse as something constructed within a social space, tensioned and caused by different social and political forces that shape it. In this understanding, a discourse analysis involves understanding what was said/written and a broad analysis of the socio-political context of who utters the speech and for whom. This combination of factors will guide the analysis of the discourse, always prioritizing understanding how the socio-political context is inserted. It is as if it were a double structure. On the one hand, we have intersectionality and intertextuality. On the other

hand, the structures and social stigmas embedded in how the speech was constructed and delivered.

[Discourse is] a complex bundle of simultaneous and sequential interrelated *linguistic acts*, which manifest themselves *within and across the social fields of action* as thematically interrelated semiotic, oral and written tokens. (WODAK, 2001, p. 66 Apud STRITZEL, 2014, p. 44, emphasis added by Stritzel)

Thinking about Securitization, two dimensions manage to emerge in this context of discourse understanding: 1) the Socio-political dimension, in which the speaker needs to talk from a place of authority in a context of power and opportunity disparity, and 2) the Sociolinguistic dimension, which deals with how linguistic resources are used to move and persuade the audience. It is important to highlight that the speaker's authority is significant for the second generation of Copenhagen School thinkers but does not conclude the process alone. Thus, understanding the context in which the speech act is performed is unique for analyzing the securitization process.

2.2.1 - SECURITIZATION AS AN ANALYSIS FRAMEWORK

From a methodological point of view, this conceptual notion requires the combination of two points, 1) a textual analysis and 2) a socio-political analysis of the securitization authorization process. Thus, the basis for understanding the securitization process would be studying the language and its uses and how this language uses the historical and socio-political context to build the notion of threat over a theme.

Nevertheless, how does securitization theory differ from traditional discourse analysis? The main difference would be the specific framework used in securitization theory, with the "securitization grammar." This grammar marks a specific rhetorical structure that expresses the sense of urgency and risk for the survival of the action. Vuori (2008) points out that this grammar has a specific sequential structure. It would be: Claim, Warning, and Demand, usually followed by a proposition content.

However, if used generically, more than this grammatical sequence is needed to guarantee the success of the securitization process. It is important to adjust this grammar with a context that helps the audience to receive the message. At this point, communication resources come in, ranging from adapting the message to be intelligible, using examples that make sense in that socio-political context, and using symbols and specific cultural aspects.

Using the ideation of Vuori (2008) and the explanation of Stritzel (2014), we have Table 1, which places side by side the differentiation of what would be the use of each step of the sequential structure in a generic and contextualized way.

Table 2 - Securitizing moves - grammatical structure sequence: comparison between generic and contextualized usage according to VUORI, 2008; STRITZEL, 2014

Grammar Structure	Generic	Contextualized
Claim	something is dangerous/an existential threat	contextualized description of the danger/threat
Warning	if something is not done, the danger/threat will be realized	contextualized description of the consequences inaction
Demand	something should be done	contextualized description of an action plan
Propositional Content	proof and/or reasons are provided to support the claim/warning	contextualized presentation of proof and/or reasons

Elaborated by the author

Table 2 shows us how the sequential grammatical structure of the securitization process works. However, Stritzel (2014) raises questions about who are the securitization agents that use this structure as a basis for the securitization process. If we answered this question from the perspective of the first generation of scholars of the Copenhagen School, we would be talking about heads of State, ministers, high-ranking diplomats, and influential voices within military entities, that is, state political actors. To the first generation, being an actor in a position of power gives the securitizing agent the possibility of using the Discourse of authority to invoke the securitization process. However, some of the second generation of scholars disagree with this thinking. There is a debate about how other authors can use linguistic resources adapted to socio-political realities to place themselves in positions of authority while discussing an issue. For these scholars, this authority position is more malleable than an exclusive place for state representatives.

2.3 - SECURITIZATION AS TRANSLATION

We can understand Securitization as a two-step action. In the first moment, we have the movement to securitize a theme. At this stage, we have the whole process of politicizing an issue, converting it into a threat, and taking action with more extreme measures. Then, in the second moment, we have the translation of Securitization. The translation is the movement of capturing a picture of something that has already been securitized at a given time and using it as a basis for actions in the current context.

This nomenclature can be confusing since, in English, the term to identify the movement of transplanting or transferring something is the same as converting something from one language to another. However, when it comes to Securitization, translation will always be related to taking a framework of analysis or action taken previously and applying it to a new context, usually a more current one.

Based on adaptations of linguistic understandings, Stritzel (2014) will call this first moment a threat image, referring to the movement of the entire construction of the threat to justify the actions that touch political normality. This threat image that Stritzel refers to is a final result of Securitization. At the end of the process, we have an image of the threat and how we deal with it. This notion brings a sense of stability and durability more remarkable to this concept than conventional securitization movements.

Regarding the second moment, the translation, this would be connected with the notion of pre-existing structures. It uses narratives, and sometimes examples, that existed in other contexts to justify the transplantation of structures and practices to a new context. Stritzel (2014) illustrates this movement with a case study between the United States and Germany. However, we could continuously observe this process in developing countries in relation to developed countries. This translation movement raises questions about application, operationalization, and localization.

2.3.1 - WHAT IS SECURITIZATION?

As stated earlier, securitizing a topic is opting for adopting the "Panic policy," which would transform something into a matter to be dealt with by the defense ministry or corresponding body as a threat to national security. For some, at this point, this process may sound very similar to Giorgio Agamben's State of Exception, but there are differences.

In the Italian philosopher's State of Exception, the statesman uses a social crisis to use force legally. That is, the use of force, in this case, does not go through validation with

public opinion. The State only adopts the emergency measure deemed necessary at that specific moment. *Securitization* is a process that goes further.

As Silva (2016) pointed out, the securitization process is argumentative and needs to be justified to put the "panic policy" into effect. When successful, the securitization process allows the State to treat the issue as it sees fit, regardless of a state of exception (different from Agamben's premise). An example of successful Securitization is that of terrorism.

As it is an already securitized issue, terrorism is linked to national security. Waging war against terrorism or counterattacking to the same or higher degree is an intelligible action. Thus, the State can deal with the issue as it sees fit. However, the securitization process, as the School of Paris scholars explain, is a social process with phases and nuances that, in a certain way, take time.

According to Villa; Santos (2011), the Referring Object (theme perceived as a threat) requires a Securitizing Agent (the actor who claims the existence of a threat in the Referring Object) to argue and support its thesis with other actors involved in the security dynamics of the sector. In this way, the object goes from non-politicized to politicized and only then securitized. The subject's circumstances will place it within the spectrum of Securitization or even lead it to desecuritization. According to Silva (2016), the success of Securitization depends on three components: Identification of an existential threat, emergency actions, and legitimation so that rule-breaking can occur freely.⁷ (SILVA, 2016, p. 6).

Balzacq et al. (2016) highlight that Securitization combines threat design and management policies. This junction is the path that will lead to the common understanding that the issue is a threat (Securitization). In designing and managing the threat, some factors are relevant and influence, each in its way, the final result of this securitization process.

There are four concepts that Critical Security Studies (CSS) constantly use to understand the securitization process. They are 1) Audience; 2) Context; 3) Power Relations; 4) Practices and Instruments. Even in different schools, these four concepts are essential for a deeper understanding of Securitization.

Audience. The concept of audience is vital to understanding Securitization under CSS because the basic premise of the theories is that the securitization process is an intersubjective process that depends on the audience's consent. Balzacq et al. (2016) point

⁷ Translated by the Author. Original Version: o sucesso de uma securitização depende de três componentes: Identificação de uma ameaça existencial, ações de emergência e legitimação para que ocorra livremente a quebra de regras.

out that scholars have dedicated their time to answering three basic questions about the impact of the audience on the securitization process.

[...] researchers have explored the following set of questions: What is the nature and criteria of audience acceptance? Which challenges does the possibility of multiple audiences raise for the theory? What are the functions and types of acceptance by the audience? (BALZACQ; LÉONARD; RUZICKA, 2016. p. 499).

Buzan et al. (1998) further state that *the issue is securitized only if and when the audience accepts it*. Although there is this conception about the importance of the audience in the securitization process, Balzacq also highlights that the literature discussing this concept needs to be revised. This lack of literature on *the securitizing act attempts to convince to accept special procedures because of the specific security nature of some issues* can make it challenging for the researcher to understand precisely the role of this concept in the process as a whole.

Context. The questions around the context as a critical aspect are precisely about how the results *can be derived from and explained by differences in contextual features* (BALZACQ; LÉONARD; RUZICKA, 2016. p. 502). The debate about this factor is ontological and epistemological. Ontological because it questions what is and what builds the context; It is epistemological because it questions whether there is a causal relationship between context and outcome of the securitization process.

Power relations. The debate around this factor is about whether or not the power relationship between the actors involved concerning the audience impacts the outcome of the securitization process. Power relations illustrate how the securitization process is an argumentative game in which different actors explore ways of defining the referent object as a theme to be securitized. At this point, this concept argues a lot about the ability of elites to get ahead with the process of securitizing a topic.

In addition, the fact that Securitization has an impact on power relations helps explain the gradual shift from the question of what security is to what it does. Initial securitization debates focused in large part on the issue of the power of the elites to successfully carry out securitizing moves. (BALZACQ; LÉONARD; RUZICKA, 2016. p. 501)

Practices and Instruments. The debates on how the Practices and Instruments used in the securitization process manage to influence the final result, unlike the debate on context, circumvent the debates on ontology and epistemology. At this point, the debate is more practical. It seeks to understand how technical or physical practices can advance the

securitization process without the language barrier being a problem between the securitization agent and the audience.

Existing debates concerning the work of authors such as Bourdieu and Foucault primarily inspire debates around this concept. From these authors, securitization scholars borrowed the concepts of "practice field" and "Habitus." In the field, the securitizing agent can better understand the relationship between the audience and the securitization process. In this field, the securitizing agent can gain more instruments and knowledge about what and how certain types of power (economic, cultural, symbolic, etc.) to use. Habitus is how the agent relates to and behaves in the field. This concept shows how the ability to capture linguistic and non-linguistic routines can be fundamental to the conclusion of the securitization process (BALZACQ; LÉONARD; RUZICKA, 2016).

Critical Security Studies (CSS) have evolved a lot since its creation. Currently, it is possible to understand better and analyze the impact of the audience on the outcome of the securitization process. In addition, scholars have managed to advance the role of context, power relations, and verbal and non-verbal routines and their impacts on the securitization process.

2.3.2 - WHY TRANSLATION?

When threat images thus defined travel, however, they reach beyond the specific discursive structures of their initial location and genesis. Threat images then potentially encounter a variety of new discourses which potentially reiterate, transform or challenge the interpretations initially associated with the threat image and potentially adapt it to the particularities of the new locale. Processes of Securitization in a certain discursive locale, then, take the form of translations of these pre-existing knowledge structures generated in previous discursive locales. (STRITZEL, 2014. p. 56)

As mentioned before, when it comes to Securitization, translation refers to adapting the notion of threat given to a given referent object at a given time to apply to a new context. By new context, we can understand a new historical period within the same country and the transposition of this concept to a new location, which consequently has a new socio-political context. As stated in the previous sections, the socio-political context is crucial to Securitization. In this way, any change in it can impact the audience's understanding of Securitization, reinforcing or refuting it.

Using the term and idea behind the translation best illustrates the process of taking a securitized topic through its phases and replicating it in another context. Freeman (2009) condenses the translation process into five main pillars to better understand how this

process evolves. That is, these five elements represent factors intrinsic to the translation process. 1) Passage; 2) Construction; 3) Bounded; 4) Encounter; and 5) Indefinite are the main elements that help us understand the translation process. Table 3 shows these elements and what they refer to within the translation.

Table 3 - Elements of the Translation

Element	Description
Passage	Refers to the process of spatial change, To take something from one place to another; It refers both to the geographical sense and the change from one socio-political context to another.
Construction	The notion of replication; (Re) Construct understanding with changes consistent with the new reality.
Bounded	Work on the structure to maintain the "original" version somehow bounded to the new version.
Encounter	"Encounter" of the previous version with the new context; Uses the new context to "encounter" ways to incorporate the original idea into the new locale appropriately.
Indefinite	Indefinite; The process does not have a stable threat image; New context can result in process changes.

Source: FREEMAN, 2008; STRITZEL, 2014. Elaborated by the author.

Considering the points exposed above, and the concept of securitization as translation, or translation as an analysis perspective, it makes sense to think of a scenario in which threat images move transnationally. However, every time this movement takes the threat image to a new national reality, new elements are incorporated through the discursive process. Integrating the different local discourses into the threat image can be called the localization process. The understanding of what Stritzel (2014) calls “locale” would be about a consolidated discursive field, and in a certain way, autonomous in terms of practices and standards to identify sociolinguistic and political structures shared with other spheres. Thus, the location would be the *encounter of a pre-existing threat image with such particularities of a discursive locale* (STRITZEL, 2014. P. 63). This meeting can occur at any level, global, regional, national, or organizational.

In short, securitization transforms a non-politicized issue into an important issue for National/International Security. This process involves a securitization agent (the one who is interested in securitizing the subject), a Referent Object (the issue or group that configures the alleged threat), and an audience (which is the public to which the securitization agent presents its justifications of securitization). The socio-political context is crucial in the process. It will define everything from how the securitizing agent externalizes its reasons to the audience's reception. This process can be seen as a translation since the threat image goes from the “non-securitization” to the transnationalization of the threat.

Because we live in a globalized world, the transnationalization of threat images is entirely intelligible. Furthermore, this process of national fear being presented to the international community as a threat to everyone has been seen at other times (e.g. when the US sold the communist threat as a threat to everyone in the Cold War). When transferred to another realized image, the threat image acquires specific aspects for its new composition. Since the socio-political context is unique in this process, each context change impacts the construction and maintenance of the threat. With each translation, contemporary discourses are coupled with the threat image to reinforce or refute securitization.

Throughout history, we have already observed the concept of security and the understanding of threat change. Several times we also watched countries presenting internal fears to the international community as a theme that all should fear. It is widespread to observe the movement of transferring a threat from another country to yours, even though this threat has never been under the radar. This movement can be constantly observed mainly between developed and developing countries. Brazil, for example, passed legislation on terrorism after much external pressure, even though it had never been the target of attacks or had been involved in direct negotiations that could make it one. Securitization is not restricted to the internal process of a statesman in transforming an issue into an essential one for national security, but it can also mean the way in which a country presents a threat to the international community and how this threat is adapted and retold in other locations.

