

English Abstract	
Title	Privatization of Security in Colombia: Expanding the Concept of Militarization
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This dissertation examines the role of the privatization of security in the militarization process that took place in Colombia between 1990 and 2010. It also analyzes the impact of that particular militarization process on indicators of democracy and economic growth. The main purpose of the study is to assess an intellectually puzzling situation regarding the existing theory on militarization and the evidence provided by the case study: while the current literature concludes that militarization is negatively associated with development, the militarization process in Colombia has had a positive effect on both democracy and economic growth.

The context of the period in which the research is focused on is characterized by a protracted internal armed conflict, the production and trafficking of illegal drugs, the demobilization and reintegration of illegal paramilitary groups, a strong influence of United States' foreign policy, unceasing counterinsurgent and counternarcotic operations, and an emerging private security industry. The unique combination of these characteristics makes the evaluation of the case study academically interesting. Likewise, the parallel manifestation of the processes of militarization and privatization of security in the same space and time enables the possibility of broadening the theoretical approach towards the controversial concept of militarization.

In order to analyze the theoretically puzzling situation present in Colombia, the dissertation aims to answer the following research questions: first, despite that PMSCs emerged in the context of demilitarization after the end of the Cold War, why has the domestic private security industry developed in an environment marked by greater militarization in Colombia during the last two decades?; and second, while existing literature on militarization concludes that large militaries and high defense budgets are negatively associated with development (in terms of levels of democracy and economic growth) in Latin America, why does the militarization process in Colombia seem to have had a positive effect on democracy and economic growth?

The study tests four hypotheses to answer the previously stated questions: first, the rise of the domestic private security industry in Colombia is not triggered by the country's militarization or demilitarization context; other factors motivate its growth; second, the domestic private security industry and the national armed forces provide complementary services to fulfill the increasing demand for security

in a country affected by a protracted internal armed conflict; third, the presence of a domestic private security industry mitigates the negative effects of militarization on democracy and economic growth; and fourth, the domestic private security industry fulfills security demands that promote a stable political and economic environment. The first two hypotheses address the first research question and the last two address the second research question.

This dissertation is a policy-oriented study. The type of research design is a *case study research* of Colombia: it is a single-case study that entails diachronic and synchronic analysis. In other words, militarization and privatization of security are analyzed combining temporal and spatial components.

The first chapter of the study introduces the concept of privatization of security and describes the relevant background of the case study. The second chapter presents the literature review on the existing research regarding militarization in Latin America and its impact on democracy and economic growth. It also describes the global industry of Private Military and Security Companies and presents the findings of the scarce research on the presence of these companies in Colombia. The third chapter explains in detail the methodology of the research. It reveals the main hypotheses of the study and identifies the independent and dependent variables that will be used to analyze the hypotheses.

The fourth chapter analyzes in depth the processes of militarization and privatization of security that took place in Colombia between 1990 and 2010. This chapter examines the increasing militarization and the rise of the private security industry in the country and highlights the importance of the protracted internal armed conflict in each process. This is a fundamental chapter to understand the impact that the private security sector has had on the militarization of Colombia. A quantitative analysis of the relation between militarization (in terms of MPR) and privatization of security (in terms of PrivateMPR) shows that there is a strong and significant correlation between the two variables.

In chapter five the quantitative and qualitative evidence provided along the study confirms that the militarization process in Colombia had a positive impact on democracy and economic growth, and that role played by the private security industry in Colombia was vital for that impact to occur. The qualitative analysis shows that the insertion of the privatization of security variable in the analysis of the impact of militarization on democracy and economic growth provides four reasons capable of explaining why militarization does not exert a negative effect on democratization and economic development in the country. First of all, the service provided by private security agents complemented the service that had been traditionally provided by national security forces. Second, private security providers helped reduce the risks posed by the urbanization of the conflict in Colombia during the 1990s, a situation that otherwise would have created more political and social instability. Third, the private security industry enabled national and foreign companies to continue performing and expand their commercial activities throughout the country, increasing their sense of security in the middle of the

internal conflict. Finally, the privatization of security created a significant number of quality jobs that had a positive impact on the nation's unemployment rate. Likewise, the quantitative analysis