2.4 - THE TRANSLATION OF STRITZEL IN LATIN AMERICA: DIFFERENCES AND APPLICABILITY

Stritzel's (2014) work is particularly relevant to our analysis as it presents the transaction as a key element of the securitization movement. His perspective is that securitization relies heavily on audience recognition of the speech, with the transaction serving as the movement that enables the securitizing Agent to present the Referent Object as

a threat. This understanding is crucial as it forms the theoretical basis for examining the translation of securitization theory in Latin America.

Stritzel, in **Security in Translation: Securitization Theory and the Localization of Threat**, presents excellent examples of how the translation of concepts and elements that characterize the threat occurs from one reality to another. Of the examples used in the book, the case of the securitization of Organized Crime in Germany demonstrates the choice and use of these elements. Stritzel's studies present how the German State (Securitizing Agent) used historical and popular elements from other countries to characterize organized crime (referent object) as an imminent threat. Stritzel, in the conclusions, points out that the German success with the organized crime case was mainly due to the connectivity with the elements used and the audience. The references to Italian Mafias and American Gangs and the translation of other elements were unique to the process.

Securitization is undeniably intertwined with discourse—not just the discursive act, but also how it is executed, received, and adapted to the surrounding scenario. Translation is an indispensable element of securitization as it is a catalyst that speeds up the process of politicization of the topic. However, the adaptation of understandings and characteristics to the context is pivotal to the final outcome.

When we look at our research object, we already know it is a politicized topic. In other words, the Colombian and Brazilian states have already had discussions and government decisions on the subject, and the threat characterization discourse is present.

Unlike Germany, characterizing the enemy tends to be easier for the two countries studied. If, on the one hand, Germany, described by Stritzel, needed to characterize a more abstract group such as organized crime, for Brazil and Colombia, the threat is placed in a more tangible position. In the case of South American countries, the enemy, in general, has already been historically constructed by colonialism. The State usually treats social movements, protests, and riots as synonymous and forms of attack on the State sovereignty. This is because the actors who call for political acts that take to the streets tend to represent groups already treated by the State as rebels.

Latin America as a whole has a history of characterizing social movements and protests as terrorist acts. Most countries have generic legal classifications on terrorism that have many gaps in interpretation. When we bring Stritzel's logic to South America, many translation elements are already embedded in society. The critical parallel when thinking about the structure of Stritzel's theory in the South American context is how the selectivity in applying the elements that characterize the enemy is exercised.

The Latin American region has a more challenging approach to the translation movement. However, when it comes to labeling protests as terrorist acts, the categorization must be strategic. The translation used must be carefully considered so that the public can differentiate between exercising their civil right to protest and when they are not. Unlike the case of organized crime in Germany, the securitizing Agent's greatest challenge is to define this fine line of the enemy's characteristics.

After the 9/11 attacks, the concept of terrorism was more thoroughly integrated into domestic policies, heavily influenced by the United States. This change affected Brazil, Colombia, and other countries, leading to the implementation of imprecise domestic policies. As a result, these countries had to develop more elaborate methods to identify and classify their enemies. While the international system had an effective classification system for terrorism, incorporating the concept into domestic policies presented new challenges.

In this study, certain fixed bases were established to comprehend the key objective of the research. Historically, Colombian and Brazilian States have attempted to secure social movements and protests as terrorist acts. The movement to describe this enemy varies over time and has different levels of effort. Using Stritzel's logic, we aim to determine whether the police force used during the 2020-2021 protests can be regarded as a feature of this translation movement and characterization of the imminent threat.

3 - STATUES ON THE GROUND AND VACCINE ON THE ARM: AN ANALYSIS OF PROTESTS IN COLOMBIA AND BRAZIL

To answer this study's question, we need to examine the protests during the studied period. Analyzing these events helps us understand the context behind the government's actions. We want to reflect on the the size and motivation of various actors engaged in these protests. Moreover, we also scrutinize the State's position on social media regarding the events.

The data study was divided into two blocks. The first block entails a detailed analysis of the events themselves, including dates and comprehensive information about the protests. The second block focuses on what was observed on social media regarding the subject. To enhance comprehension, the data were painstakingly classified into various categories and markers, with the aim of extracting the most crucial information for this study.

After collecting the above information, categories were created to group the events to facilitate reading the information. Four groups of categories were created to help categorize the data collected. They are: 1) Actors; 2) Motivation and Causes; 3) State Force Usage; and 4) Size of the event. In Table 4 we have the definition of each of the categories mentioned.

Table 4 - Categories and definitions

CATEGORY	DEFINITION	OBJECTIVE
Actor	Classification, into more generic groups, of the actors who were involved in the event.	Identify the main groups involved in the events, whether calling for protests or interacting
Motivation and Causes	Classification relating to the main reasons that led to the event being called	Group the main motivations and motivating themes of events
State Forces Usage	Classification of the level of force used by the state in the events that occurred. Relating to the use of contingents and specialized groups.	Observe the size of the state force used in the events and compare it with the number of participants
Crowd Size	Classification relative to the size of the group participating in the	Group events by crowd size. Facilitating analysis of the use of

event.

state force

Elaborated by the Author.

The categories "Actors" and "Motivation and Causes" were created following the patterns observed in the main groups involved in the events. Each group's nomenclature for these categories is self-explanatory. Two groups may need further explanation for the "Motivation and Causes" category. They are: "Non identified" - which refers to events whose cause or motivation has not been identified; and "Local Relevance" - which refers to protests motivated by local events or interests of specific groups without impact on the national level. Examples of "Local Relevance" would be protests against a law or municipal position and protests by labour groups (drivers, truck drivers, lawyers) that dealt with specific class issues. Regarding the category of the use of State force, four possibilities were stipulated:

1. **Small** - when it was understood that the police force employed was the regular contingent;
2. **Medium** - for cases in which more significant use of police force was noted or in cases with a record of violence without identifying the actors;
3. **Large** - for cases in which special forces were used in situations outside the standard regulations or the expected;
4. **Non identified** - for cases with insufficient information to conduct the analyses.

We have taken a meticulous approach regarding the 'Crowd Size' category. We have created increasing groupings to represent the size of the crowds accurately: I) up to 100; II) up to 1,000; III) up to 5,000; IV) up to 10,000; up to 100,000; V) above 100,000; VI) Not Reported; VII) Not Specified. "Not Reported" values are events in which there was no official or unofficial disclosure of the number of people. The "Not Specified" label considers the reported non-numeric values, making the actual count unattainable. Examples of this group are information such as 'groups' or 'families', in which the information is theoretically provided but is not based on quantitative elements. This meticulous approach ensures that our data on crowd size is as accurate as possible.

For the data concerning the events, we aim to understand the interactions between state forces and civilians. In this part of the analysis, we seek to comprehend the state's actions about the protests, highlighting, in particular, the use of police force in an ostensive manner.

We want to understand the state's stance on social media activity. For these data, the analyses stem from observing the texts used, key messages, and framing according to the grammatical structure logic outlined by Stritzel (Table 2). The data for this part of the study were filtered using criteria designed to ensure the "virality" of the posts.

The Table 5 lists the profiles selected as sources of information on how the securitizing agent directed the discourse.

Table 5 - Profiles used for searching posts on Twitter (X).

	Actor Type	Handle	Followers	Country
Policía Metropolitana de Bogotá	Military Forces	@policiabogota	153.500	Colombia
Policia de Colombia	Military Forces	@policiacolombia	1.600.000	Colombia
Ivan Duque	Politician	@ivandunque	2.500.000	Colombia
Jair Bolsonaro	Politician	@jairbolsonaro	12.100.000	Brazil
Policia Militar Rio de Janeiro	Military Forces	@PMERJ	344.500	Brazil
Polícia Militar São Paulo	Military Forces	@PMESP	722.800	Brazil
G1	News	@g1	15.000.000	Brazil
El Tiempo	News	@ELTIEMPO	8.800.000	Colombia

Source: X - Twitter. Elaborated by the Author.

Due to the different structures of police forces, Brazil has more profiles of Military Forces than Colombia. While Colombia has a more nationalized police force structure, in Brazil, the military police fall under state jurisdiction, resulting in each Brazilian state having its regional police force. Only verified profiles of Brazilian military forces were selected to avoid a significant discrepancy in the number of posts between the two countries due to the higher number of military force profiles in Brazil.

To better guide the searches, the collection of posts followed the logic of advanced search on Twitter. We used keywords and specific profiles (mentioned above) as search parameters. Each type of profile, in addition to the keywords, had a minimum number of likes as a criterion. The minimum number of likes for Military Forces, Sitting Presidents, and national Newspapers was 200. The minimum number of likes for posts made by civilians and foreign newspapers was 2000. The keywords used in the searches were selected based on notes from the database regarding the events in both countries.

Table 6- Keywords used to filter posts on Twitter by type of profile of interest

Brazil	Colombia	International Profiles
Protesto	Protesta	Protest in Colombia
Manifestação	Manifestación	Protests in Brazil
Manifestações	Manifestaciones	
Violência Policial	Paro Nacional	
Impeachment	ESMAD	

Elaborated by the Author

It is essential to highlight that the words chosen were based on observations made during field activities and the notes available for each event mentioned in the database. The words were used within close contexts, no matter how different they sounded or grammatically contrasting meanings—for example, the use of ESMAD for Colombia and Police Violence in Brazil. The two words are different, but they were mentioned in similar contexts in almost all observations. The words "Impeachment" and "Paro Nacional" are another example. They are different words, but they were the main words indicated as motivation for the observed movements.

3.1 - GENERAL OBSERVATIONS ON THE SCENARIO IN SOUTH AMERICA

Overall, more than 42,510 protests occurred in South America. The 12 countries and French Guiana recorded demonstrations over the two years, even amid the pandemic. Some of these protests were motivated by the COVID-19 pandemic itself. Brazil and Colombia account for 47% of all protests during this period.

Table 7 - Number of Protests by country and percentage of the region

Country	# Protests	%
Argentina	5.961	14%
Bolivia	1.778	4%
Brazil	13.834	33%
Chile	3.270	8%
Colombia	6.042	14%
Ecuador	958	2%

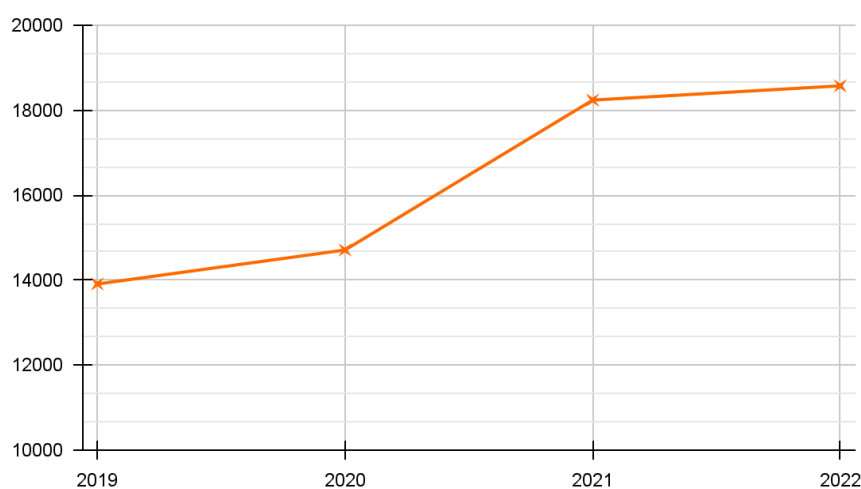
French Guiana	83	0,2%
Guyana	161	0,4%
Paraguay	2.069	5%
Peru	2.606	6%
Suriname	80	0,2%
Uruguay	117	0,3%
Venezuela	5.559	13%
Total	42.518	100%

Elaborated by the Author

Approximately 25% of all these protests involved attacks on civilians, with about 8% of these incidents involving state forces among the actors. This provides a general overview of the protest landscape in South America for 2020 and 2021. As seen in Table 7, Brazil and Colombia represent the majority of events during this period. Both countries remain at the forefront of these events even when applying more specific filters, such as the number of protests involving attacks on civilians or the number of protests per year.

Since 2019, the region has experienced a growing wave of protests. Brazil, Chile, Venezuela, Colombia, and Argentina lead the list of countries with the most protests. Brazil has consistently held the top position every year since 2019, with the other positions alternating among the remaining countries. Figure 1 illustrates the evolution of the total number of events in South American countries.

Figure 1 - Total of Protests in South America per Year (2019 - 2022)



Elaborated by the Author

3.2 - ANALYZING PROTESTS BETWEEN 2020 AND 2021 IN BRAZIL AND COLOMBIA

As mentioned, Brazil and Colombia account for nearly 50% of the region's protests, with Brazil being the absolute leader, representing over 32% of all protests. Together, the countries amassed more than 11,400 protests over two years. Protests were conducted on more than 720 days, almost averaging at least one protest per day over two consecutive years. Over 1,000 Brazilian cities (19% of the country's total municipalities) and more than 500 Colombian cities (49% of the total municipalities) reported protests during this period. Both countries recorded protests before the official lockdown⁸ decrees due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Brazil reported 1,177 protests, and Colombia 238 protests before the imposition of pandemic measures.

The events reported in both countries were divided into six categories, reflecting the motivations that drove people to the streets. When examining the data on these categories in aggregate form, we find that in 2020, the primary motivations were Local Relevance Protests (52%) and COVID-19-related protests (23%). In 2021, while Local Relevance Protests remained one of the most observed categories (30%), Anti-Government Protests became the primary reported motivation (35%).

When we separate the data to observe the distribution of protest motivations in each country, we can see that Brazil and Colombia were similar in this data categorization. As shown in Table 8, the two most observed categories of protests were the same for both countries and had very similar percentages in both years studied.

Table 8 - Percentage of protests by category by year (2020 - 2021)

Cause Group	2020		2021	
	Brazil	Colombia	Brazil	Colombia
Against the Government	5%	3%	21%	58%
COVID-19 Related	23%	25%	14%	3%
In Favor of the Government	4%	1%	16%	0%

⁸ Colombia and Brazil registered different dates and forms of lockdown. In Colombia, the first mandatory social isolation measure was issued by the federal government on March 25th, 2020, and it is valid throughout the national territory.

In Brazil, the approach to lockdown was more gradual. The federal government initially refused to issue a national decree of mandatory social isolation, leaving it up to the state governments to impose distancing measures. The first mandatory measure was registered on the Island of Fernando de Noronha (belonging to the state of Pernambuco) on April 20th. This measure was a precursor to the state-wide measures that would be imposed weeks later. The first Brazilian state to adopt a lockdown across the entire territory was the state of Maranhão on May 2nd, 2020.

Infrastructure Problems	9%	7%	7%	5%
Local Relevance	52%	50%	35%	23%
Unknown/ NA	7%	13%	7%	11%

Fonte: Elaborated by the Author

Of the more than 11,400 protests recorded over the two years, 81% were categorized as Peaceful Protests, while the remaining 19% involved interactions between different actors. These numbers align with the data from another categorization observed, State Force Usage. Protests reported as events with low state force usage accounted for about 81%, matching the percentage of peaceful protests. For the other events, 13% were categorized as having medium use of state force, indicating above-normal but moderate police force and 6% involved extensive use of police force.

Table 9 shows the number of reported participants in protests per country. It is evident that most events, according to reports, were relatively small in scale, with up to 5,000 participants. Events with more than 5,000 participants collectively accounted for less than 0.5% of the reported events. In both countries, events with unreported or unspecified sizes were the majority. In about 0.2% of cases, the proportion of participants was reported unqualified, making it impossible to classify them into other categories, and thus labeled as "Not Specified."

Regarding crowd size, Brazil was the only country that reported protests with more than 100,000 participants. Of the three protests with over 100,000 participants, two took place on September 7, 2021 (Brazil's Independence Day), in support of then-President Jair Bolsonaro, and the other occurred in March 2020 in Belém, Pará, against child labour. Notably, the event in Belém happened 67 days before the official COVID-19 lockdown decree.

Table 9 - Crowd Size per country (%)

	Brazil	Colombia	Total geral
no report	87,26%	85,84%	86,79%
Not specified	0,04%	0,42%	0,17%
over 100.000	0,04%	0,00%	0,03%
up to 100.000	0,18%	0,50%	0,29%
up to 10.000	0,07%	0,03%	0,05%
up to 5.000	0,22%	0,56%	0,33%
up to 1.000	4,04%	4,85%	4,31%
up to 100	8,15%	7,79%	8,04%

Elaborate by the Author.

Considering the high number of events and aiming to address our research question better, we will analyze the collected data using specific filters. Two filters will be applied simultaneously to the data. To consider the events, they must report large-scale police force usage and involve crowds of up to 5,000 people or categorize them as "not specified." This approach narrows our data, leaving us with 99 events (7%). The rationale for choosing these filters is based on the need to understand why the state deployed significant police forces (or specialized squads) in protests of relatively small size (up to 5,000 people).

3.2.1 - DELVING INTO THE BRAZILIAN AND COLOMBIAN PROTEST SCENARIOS DURING THE PANDEMIC

By applying the mentioned filters, we can better observe which motivations most frequently involved large-scale police force interaction. In both years and countries, motivations of local or specific group relevance (Local Relevance) exhibited the highest number of cases of large-scale police force usage. Beyond these cases, in 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic was the second most common motivation for using large police forces. In 2021, anti-government protests reported the highest incidence of large police force deployment.

It is noteworthy that only Brazil recorded pro-government protests and that even in these cases, there was large-scale police use. However, it is important to emphasize that in these specific cases (pro-government protests), the large number of officers on the streets had a political bias, as the demonstrators in support of Jair Bolsonaro praised the country's military forces.

Evidence shows a shift in the primary motivation from one year to the next, but we can also observe a correlation between the cases. In 2020, pandemic-related themes (vaccine, lockdown, rising death toll) were the primary motivations for protests. In 2021, the theme shifted to anti-government protests. One can understand this transition as interconnected: in the first year of the pandemic, motivations directly related to COVID-19 issues, and in the following year, civilians began questioning the government's actions and the outcomes of the previous year's processes.

In addition to data on the extent of state force employed at events, it is also crucial to highlight events involving direct interaction between protest organizers (actor 1) and police forces (actor 2). 92 out of the 99 cases selected by the filter reported interaction between some official police force and Actor 1. Colombia was the country that reported this type of

interaction the most, at 58%. Protests against the government and regarding the pandemic were the events that most frequently exhibited this interaction, at 15% and 20%, respectively.

Table 10 - % of events by Motivation

CAUSE GROUP	2020	2021
Against the Government	3,13%	40,00%
COVID-19 Related	26,56%	2,86%
In Favor of the Government	6,250%	5,71%
Local Relevance	62,50%	51,43%
Unknown/ NA	1,56%	0%

Elaborate by the Author.

Looking specifically at the military actors cited as class 2 actors (actors who interact with protest organizers), we can observe a higher frequency of certain police groups. In Brazil, in addition to the well-known police divisions (military police, civil police), a generic category, "Police Forces of Brazil," was also reported, referring to the possible joint operation of different police squads and forces. 72% of interactions occurred between Actor 1 and Military Police, while another 13% occurred between Actor 1 and the Police Forces of Brazil.

In the Colombian case, as expected, most interactions between protesters and police forces involved the ESMAD. The "Escuadrón Móvil Antidisturbios" (ESMAD), a subdivision of the Colombian National Police, was created in 1999 with a group of officers specialized in containing riots and large gatherings of civilians. Subject to national and international criticism for its methods and lack of preparedness, the squad continues to be deployed as a police force responsible for responding to calls during protests in Colombia. Between 2020 and 2021, the ESMAD was reported as an interacting actor in 57% of protests with up to 5,000 people and significant use of state force—another 36% of events involved joint interaction between different police forces and protest organizers.

In addition to events with local motivations, which were present in 54% of cases, there were reports of ESMAD in 64% of protests against the government and 50% of protests related to the pandemic. The Police Forces of Colombia's presence was reported in 36% of protests against the government and 50% of protests related to the pandemic. Meanwhile, in Brazil, the Military Police were reported as present in 83% of protests related to the pandemic and in 33% of pro-government protests, as well as interacting in 70% of local relevance protests.

Table 11 - % of Police Force participation in protests with up to 5,000 people

BRAZIL	Civil Police (Brazil)	3%
	Federal Police (Brazil)	3%
	Military Police (Brazil)	72%
	Municipal Guards (Brazil)	8%
	Police Forces of Brazil (Brazil)	13%
	Prison Guards (Brazil)	3%
COLOMBIA	ESMAD - Mobile Anti-Disturbance Squadron (Colombia)	57%
	Military Forces of Colombia (Colombia)	4%
	Police Forces of Colombia (Colombia)	36%
	Prison Guards (Colombia)	4%

Elaborate by the Author.

When we compare the filtered data with the raw data, we encounter that 49% of total protests in Colombia, regardless of crowd size, involved interaction with ESMAD, and another 45% involved interaction with Colombian Police Forces. In Brazil, 70% of protests, regardless of size, reported interaction with the Military Police, and another 7% with Brazilian Police Forces.

Table 12 shows the breakdown of filtered events by groups that were the proponents of the protests (Actor 1). In Brazil, 16% of protests were convened by Labour groups, followed by indigenous or ethnic groups (5%) and social movements (5%). In Colombia, the National Strike Committee was responsible for a significant portion of the calls (22%), followed by Labor Groups (7%) and Students (6%). In both countries, more than half of the events could not identify the leading actor in the call. It is important to note that, for the Colombian case, 100% of protests by the National Strike Committee, which fit the mentioned filters, involved interaction with ESMAD.

Table 12 - Groups that organized for protests (%)

COUNTRY	GROUP⁹	%
BRAZIL	Indigenous or Ethnic Groups (Brazil)	5%
	Labor Groups (Brazil)	16%
	Prisoners (Brazil)	2%
	Social Movements (Brazil)	5%
	Students (Brazil)	2%
	Unidentified Groups (Brazil)	71%
COLOMBIA	CNP - National Strike Committee (Colombia)	22%
	Foreigners (Colombia)	2%
	Labor Groups (Colombia)	7%
	Prisoners (Colombia)	4%
	Social Movements (Colombia)	4%
	Students (Colombia)	6%
	Unidentified Groups (Colombia)	56%

Elaborate by the Author.

3.3 - ANALYSIS OF THE USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA AS A COMMUNICATION TOOL WITH PUBLIC OPINION

Based on the dates observed in the database of protests in both countries, profiles, and criteria pointed out at the beginning of this chapter, we could observe the movement and formation of discourse on Twitter (X) throughout the period studied. Following established standards regarding reach and eligible profiles, 120 tweets were identified for analysis. Of these publications, 74 were made by politicians or government officials (62%).

Once the relevant publications were identified, they were compiled into a comprehensive database for analysis. This database included the original text, handles, and crucial data on reach (total likes, comments, shares). Moreover, the publications were meticulously characterized based on the grammatical structures of the securitization discourse as outlined by Stritzel (see Table 2). From the original texts, we also identified publications that highlighted the characterization of an enemy or threat or proposed a solution.

⁹ Traditional social movements were considered for the Social Movements group in both Brazil and Colombia. Are part of this group: LGBTQIAPN+ Movement, Feminist Movements, and Movements for Racial Equality. Due to their high incidence, some traditional social movements, such as student and indigenous movements, were considered separate groups.

To categorize the post texts according to the Stritzel structure, the GPT4^o artificial intelligence tool was used. The tool extracted a cloud of frequent words the profiles indicated in Table 5 used during 2020 and 2021. The word cloud was filtered, discarding words outside the context of the manifestations, and the words were divided following the logic of the grammatical structure of Stritzel (see Table 2). In this way, based on the words found in the original text, the tweets were categorized following the Grammatical Structure. A specific analysis was carried out in cases where double identification was observed.

The unique approach of Stritzel's grammatical structure was applied to identify whether the publications were about characterizing the threat, the enemy, or a solution to the threat. This approach involved identifying keywords for each group and then locating them within the text of the publication. Notably, simultaneous cases were not excluded in this classification group, as the text could present elements from all 3 categories. Tables 13 and 14 provide a comprehensive view of the words used for classifications.

Of the posts that met the requirements indicated at the beginning of this chapter, 38% were made by civilians or newspapers. Brazil had the lowest number of publications classifiable for analysis, around 28%. There was much activity on Jair Bolsonaro's part on social media. However, Twitter was not his most frequent social media, and his publications rarely discussed protests. Brazilian police forces have published more on the topic than the president himself. Conversely, Colombia was very active in articulating via social media, being responsible for around 72% of the tweets analyzed.

Table 13 - Words frequently used by the profiles studied during 2020 and 2021.

	KEYWORDS
CLAIM	Enemigo Es falso Irresponsável Manifestación Pacífica
WARNING	Destrucción No es manifestación pacífica Vandalismo/ Vándalos Violência/ Violencia
DEMAND	Investigación Garantizar Acompañamiento #EsUnHonorSerPolicia Denuncia
PROPOSITIONAL CONTENT	Balance Recomendamos Razones Reconocimiento ESMAD protege Atacar

Source: Elaborated by the author using artificial intelligence to identify key words.

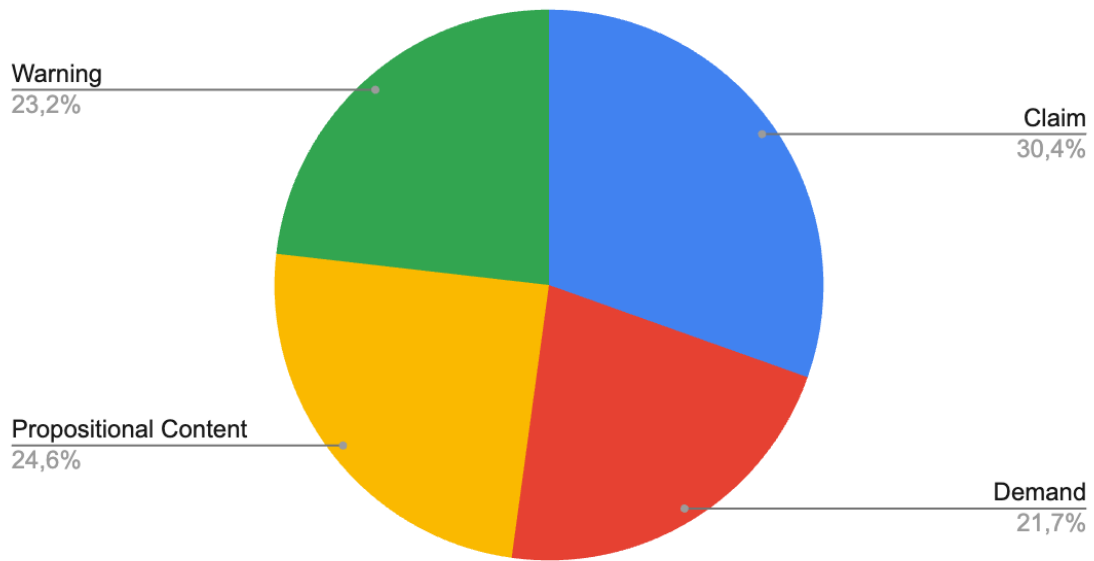
Table 14 - Groups of words to categorize threat, enemy and solution frequently used by the profiles studied.

GROUPS	KEY-WORDS
THREAT	lesionados
	heridos
	fallecidos
	asesinados
ENEMY	Vandalismo/ Vândalo/ Vandálico
	Violência/ Violencia
	Dañar
SOLUTION	Cero Tolerancia
	Garantiza/ Garantizar/ Garantir
	Proteger
	Acompañamiento
	Atender
	#EsUnHonorSerPolicia

Elaborated by the author

Upon analyzing 58% of the publications, we found a clear pattern in the speech structures. The most prevalent structure, as identified by Stritzel's grammatical logic, was the 'Claim', appearing in a majority of the publications. This was followed by the 'Propositional Content', indicating a strong presence of these two structures in the discourse surrounding the protests (see Figure 2).

Figure 2 - Grammar Structures for Securitization identified in tweets.



Elaborated by the author

When we separate the frequency of posts categorized within the Stritzel structure, we can observe the principal authors. Table 15 shows the proportion of publications made by profiles. Note that only the Military Police of São Paulo presented publications that discussed the topic studied, presenting elements for characterizing the structures necessary for securitization, according to Stritzel. It is interesting to note Ivan Duque's significant presence on social media, constantly discussing the topic.

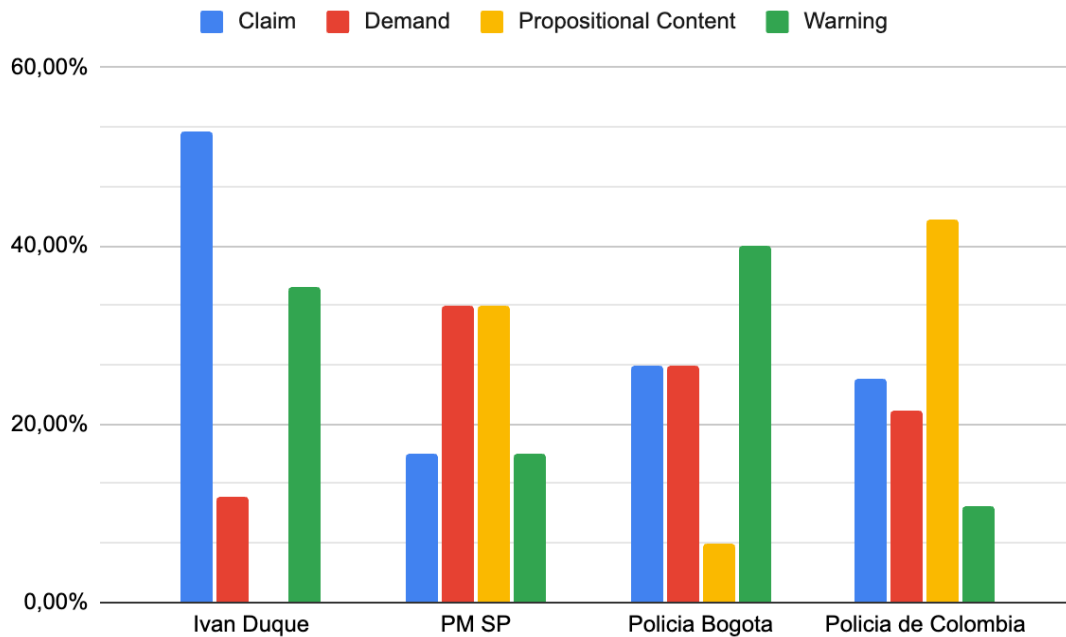
Table 15 - % of publications analyzed

El Tiempo	4,35%
Ivan Duque	24,64%
PM SP - São Paulo Military Police	8,70%
Policia Bogota	21,74%
Policia de Colombia	40,58%

Elaborated by the author

Figure 3 provides a comprehensive view of how the publications of each profile are distributed across the categories of Stritzel's grammatical structure. If we set aside the data concerning the military police in São Paulo, and focus on the Colombian case, we can discern a harmony between the presence in social media of the actors under study, a finding that significantly contributes to our overall analysis.

Figure 3 - Proportion of tweets by grammatical structure category per profile

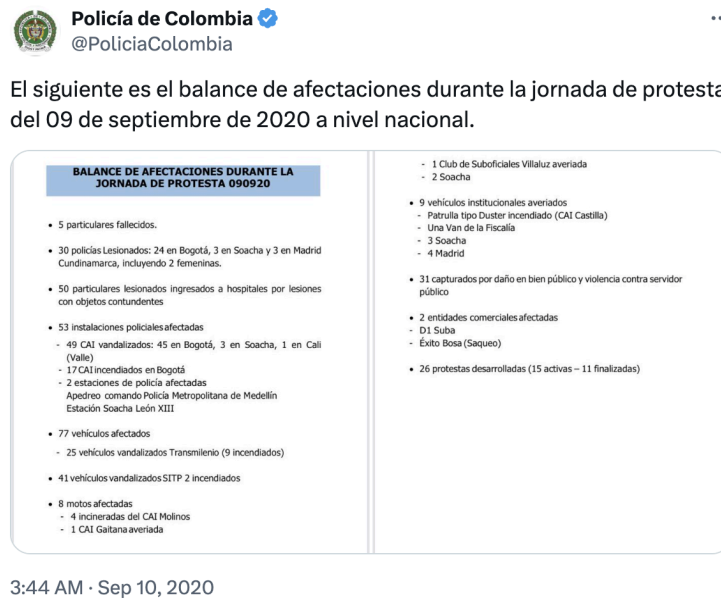


Elaborated by the author

When we look at the Colombian police forces, we realize there was a great effort to report on social media the consequences of the threat (Referent Object) to society. There was an effort to describe the threat and the enemy. However, much of the effort was to characterize the consequences (Warning) and to present evidence of the danger (Propositional Content). At the same time, we observed that Ivan Duque's presence on social media complements the efforts of the police forces. A large part of the then president's publications (52%) were about presenting a contextualization of the threat/enemy (Claim).

We could observe these categorizations more clearly in some specific posts. Figure 4 shows us a publication by the National Police (@policiacolombia), in which we can observe how the speech was conducted to contextualize the consequences of not combating the threat (Referent Object). The post refers to the events on September 9, 2020. On this date, 12 protests were reported in 7 cities. In 6, interaction between Police Forces and protesters was reported, one in Medellín (Antioquia) and 5 in Bogotá (D.C.). Of the five protests in the Colombian capital, one reported four deaths, 2 being bystanders and two from stray bullets. None of the notes on the events mentioned police officers who died as a result of the clashes. An important detail is the posts called "General Balance," made by the National Police profile, which frequently happened as a way of reinforcing the threat.

Figure 4 - Example of Publication categorized as Warning, publication by the Colombian National Police¹⁰



Source: Official profile of the Colombian National Police (@policiacolombia). Screenshot

Another example that significantly helps us identify the discourse structure in the "Propositional Content" category is the publication made by the National Police on 06/16/2020. The publication reads:

Vandalism is the worst enemy of social protest; it delegitimizes it and induces young adolescents. Today, 12 minors were used by dark forces. The Police are responsible for containing violent acts against public and private property. (POLICIA METROPOLITANA DE BOGOTÁ, 2020)¹¹

This post provides us the opportunity to observe how the discussion was shaped to present evidence of how threatening the Referent Object is. By citing the use of minors and naming the Referent Object as "Dark Forces", the Securitizing Agent is able to contextualize reasons for the threat, in addition to reinforcing the importance of considering it a threat.

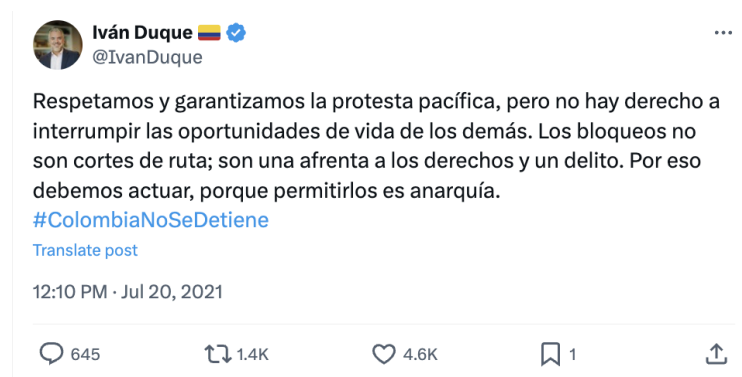
When we examine the publications of Ivan Duque, we can't help but notice the importance of the 'Claim' category (see Figure 5) in his rhetoric. This category serves as a crucial platform for Duque, enabling him to not only contextualize the perceived threat but also to highlight how certain movements are undermining the legitimacy of the right to protest. By doing so, Duque effectively presents the Referent Object and subtly suggests that

¹⁰ "The following is the balance of effects during the days of protests on September 9, 2020 at the national level". Translated by the Author.

¹¹ Quote translated by the author. Original Text: "El vandalismo es el peor enemigo de la protesta social, la deslegitiman e inducen a jóvenes adolescentes. Hoy 12 menores fueron utilizados por fuerzas oscuras. La Policía tiene el deber de contener actos violentos contra bienes públicos y privados."

the threat lies in the potential for these 'good' civilians to be influenced and the state to respond with force.

Figure 5 - Example of Publication categorized as Claim, publication by Ivan Duque (Former Colombian President)¹²



Source: Official profile of Ivan Duque (@ivandunque). Screenshot

Interestingly, in the Colombian case, the police forces tried to present evidence of the threat through social media. The effort to present an action plan to deal with the said threat was less than other efforts. The communications relating to the "Demand" category mostly exemplified what had been necessary to do to contain the situation.

When observing the "Demand" category, we learn that the contextualization of the action plan in response to the threat was done to present the efficiency of the police force in quickly moving and containing the "disturbances." Most of the Colombian police posts for this category used words to demonstrate that the action plan was focused on guaranteeing the civil right to protest and not on attacking the threat. This movement can also be perceived as a form of deterrence focused on "re-humanizing" a police group that has been labeled as violent and brutal for a long time (ESMAD). The two movements, presenting the action plan and placing ESMAD as a hero guarantor of rights, are essential points for the discourse of the Colombian police forces, especially when they mention the anti-riot battle. Figure 6 and 7 show us how the contextualization of this action plan happened.

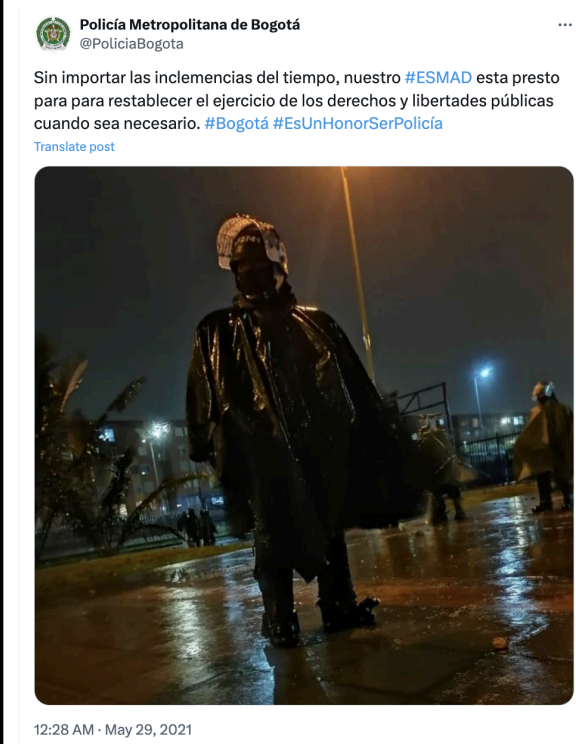
¹² "We respect and guarantee peaceful protest, but there is no right to disrupt the life opportunities of others. Blockades are not roadblocks; They are an affront to rights and a crime. That is why we must act, because allowing them is anarchy. #ColombiaDoesNotStop". Translated by the Author.

Figure 6 - Example of Publication categorized as Demand, publication of the Bogotá Metropolitan Police¹³



Source: Official profile of the Bogotá Metropolitan Police (@policiabogota). Screenshot

Figure 7 - Example of Publication categorized as Demand, publication by the Metropolitan Police of Bogotá¹⁴



Source: Official profile of the Bogotá Metropolitan Police (@policiabogota). Screenshot

Turning our attention to the São Paulo Military Police's social media presence, we observed a well-balanced distribution of efforts across categories. They were almost equally committed to presenting their actions as an action plan within the protests and characterizing the motivations for the necessity of their actions in those events. As observed in the Colombian police force for the "Demand" category, the discourse used by the São Paulo military police was intended to indicate what was being done by the force in terms of strategy to contain the threat and force and equipment that were being used (see Figure 8)

¹³ "A few minutes ago in the restoration of public order, members of #ESMAD acting with courage and professionalism in the protection of lives and property. #It'sAnHonorToBePolice". Translated by the Author.

¹⁴ "Regardless of the inclement weather, our #ESMAD is ready to restore the exercise of public rights and freedoms when necessary. #Bogotá #It'sAnHonorToBePolicia". Translated by the Author

Figure 8 - Example of Publication categorized as Demand, publication by the Military Police of São Paulo¹⁵



Source: Official profile of the Military Police of São Paulo (@pmsp). Screenshot

3.3.1 - STRITZEL STRUCTURES IN SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS

At its creation, Stritzel's structures still needed to target social networks as a tool tacitly included in the securitization process. The Securitization Agent's speech now has an even more elaborate process to reach public opinion and shield itself from contrary narratives. In the case of Twitter (X) as a vehicle for disseminating information, the narrative must be concise and direct to fit within the character limits.

Our analysis not only categorizes the publications into the 4 grammatical structures proposed by Stritzel (Table 2), but also delves deeper into the original texts. We strive to understand how the discourse was shaped, particularly in terms of the threat, the enemy, and the solution. This understanding is crucial in comprehending the impact and effectiveness of Stritzel's structures in the Securitization process.

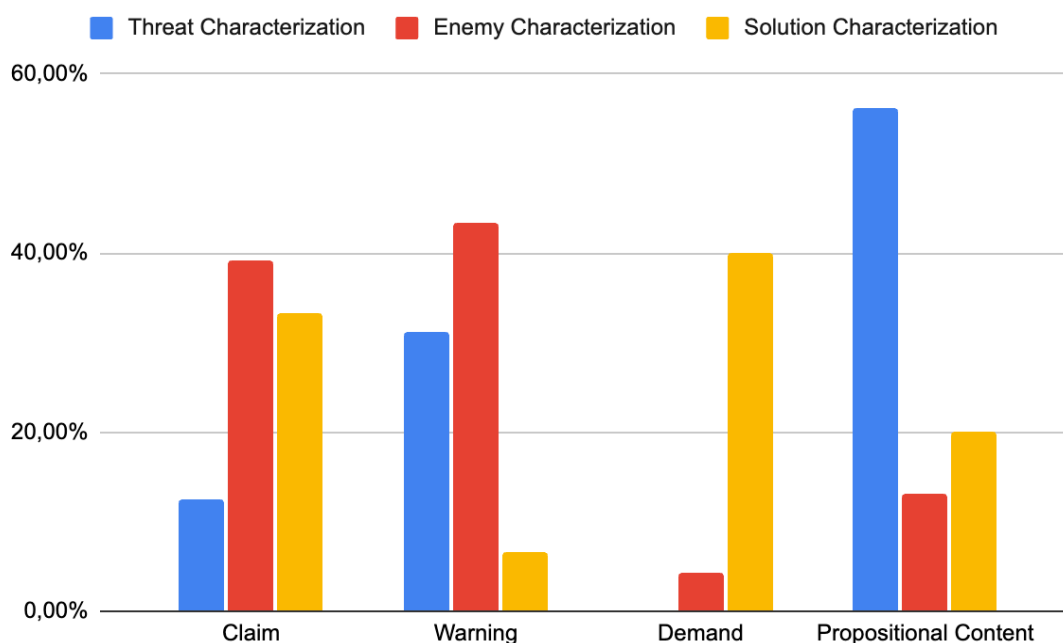
We observed these narrative modulations for each grammatical structure with Figure 9. Posts categorized as "Claim" and "Warning" were the ones that presented the most words used to characterize the enemy (more than 80%). The threat's characterization was more frequent in posts categorized as "Warning" and "Propositional Content." Around 40% of

¹⁵ "Image of the demonstration captured by "Águia 4" of the PM Aviation Command. At that moment on Av. Paulista and R. Bernardino de Campos. Officers accompanies the act." Translated by the Author. "Águia 4" or "Eagle 4" is the name used to reference the helicopter used by the PMSp.

publications labeled "Solution Characterization" were identified within communications categorized as "Demand." Considering the description of "Demand" made by Stritzel, we can understand the reasons for this association. However, publications categorized as "Claim" were responsible for 33% of "Solution Characterization." We can understand this presence of "Claim" together with a characterization of solutions since some publications that presented the "enemy" already mentioned the actions taken to remedy the situation.

Media played a significant role in the social media posts we analyzed. Approximately 97% of the publications, categorized according to Stritzel's structures, included photos or videos alongside the text. The categories with the highest presence of media were 'Warning' and 'Claim', each accounting for around 39%. A particularly interesting finding was that 45% of the publications by Ivan Duque, Former Colombian President, included photos and videos alongside the text. These media were predominantly videos, featuring complete statements about protests or cuts of statements or interviews on the subject.

Figure 9 - Proportion of publications with references to the characterization of Threat, Enemy or Solution



Elaborated by the author

Figure 9 shows us how the grammatical elements are distributed within the speeches used by Securitization Agents when talking about the Referent Object. When we look at the posts related to "Claim," we notice that the description of the threat made by the Securitizing Agent used a tactic of characterizing the enemy, almost as a movement of giving this character a face. For this group, we have posts that talk about the threat as if they were mentioning an individual. We can observe this tactic of personifying the threat in movements

made by the United States with Hollywood productions in which the terrorist enemy always had specific and well-defined physical and personality traits.

When we look more closely at the 'Warning' group, we can see that the publications made a double effort to contextualize the threat and link it to the enemy. This strategic use of language is significant as it not only characterizes the enemy but also explicitly states the threat it represents. In this way, we observe the use of words that mention and qualify the enemy but also explicitly state the threat he represents. The tweets for the Colombian case perfectly exemplify this movement. The narrative used by the Securitizing Agent, most of the time, was to characterize the enemy using words such as 'vandal' and 'violent protester' and make it clear that the enemy was this animalistic character that fudged the right to protest. Thus, the Securitizing Agent presented to public opinion that the threat the enemy brought was to mischaracterize the right to protest and invalidate the agendas raised by the protesters.

"Propositional Content," as expected, listed many elements regarding the characterization of the threat. If, in the other two categories, the identification of the enemy and how he related to the threat were the main points of the Securitizing Agent's narrative, for this category, the threat figured at the center of the narratives. For the most part, the posts of this group brought elements to prove the danger that the Referent Object brought to society. In addition to presenting texts about violence on the part of protesters (also called vandals in some cases), some posts cited the number of officers injured and killed in clashes, information about vandalized public and private buildings, among other information that could reinforce the argument about dangerousness, like the publication mentioned above that talked about the coercion of minors to act as vandals.

Finally, for 'Demand,' many elements were identified to characterize a possible solution. The intriguing thing about this point is that, as pointed out in the previous chapter, which discussed the State's vision of who and what is a threat, this helps the Securitization Agent not to need many elements to build their narratives. Much of the movement to talk about solutions to the Referent Object threat was expositions about how the police force had acted effectively. The central idea of the narratives was not to contextualize what could be done against the threat but to report the containment strategy used. This group of publications mostly carried tags and catchphrases that placed the police force with heroes who guaranteed civil rights.

3.4 - FROM VIRTUAL GATHERINGS TO THE STREETS: ANALYZING DATA CROSS-SECTIONALLY

In the preceding sections, we have delved into crucial aspects of the events under scrutiny in this study. The pivotal aim of our research, to discern whether a securitization movement was initiated by the State in Colombia and Brazil in relation to the social movements that unfolded between 2020 and 2021, necessitates a juxtaposition of the previously observed information.

Securitization is contingent upon the interaction between the Securitizing Agent and its communication about the Referent Object. To comprehensively analyze the reciprocal influence of street events and social media discourse, we meticulously identify common elements in both spheres to guide our analyses. This approach has led to the construction of specific analyses using structured logic, particularly in observing social media.

The database relating to protests that occurred during the period studied has a field for notes and observations used to describe what occurred in general terms. The description, for the most part, used newspaper headlines and the researcher's experiences as a way of reporting what happened. Based on the information in this data column, a movement similar to the categorization of texts used with Twitter (X) data was implemented. Keywords used to describe specific situations and actions were searched within the event description texts to identify recurrences. Table 15 shows us the search interests and respective keywords. In addition to observing the presence of specific information such as that mentioned in Table 16, there was also an effort to identify the mention, within the descriptions, of words that once served as classifiers for Stritzel's grammatical structures.

Following the same criteria for analyzing the events, it was possible to observe some relevant information. In almost 30% of the events, the interaction between state forces and other actors was reported, and 20% of the notes included using weapons such as tear gas, water cannons, and other "stun weapons." Regarding the weapons and strategies used by protesters, 23% of the descriptions mentioned strategies such as barricades and blockades. Another 14 mentions were made reporting the use of Molotov Bombs, Stones, and Sticks by protesters.

Table 16 - Interest Categories for searches and keywords

CATEGORY	KEYWORDS
Heavy Interaction (Actor 1 and Actor 2)¹⁶	Clash
	Fight
Heavy Weapons¹⁷ (Actor 2)	Tear Gas
	Water Cannon(s)
	Stunner
Weapon/ Strategy Reported (Actor 1)	Molotov
	Stones
	Barricades
	Blocking

Elaborated by the author

Figure 10 serves as a visual representation, providing a clear overview of the use of keywords for categorizing grammatical structures (see Table 2) in the descriptions of the analyzed events. In general, "Claim" was the most used grammatical structure (32%), followed by "Propositional Content" (24%). For Colombia, the highest recurrence was in the "Claim" category, with 33%. The country also presented the "Propositional Content" and "Warning" categories with 23% each. Colombia was the country with the most observations of Interaction between Actor 1 and Actor 2 (93%) and reports of using non-conventional weapons by state forces (60%).

Figure 10 provides a nuanced understanding of how the elements that constitute Stritzel's securitization process were manifested in the realities of the two countries under study. The Securitization Agent played a pivotal role in both cases, strategically contextualizing the threat and its consequences, and presenting compelling evidence that justified the State's action against the perceived enemy. The contextualization of the action plan against the threat was predominantly conveyed through a narrative that informed public opinion about the measures taken to mitigate the threat.

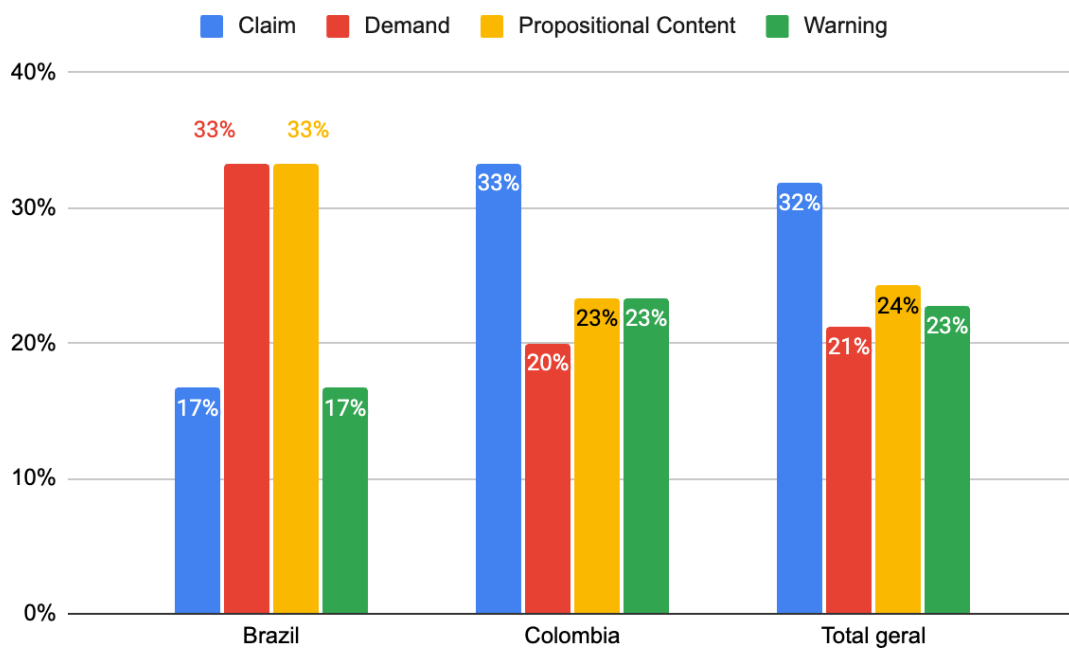
In the case of Brazil, we see balanced numbers in almost all categories. It is important to highlight that a large part of the movement in social media eligible for the study came from

¹⁶ Interactions between protesters and police forces marked by the use of heavy weapons or large contingents of police force.

¹⁷ Lethal or non-lethal weapons with great capacity to harm protesters.

the São Paulo Military Police. A significant movement was observed to contextualize public opinion, whether about the enemy or the strategy used, in a direct way, with a great predominance of short tweets. Another interesting factor in the Brazilian case is that some of the events did not occur on the streets. Around 16% of the protests reported in Brazil were reports of 'panelaços', a form of protest where people bang pots and pans, which became quite popular during the Dilma government and was reinforced during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Figure 10 - % of mentions of elements that reference Stritzel's grammatical structures.



Note: 3% of the total corresponds to publications in which it was not possible to identify elements corresponding to the grammatical structure.
Elaborated by the author.

The Colombian case presents us with several important layers of analysis. Notoriously, there was a great effort to characterize the enemy and the threat and to present contextualized evidence to support strict action by the State. We can understand this movement on the part of the Colombian State as a strategic attempt to 'regain control of the narratives about ESMAD', the police force's particular group that has a reputation marked by scandals and constantly figures as a protagonist in cases of protests with fatalities. This movement of characterizing the threat and justifying harsh actions in favor of guaranteeing rights can be understood as a resumption of the narrative to humanize the police force, which has been perceived as unstructured and incapacitated.

3.5 - CRITIQUES AND COMMENTS ABOUT THE CONTEXT OF DATA AND POSTS

Our role as researchers goes beyond presenting the data and social media posts. We must identify and address the flaws that were possible to observe throughout the data collection and analysis process. Both the database on protests and the database with posts on Twitter presented weaknesses that need to be considered, and it is our collective responsibility to rectify them.

Regarding the database on protests, the main deficiency noted during data analysis was some standardization problems. The base was built collectively during a research internship at the Universidad Externado de Colombia and followed the same logic as the data exposed by Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project (ACLED). The researchers were given orientations and guides on classifying the data, as available through the ACLED webpage¹⁸. However, many inconsistencies were found, especially regarding the size of the protests.

The most complex data to find was the size of the events since only two sources could be considered official. The number should come directly from government sources or the actors who called for the event (Actor 1), and in case of conflicting information, it would be considered the lowest. In many cases, finding information about the size of the events took time. In others, the information came in unconventional formats that needed an established standard. In the case of Brazil, for example, many protests took place inside vehicles. Several times, the data received were about the number of vehicles rather than the number of people participating, and this left the category with several gray points within the data.

Still thinking about Brazil, the *panelaços* also made a point of questioning the structure of the protests. Protests with different concentration points were generally counted as separate events, even when called by the same actor and with the same final destination. This separate accounting movement helped better understand the distribution of events within urban space. However, the *pot-banging* was a point of questioning what notifications should be. As there are no specific points of concentration, the accounting of these events became subjective as researchers could understand that records in different neighborhoods should be counted as different events.

Despite the late arrival of guidance on how to proceed and standardize, we were able to adapt the data to these standards. This adaptability and the thoroughness of our data

¹⁸ Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project (ACLED) guides and guidance available at: <https://tinyurl.com/27owefq2>

analysis process ensure the reliability of our findings. For protests with identification with a number of cars, the rule established was to count 1 person for each motorcycle and 2 people for each car with 4 wheels or more. Protests with categorization with the name 'families' should include 3 people per family. For pots, the current rule is registration by region within the city. In the case of pots, the guidance was that the new form of registration would only be valid for 2023, and that registrations made until then should continue to be considered as separate events.

The chosen social media, Twitter (X), also needs some clarification. As explained at the beginning of this work, even though it is not the most used social media in the countries, Twitter was the media chosen because it allows us to filter information better. The character limit helped us obtain shorter, easier-to-analyze narratives. However, the Brazilian case showed us a big difference in the number of publications compared to the Colombian case. In particular, the two presidents, Jair Bolsonaro and Ivan Duque, were very different in terms of their use of social media. Bolsonaro used Facebook and WhatsApp more, as they were the mediums with the most significant part of his electorate. Ivan Duque behaved like an American congressman and used Twitter more.

In addition to this difference in usage, changes to the platform throughout this work also (re)directed efforts. Initially, the extraction of information would be through a programming language, allowing us to extract large-scale information with tweets and other data. However, the permissions of social media APIs constantly changed after the new owner, Elon Musk, took over as director of the company. Therefore, it was necessary to think of patterns that could guarantee that information could be extracted, but that would not generate results with countless pages of tweets. Rules regarding the number of likes and choice of profiles were essential to guarantee the quality of the manual information extraction work.

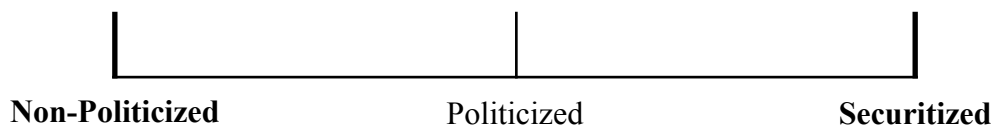
4 - BETWEEN TWEETS AND RUBBER BULLETS: SOCIAL MEDIA AND NEW WAYS OF ENSURING STATES VIOLENCE

To raise the level of discussion, we will use Stritzel's case studies in his book "Security in Translation: Securitization Theory and the Localization of Threat". Using the case of the Rogue States and Terrorism securitization process in Germany, we will observe the data presented in the previous chapter to establish arguments and counterarguments. The main objective is to raise the main points listed by Stritzel as factors of success or failure in the cases presented in his studies and understand how each country would position itself within that element.

According to Stritzel (2014), the main point for a successful securitization process is the reach of the Securitizing Agent's narrative about the Referent Object. In the case of Terrorism in Germany, for example, we have a successful process. The German State used several discursive elements that constructed the image of the enemy with elements external to German culture but made sense and were simple to communicate with public opinion. In the case of the Rogue States, Stritzel points out that there was a failure in the reception of the speech act, mainly because it was not possible to make the image of the threat make sense in the cultural context of Germany. Stritzel (2014) points out that the communication, based on many elements in the United States, caused some discomfort in public opinion, which understood the securitization discourse as a more significant threat than the Referent Object.

When analyzing the data presented and discussed in the previous chapter with the logic of Stritzel (2014) about the success of a securitization process, we need to reaffirm some crucial concepts. Securitization can be understood as a spectrum (Figure 11). At one end, we have the "non-politicized" pole, which has never been debated about or does not arouse interest. On the other hand, we have the "securitized" pole, where the topic is already considered a threat and its contextualization has been accepted by public opinion. The spectrum concept is relevant since the topic can oscillate from one end to another, and topics can be securitized at specific historical moments. In contrast, others return to debate as to whether they need to be understood that way.

Figure 11 - Spectrum of the Continuum of the Securitization process, adapted from SILVA, 2019



Elaborated by the author.

In Chapter 2, we discussed the nuances of the securitization process according to Stritzel (2014). In the previous chapter, we saw how some elements can be captured to analyze this structure in the current scenario. The structure presented by Stritzel modulates how the Securitizing Agent organizes the process of getting public opinion to agree with it. This process is not necessarily linear. Grammatical structures are elements that can be used in different ways throughout the process and serve to point out the "threat" that the Securitization Agent observes.

When we look at the information from the previous chapter and think about Brazil and Colombia together, we can notice that the movements toward Stritzel's structures are identifiable but, in some moments, could be more solid. Thinking about this construction by Stritzel (2014) and the logic of the securitization process as a spectrum, let us delve deeper into each country. Although there are many similarities, a separate analysis of each country will help us to observe more closely how specific structures can be understood and evaluated.

4.1 - THE SOUND OF POTS AT THE BALCONY: AN ANALYSIS OF THE SECURITIZATION OF SOCIAL MOVEMENTS IN BRAZIL ACCORDING TO STRITZEL

As it was possible to identify, despite a large volume of protests taking place in Brazil during the period studied, the movement in social media did not prove to be relevant to the analysis of a securitization process. Assuming that the audience is a crucial actor in the securitization process, the low level of relevant movement in social media suggests something that needs further analysis within this structure. It is essential to highlight that there were publications on social media on the subject. However, only some met the established analysis criteria.

Even though Bolsonaro's most substantial presence is on Facebook and WhatsApp, Twitter also represents an important space for political debate in Brazil, especially with regard to youth. Jair Bolsonaro's opposition and even some party colleagues have always demonstrated a presence on social media as a way of being in different niches. The choice of

social media is not the problem since the country has already seen significant movement around political themes on other occasions; the emphasis is to shed light on the period studied.

Between 2013 and 2015, Brazil observed a large flow of publications and discussions about protests and social movements disseminated through social media. Debates and publications about the protests, the agendas, and the use of state force were generated in a different range of social media. In that period, pre-pandemic, the protestors filled the streets, and there was a large production of content about the events. The debate involved different political fronts on different interaction platforms, from cartoons to documentaries. At that moment, it was possible to identify a significant presence of grammatical elements capable of analysis within Stritzel's structure.

The Brazilian case does not give rise to the assertion that there was no attempt or success in securitizing social movements. However, it opens the space for us to reflect on the historical moment in which the country finds itself. As mentioned in Chapter 2, Latin America's countries carry a legacy in characterizing the enemy and the threat perpetuated since their colonization. In the case of Brazil, even after the end of the military dictatorship (1985), the country continued with open wounds and unaddressed gaps regarding social movements and protests. The historical heritage supported, on several occasions, the discourse of the Securitizing Agent to qualify protests as acts of vagrancy or vandalism, as occurred in the military period, justifying the use of state force.

Stritzel (2014) posits that a successful securitization process hinges on the Securitizing Agent's ability to convince other actors that the Referent Object is a threat. The strategies to achieve this are diverse, but in today's world, the Securitizing Agent must carefully consider the impact of information dissemination on its strategy, particularly the influence of public opinion.

Starting from an analysis that exclusively considers the observed data, it is difficult to positively answer our research question looking at the Brazilian case. The police forces and the then-president made a few moves to ensure that the threat was recognized by public opinion. However, other unconventional elements could be observed. Part of the protests took place from the windows of houses through pot-bangings (16%). This factor makes it challenging to characterize the enemy since the State cannot justify the line between what is permitted or not crossed by the protester.

However, Brazil was the country in the study with the highest number of registered demonstrations in favor of the president (7% compared to 0.2% in Colombia). Around 12% of

protests in Brazil were motorcycle protests (motorcades), a widespread demonstration among Bolsonaro and his supporters. This data explicitly opens up a reflection on the possibility of a strategy different from the traditional one. In other words, going against what was noted in Colombia, in which the narrative was constructed to define the enemy and how it would threaten state sovereignty, Bolsonarism presents a movement to characterize the "self." Instead of defining who would be "on the wrong side," it begins to define who is on the "right side." The grammatical structures proposed by Stritzel were designed to exclude this type of communication strategy precisely because they are all related to the threat. By making this move, Bolsonaro makes it impossible for the logic of Stritzel's grammatical structure to be applied more precisely, opening up the need for equivalence of speeches that can result in subjective standards.

In his book "Security in Translation: Securitization Theory and the Localization of Threat," Stritzel (2014) classifies the securitization of rogue states in Germany as unsuccessful for four main reasons. 1) the German State failed to establish a narrative that was compatible with what Germans were traditionally familiar with; 2) the construction of the image of the threat was weak given the passivity of German public opinion, which did not receive positively the construction made by the Securitizing Agent; 3) low adherence due to cultural factors, since the position of the German State was traditionally open to dialogue rather than military imposition; 4) linked to the previous point, German public opinion viewed the securitization proposal more as a threat than the topic itself to be securitized, since the idea of brute force was a sensitive topic for the country that the Second World War had significantly impacted.

Therefore, when we parallel the previous chapter's data and Stritzel's securitization logic, the Brazilian case remains in a cloudy field. Suppose we understand securitization as a spectrum (Figure 11) and consider the points raised by Stritzel to justify the lack of success in the case of the Rogue States in Germany, for example. In that case, we can observe that Brazil may be close to the "Non-Securitized" pole. However, let us consider the country's history. Elements such as the reception of the characterization of protests as a threat, the compatibility of actions and perceptions of public opinion, and the absorption of concepts have already been internalized by Brazilian society.

This debate about characterizing social movements as a threat to the State had had repercussions since 2013 when social media became a crucial tool in forming public opinion. Since then, there has been discussion about whether the Brazilian State tries to equate social movements with terrorist acts. This debate puts the justification for adhering to the narrative

on the agenda for consideration. Even though the Brazilian imagination does not make an automatic connection between protesters and terrorism, there is a tendency to accept police violence depending on which group in society suffers it.

In 2019, Artigo 19 published a report indicating that 38% of Brazilians believed that protests created more friction than they brought solutions. This data raises the debate about the effectiveness of the securitization of protests. Like the case of Jair Bolsonaro's motorcades, this factor deviates somewhat from Stritzel's logic and thought within the securitization process. The threat stops being an imminent danger to the State and becomes an event that causes more disturbance than results. This classification is more discreet than the harsh position of equating protests with terrorist acts.

Brazil has a history of being self-characterized as a welcoming and peaceful people. As in the case of the Rogue States of Germany, the cultural tradition of dialogue and peacefulness can weigh heavily when influencing the outcome of a securitization process that takes a harsh stance when characterizing the threat as something like terrorism. Like other countries, Brazil has incorporated into itself the logic of the imminent danger that terrorism brings. However, the terrorist act itself has few references in practice within the Brazilian imagination.

4.2 - BETWEEN THE NATIONAL STRIKE AND BUBBLE PLASTIC STATUES: AN ANALYSIS OF THE SECURITIZATION OF SOCIAL MOVEMENTS IN COLOMBIA ACCORDING TO STRITZEL

Unlike Brazil, the Colombian case provided us with many materials for analysis on social media. The differences between the two countries could also be noticed at other times, such as protests in favor of the president. While protests in favor of Bolsonaro represented 7.14%, and almost 30% of motorcycles were in his favor, Colombia registered only 0.2% of protests in favor of the president, in which 48% were actually in favor of Alvaro Uribe (former president and Ivan Duque's political godfather).

The narrative line of the police force and Ivan Duque in social media around social movements proved to be consistent for an analysis of the securitization process. If we draw a parallel with what Stritzel (2014) uses to establish a successful securitization process, in the case of Germany with terrorism, the cohesion of the discourse is an essential factor. For Stritzel, the success of the case of terrorism in Germany can be justified by the power of the Securitization Agent in being able to persuade public opinion to agree with what were the

lines that defined a terrorist act. However, as pointed out in Chapter 2, the work of the Securitization Agent in Brazil and Colombia was more straightforward, given that the general concept of terrorism was already well established internationally.

In Colombia, as in Brazil, the Securitizing Agent's effort would be to qualify and characterize the enemy in a simple and palatable way for public opinion. Once well characterized, the Securitization Agent would simply determine that the Referring Object was a threat equal to a high-level threat, like a terrorist. The main challenge of this process would be to devise a communication strategy that could overcome the problem of no longer being the holder of the communication monopoly. Now, the Securtizador Agent should communicate with public opinion and be ready to refute contrasting comments and publications and, in some cases, justify videos or photos that differ from its previous statements.

As previously mentioned, the enemy of the State, the "rebel," was already a figure built into the imagination of Latin American citizens. Through posts made by the Colombian State and its representatives, we can see that this factor was used as the initial engine of the discursive strategy. Although we cannot assume that a joint strategy existed between the social media presence between Ivan Duque and the police forces, it was possible to observe that the dialogues and languages coincided.

The primary opponent of the Colombian State's speeches was ESMAD's lousy reputation. The police force and its involvement in scandals were one of the main arguments against the legitimacy of the State's use of force. Thus, movements were noted to "regain" the humanity of ESMAD officers to avoid negative repercussions. This movement was an essential step towards communication that attempted to link State action as legitimate and necessary. Ensuring this receptivity is one of the crucial points in the process of holding public opinion's attention.

A second movement that can be noted is the structuring of a discourse positioning the State as a guarantor and defender of human rights but within limits. As mentioned in the previous chapter, we were able to observe speeches that recognized the right to protest and political opposition, but only within the forms recognized by the State. Ivan Duque was one of the leading spokespeople for this discourse structure, in which he positioned the State as an institution that did not recognize the legitimacy of any protest that went beyond the lines of peacefulness. The then-president constantly repeated that this violence was the primary threshold between a protester and the "enemy."

Within his speeches identified as "Claim" (see Table 2), Ivan Duque seeks to contextualize the threat (Referent Object) by comparing what constitutes the exercise of the right to protest and what goes beyond constitutional rights. However, at times, Duque's speech treats violence and the use of force by protesters as a sign that the line has been crossed, and in others, he states that protests that use strategies such as blocking roads are also identified within the group of forms of expression not recognized by the State.

Following Stritzel's logic, the Colombian State needed to stand out in the face of possible resistance to consider a successful securitization process. Considering the 2019 scenario in the country, with the Paro Nacional, contextualizing the threat and the consequences of inaction and re-legitimizing the police forces were essential steps to be taken in the securitization process. If, on the one hand, showing that ESMAD was a group of the police force that acted only when necessary and without excesses was necessary, on the other, highlighting the worst in the Referent Object was a pivotal key. As an example of this movement, we note the publications of "Balance General" after protests, as seen in the previous chapter. The act of reinforcing that the police force was also affected and suffered from fatalities during the protests was one of the narrative tools used as a means of proving excesses on the part of the protesters.

At the end of 2020, the Colombian Supreme Court understood that there was a discrepancy between events and the police force used in some protests. The -Sentencia STC7641 of September 22, 2020, of the Civil Chamber of the Supreme Court of Justice delimited the need to incorporate practices that guarantee the right to protest and observe the state force used. The complete sentence establishes the processes and procedures before, during, and after protests, including protocols for protecting protesters and observers (press, national and international bodies, organizations, and researchers) and protocols on the state force's reaction limits.

For those organizing the protest, the ruling instructed civil society organizations and groups interested in receiving support from the State how to request it. All that was needed was to create and submit simplified plans with the primary information about the events (dates, times, routes), and public bodies would be obliged to provide support for good maintenance. In practice, this meant that the local Government became more aware of what would happen on the streets. As the right to protest is constitutionally guaranteed, no responses could denote the protests. However, risk containment procedures (negotiation of routes and schedules) could be applied in the case of politically divergent groups.

On the streets, the protests that had the support of the prosecutor's office presented, at least in their initial stages, scenarios completely contrasting with the images shared or reported by police forces on social media. Figure 12 shows how the logic behind the "Fiscalía" monitoring of the protests worked. Officers dressed in red and white formed a cordon behind the last row of protesters, ensuring space between the police force and protest participants. Observers participating in the protests were oriented to be visibly identified and receive instructions to talk to the fiscalía officers before the start of the walk (Figure 13). Some observers reported being instructed to put blood type identification on their coats¹⁹.

FIGURE 12 - Representatives of the Bogotá Public Defender's Office and the National Police at the Independence Day protest on July 20, 2021.



Source: Vander Finotti - Personal Collection. Date: July 20, 2021 in Bogotá, Colombia.

FIGURE 13 - Press representative identified as observer during the Independence Day protests



Source: Vander Finotti - Personal Collection. Date: July 20, 2021 in Bogotá, Colombia.

¹⁹ No official regulations establishing the rules on how observers should be identified were found. This information relies only on the author's experience in the field.

As a result of the Supreme Court's ruling, the presidency of the republic begins 2021 with the publication of a decree that established full compliance with the Supreme Court's decision, which regulated the protocol for reaction and use of legitimate state force²⁰. Along with the new protocol, police officers began to carry out activities and duties that preceded the protests. Protest preparation activities and initial formations on protest days served as a form of alignment with the social media narrative. While on social media, the threat was contextualized through the characterization of the enemy, on the streets, the Colombian State positioned itself as the protector of society's assets, showing that the threat could be so imminent that prior actions needed to be taken.

Driven by the Chilean movement of 2019, in which indigenous peoples of Chile toppled statues of colonizers, at least 6 Colombian states recorded vandalism of monuments in honor of colonizers²¹. Of the 2021 protests in Colombia around 4% were called by indigenous people, including the large encampment in "Parque Nacional", which stood for months and became known for, even in the middle of the city, following customs and traditional rules. Not even Simón Bolívar, an icon of the independence of Colombia, Venezuela, Ecuador, Peru, and Bolivia (formerly Great Colombia), escaped having his monuments vandalized. Figure 14 shows a post reporting the toppling of a statue in Barranquilla, Atlántico.

²⁰ COLOMBIA. Decree 003 2021 of January 5, 2021. Por el cual se adoptan medidas en el marco de la emergencia sanitaria por el COVID-19. *Diário Oficial*, Bogotá, 14 jan. 2021. Available at <https://tinyurl.com/2aytg3aj>

²¹ BBC News Mundo. La misteriosa desaparición del joven James Story: qué se sabe del caso que ha conmocionado a Colombia. *BBC News Mundo*. 26 nov. 2019. Disponível em: <https://tinyurl.com/24lsgo3o>. Acesso em: 16 jun. 2024

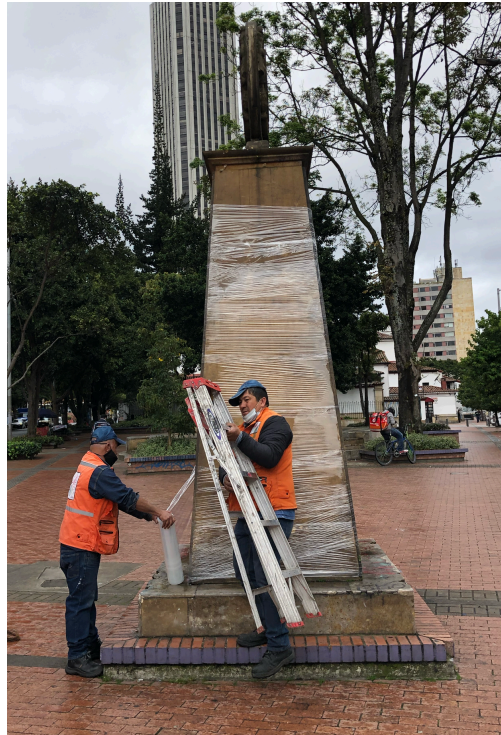
FIGURE 14 - Twitter post made by a civilian about the toppling of a statue in Barranquilla



Source: Twitter, open search. (@andreavargasBAQ). Screenshot

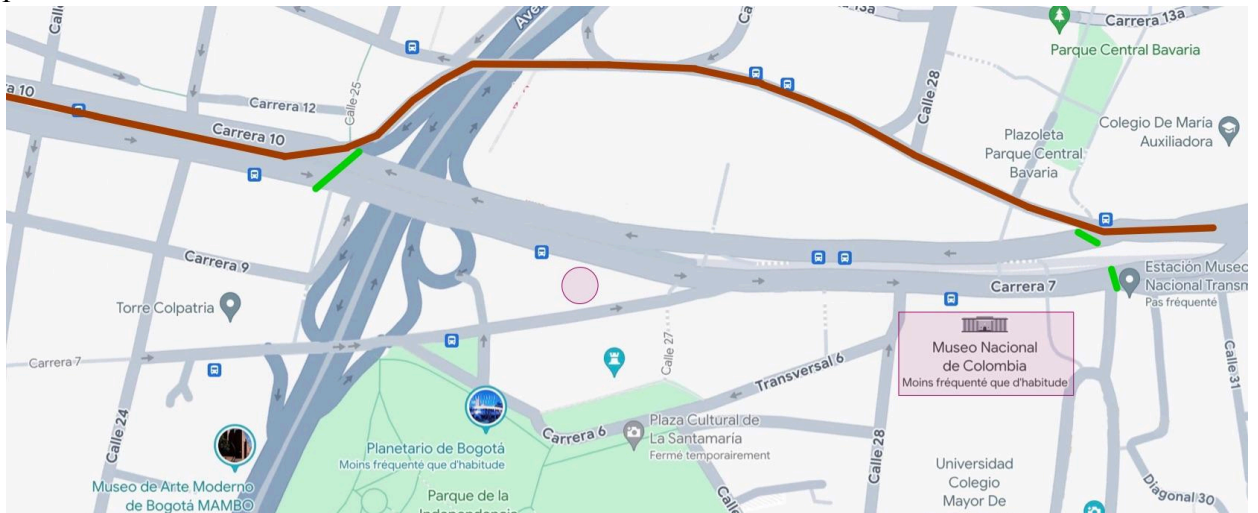
This moment, added to the protocol established by the January decree, marks the beginning of a tactical action by the Colombian police force. A few days before the protests, the Government would promote some "preparations" for the protests to be held in a few days. The Government notified businesses and institutions (mainly banks) that protests had been called and would pass through specific routes, so facades were covered with wooden coverings to avoid damage caused by clashes between protesters and police. In the case of public spaces, the Government sent military personnel or conservation teams to set up protective structures around monuments and public buildings.

Figure 15 - Employees of the city of Bogota conservation team wrapping a statue in bubble wrap, July 19, 2021



Source: Vander Finotti - Personal Collection. Date: July 19, 2021 in Bogotá, Colombia.

Figure 16 - Map of the location of the statue and the national museum in relation to the protest route²²



Source: Google Maps. Author's markings. Colorisms and shapes handmade by the Author.

In Figure 15, we observe a statue located in Carreira Séptima , downtown Bogotá. One day before the protest on Colombian Independence Day, it was wrapped in bubble wrap as a form of protection. Interestingly, the protest on July 20 had a route demarcated and permitted

²² **Notes:** in BROWN protest route; in GREEN lines with police officers from the National Force carrying out blockades; PINK circle location of the statue in Figure 15.

by the Government, which did not pass directly in front of the statue. Because the statute was located close to the National Museum (see Figure 16), this statue and the museum were not on the street where the protesters passed. Figure 17 shows a post on Twitter from the National Police (@policianacional) showing yet another example of this work on prior protection of monuments. Just like the monument in Figure 15, the one in Figure 17 was also not accessible on the day of the protests since it was located inside Bolívar Square, which, on protest days, had access blocked for a radius of 1 km. Figure 18 is also one of the actions to protect the Bolívar Square region, and Figure 19 shows a map of the blocked area.

Figure 17 - Post made by the Bogotá Metropolitan Police about protective structures in monuments²³



Source: Official profile of the Bogotá Metropolitan Police (@policiabogota). Screenshot

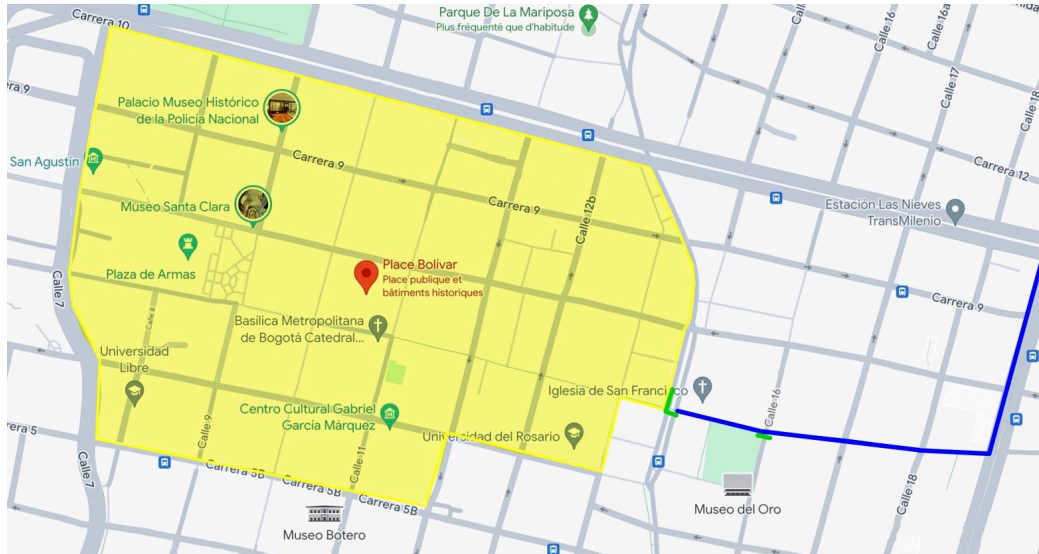
Figure 18 - Colombia's supreme court building covered in protective net



Source: Vander Finotti - Personal Collection. Date: July 24, 2021 in Bogotá, Colombia.

²³ "It is everyone's responsibility to take care of cultural heritage. Tradition remains alive in our essence". Translated by the author.

Figure 19 - Map of Bogotá with the access zone blocked at Plaza Bolívar on days of major protests²⁴



Source: Google Maps. Author's markings. Colorisms and shapes handmade by the Author.

With the decree on reaction management, use of force, and preparation activities for protests, street positioning tactics were perfect for generating photographic moments. In Figure 20, we can see a moment in which the national police lined up in front of the bank's facade covered by hoardings during a day of protests. These moments helped to build the narrative line of reaction without excesses on the part of the State that was disseminated in the official media.

FIGURE 20 - National Police in the form of a blockade in front of the facade of a bank, close to the national museum



Source: Vander Finotti - Personal Collection. Date: July 24, 2021 in Bogotá, Colombia

In this way, the Securitized Agent (Colombian State) linked its speeches on social media with everyday elements outside the sole reality of the protests. Even those who did not

²⁴ Highlighted in Yellow, blocked access zone; In BLUE, protest route; In GREEN, police blocking points; In RED location of the Monuments and Buildings of Figure 17 and Figure 18.

access social media or participated in the protests could observe the work to protect the monuments and question why the Government was taking such an action. In simple theory, this act can be understood as a very complex formulation of speech that unites several elements. We can see that the State contextualizes the danger of inaction against the enemy while exposing an action plan against one of the possible scenarios.

In general terms, the Securitizing Agent had most of the elements Stritzel (2014) listed when thinking about securitization theory. However, even with the grammatical elements and narrative cohesion in its favor, the characterization of the Referent Object as a threat remains at a blurred point on the spectrum. Even though the elements noted in the failure of the securitization of Rogue States in Germany have powerful and cohesive counter-arguments for the Colombian case, some factors lead public opinion to question the position of the Colombian State.

ESMAD, which was present in 57% of demonstrations with records of police violence and involved in 20% of events with fatalities, is the main barrier to the narrative of the Securitizing Agent in Colombia. Even though it is a special police force that only has the power to use non-lethal weapons, ESMAD, until 2015, had at least 40,000 cases against human rights violations being processed by the prosecutor's office. ESMAD's records of excess do not justify the excesses that the Securitizing Agent highlighted in its publications on the violence of protesters. However, the space opens up for discussion about how a non-lethal police force can cause much damage. This point of debate makes it difficult to characterize the enemy and the line it crosses when it joins a protest.

In short, the Colombian State has sometimes proposed a characterization of a powerful enemy. It is not necessarily an equation of the protester as a terrorist but a characterization of an "entity" capable of undermining the exercise of the right to peaceful protest. The State and its representatives boldly reinforced that the right to protest existed and that they were the foremost supporters and guarantors of these rights as long as they followed regulations. Any act beyond the State's lines of consideration would mischaracterize the protest and turn it into a transgression of the law, even if these lines were not clearly defined. This speech is interesting because, like Bolsonaro's, it uses the logic of Stritzel's securitization grammatical structure at times, but in a different way from the standards established by the author. It is evident that the Colombian State, on several occasions, was more straightforward when it came to contextualizing the enemy and the consequences of inaction. However, it is interesting to note moments in which the subjective logic of characterizing what is not a threat is a tactic that was used.

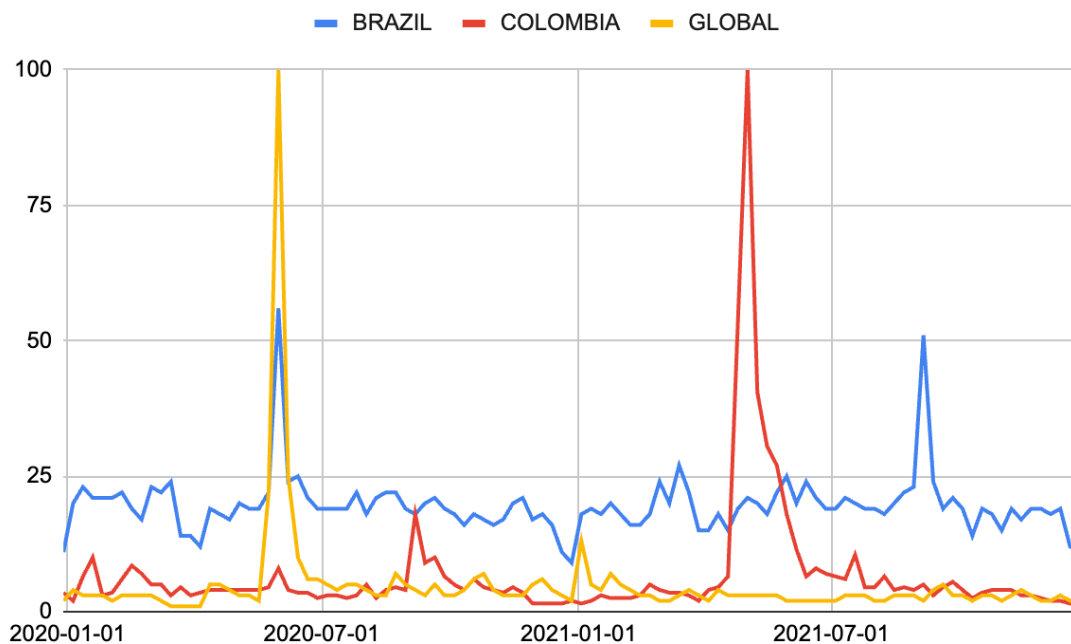
4.3 - FROM MEMES TO TEAR GAS: COMPARING SECURITIZATION IN BRAZIL AND COLOMBIA

Going beyond social media analysis, we can also briefly analyze the online information flow. Using Google Trends, we searched the keyword "protest" in English, Spanish, and Portuguese. Google Trends can give us a comparative view of searches in the search tool, generating a graph of interest. This graph goes from 0 to 100, and shows the interest in the term in the selected region, according to the platform itself:

The numbers represent search interest relative to the highest point on the graph for a given region in a given period. A value of 100 represents the peak popularity of a term. A value of 50 means the term was half as popular. A score of 0 means there was not enough data on the term. (GOOGLE TRENDS)

Figure 21 shows us that during the studied period, Brazil and Colombia had a large volume of data regarding people's interest in the subject. In both cases, the interest was more significant than the global trend on the subject.

FIGURE 21 - Comparison of Search Interest between Brazil, Colombia and Global, Search key "protest" between Jan. 2020 and Dec. 2021



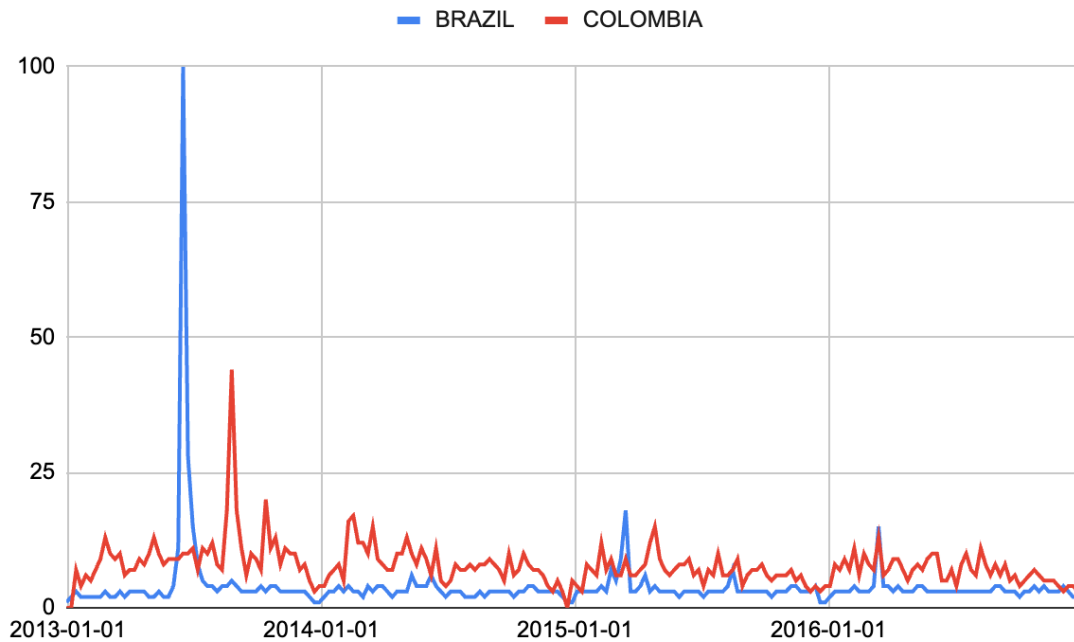
Source: Google Trends. Elaborated by the Author.

It is essential to highlight that the peak of interest shown in the Global line is in the period between the murder of George Flyod in the USA and the protests against police violence and racism that take place in the following weeks. As there were protests in Brazil

and Colombia throughout every month of the years studied, it was expected that the topic would appear in the interest filter of the search tool, mainly due to news published online.

However, Figure 22 highlights the discussion raised in section 4.1 of this chapter. Brazil has already experienced a long period of large protests, with its central peak in 2013.

FIGURE 22 - Comparison of Search Interest between Brazil and Colombia, Search key "protest" between Jan. 2013 and Dec. 2017

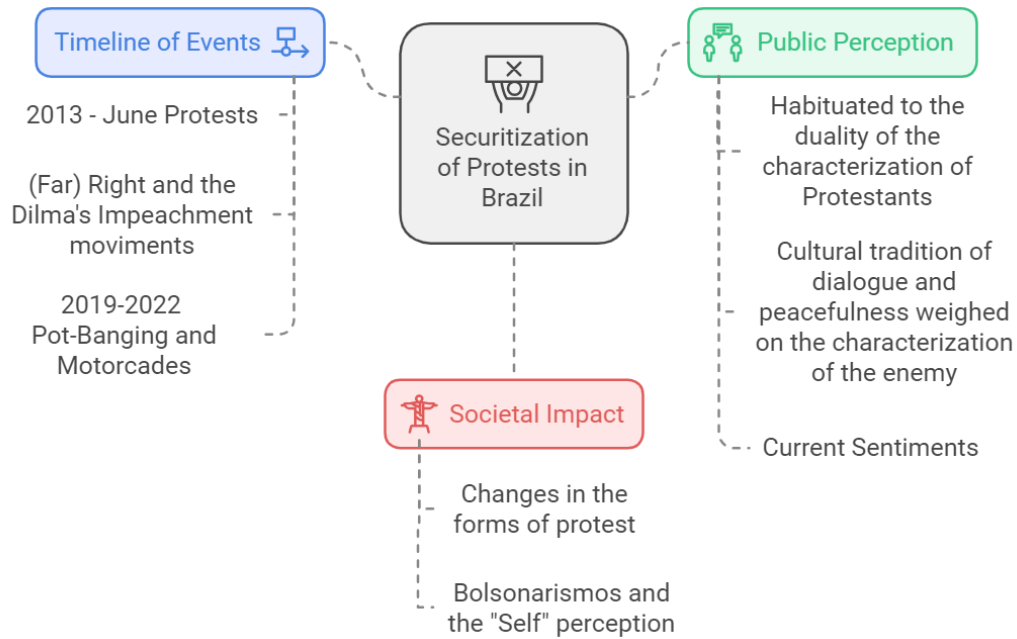


Source: Google Trends. Elaborated by the Author.

This differentiation of historical context may be one of the justifications for the difference in how social media is used. As we can see, Brazil peaked in 2013 and stabilized afterward. After this period, there were significant social media movements, mainly around President Dilma Rousseff's impeachment. Historically, Colombia also has a considerable movement concerning research on the topic. However, the period 2013 - 2017 was also marked by controversial actions by ESMAD, which makes it challenging to analyze the real reason for searches in the research tool.

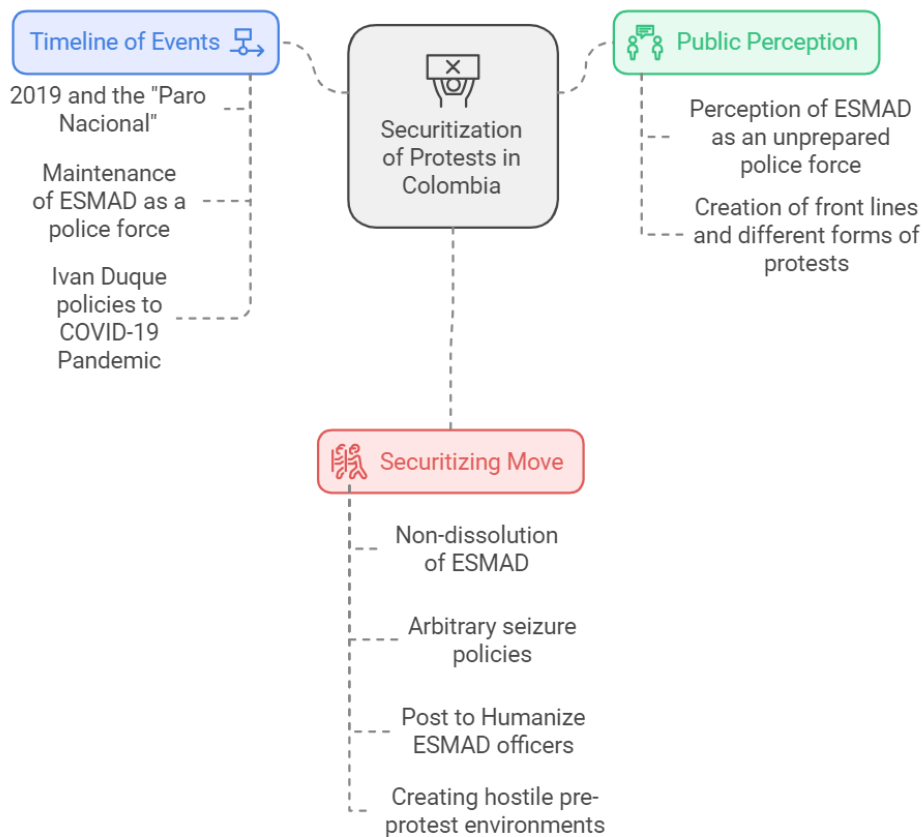
The main difference between the two countries is how the State has managed to direct Public Opinion. It is crucial to emphasize that a discourse can only emerge and position itself at the point of hegemony over others if it is in accordance with the possibilities these discourses allow in the discursive space.

FIGURE 23 - Infographic on the securitization of protests in Brazil



Elaborated by the Author.

FIGURE 24 - Infographic on the securitization of protests in Colombia



Elaborated by the Author.

In the Brazilian case, we have seen a process of securitization that began in 2013 with the "June Protests." During this period, the State made constant moves to characterize the protesters as a national enemy, so as to undermine the right to free protest. However, during the period analyzed in this study, we have seen a State more concerned with characterizing who is not the enemy than the opposite.

In the Colombian case, what we have seen are constant moves to characterize the enemy and the use of the ESMAD as the police force responsible for dealing with protests. The use of the ESMAD and its questioning of arbitrariness position the Colombian case differently from Brazil's. In Colombia, we can see a solid movement to characterize the enemy, such as the State's effort to protect monuments and private properties along protest routes.

5 - CONCLUSIONS

This work's main objective is to observe whether, according to the securitization logic proposed by Stritzel (2014), there was evidence of an attempt to securitize social movements during the COVID-19 pandemic in Brazil and Colombia. This research is particularly relevant in the current social and political climate. According to Stritzel (2014), discursive practice and its reception by public opinion are *sines qua non* factors for the securitization process. Therefore, in addition to analyzing whether there were such signs during the period studied, the present work also inserts the context of social media into the flow of analysis of Stritzel's logic. Addressing the speeches on social media was essential since the discursive logic studied by Stritzel in his book "Security in Translation: Securitization Theory and the Localization of Threat" (2014) did not address how new media could be inserted and impact the process.

To better reflect on the subject, Chapter 3 presented data on the dynamics of protests, their primary correlations, and how the movements were on social media. Throughout the chapter, we observed how discourse and practice were aligned. Regarding presence on social media, it was possible to notice points of distinction between how representatives of the State made the speech and the grammatical structures pointed out by Stritzel could be observed. In the following Chapter, we can observe arguments and counter-arguments about securitization, using the case of Rogue States and Terrorism in Germany as a starting point for analysis.

Stritzel (2014) establishes how the Securitizing Agent traces its discursive logic to arrive at a securitization process. According to the author, grammatical elements build the Securitizing Agent's narrative thread until the process's final result. These grammatical elements speak directly to characterizing and contextualizing the threat and its consequences. They are elements of direct construction and speak directly about the Referent Object. Stritzel's (2014) grammatical logic is based on how the State stated its relationship with public opinion until the historical moment he wrote his book, which leaves some current narrative elements outside the author's construction.

In both the Brazilian and Colombian cases, it was possible to observe elements that spoke to the logic of Stritzel (2014) and its grammatical elements. However, at times, it was possible to notice that elements were close to logic but following a different and more subjective path. It was possible to notice, especially in the case of Bolsonaro's speeches and political trajectory, that the speech was niche and the construction of the narrative followed a slightly divergent line.

The scenario in both countries was quite polarized during the period studied. Even though they were presidents of the entire country, Bolsonaro and Duque had a strong tendency to talk to a specific audience, their electorate. Duque, in a way, less so, but with Bolsonaro, this niched communication was quite evident, almost as if public opinion was only his voters. This movement of parallel conversation meant that the narrative elements used were different. As mentioned in the analyses, structuring the contextualization of "Claim," for example, followed much more in contextualizing who we are, **who is not the threat**, rather than directly talking about what the Referent Object was.

There may be questions about interpreting different ways of contextualizing the threat within the same logic as Stritzel (2014). However, it is essential to highlight that the narrative logic of indirectly or subjectively talking about the Referent Object was not a very common practice within the period of Stritzel's case studies and is also a movement that opens up room for questioning the existence of the securitization process. This subtlety in defining the threat, through the movement of saying what is not a threat, is a more complex and subjective narrative logic in terms of space for logical analysis. To Stritzel's logic, direct contextualization of the threat is necessary for inferences about the securitization process. Otherwise, it will be subjective and subject to the perceptions of those who analyze it.

When we look at the points highlighted by Stritzel (2014) when analyzing the cases of Germany, we can point out similarities and differences in the studies of Brazil and Colombia. The main point of attention is the one mentioned in Chapter 2: the Securitizing Agent already begins its work with a history of characterizing the threat initiated by colonization. Securitizing a social movement becomes, in theory, just the effort to guarantee the recognition of this parity of images within the imagination of public opinion. That is to say, there was a previous contextualization created by the history of colonization, which supported the discourse for the securitization of the Referent Object. This factor reduced the State's concern with the translation of concepts and practices, a context that did not exist in the cases of Germany, as presented by Stritzel (2014).

However, the main difference between Stritzel's studies and those presented in this work is the historical context of the study. The influence and tangibility of social media become a crucial element for disseminating discourse. This is because the Securitizing Agent can be easily contradicted by any civilian or institution with access to social media. This factor affects the dynamics of the argumentative game.

As explained in the previous chapter, Colombia and Brazil present different amounts of information, mainly in the number of publications on social media. However, Brazil

already experienced a historical period of significant movement in social media during the "June Days of 2013,"²⁵ which could mean that the two countries are simply at different stages of the same process.

Although it cannot be stated clearly, as Stritzel does in his case studies, it is essential to highlight that it is possible to notice movements by the State to securitize social movements and their demonstrations. However, it is important to notice that a filter is applied (un)consciously to define the dangerous actors. Almost 50% of all protests involving significant use of police force were called by groups that the State has historically marginalized or are treated like troublemakers every time they protest. Students, Teachers, Workers Groups, Strike Committees, and Indigenous groups are groups that have historically called for acts in favor of maintaining civil rights but are routinely treated as marginal. This legacy of colonization, which was reinforced by the years of dictatorship, continues to be a commonplace attitude in the life of social movements.

Therefore, if we cannot guarantee that there was a movement towards securitization of social movements, we can reflect on the modus operandi of the State. If the way the State treats protests is not necessarily to equate them with terrorist acts, why do the police react so violently? Why do only certain groups of social movements face harsh police attacks? This discussion, which fits better in other works, is essential for us to reflect on whether there is a securitizing movement or an unpreparedness of State forces. The Securitizing Agent tries to securitize the relevant Object or cannot deal with protests, or the State forces are highly efficient in what they propose to do, including appearing unprepared.

²⁵ "Jornadas de Junho de 2013", see VREESIWIJK, A. M. D. FINOTTI B, V. As "Manifestações de Junho" e as Redes Sociais na Perspectiva da Análise do Discurso. In: Anna Maria Dias Vreeswijk; Evandson Paiva Ferreira. (Org.). Ensino Médio Pesquisa. 1ed.Goiânia: Editora Espaço Acadêmico, 2019, v. 1, p. 7-233.

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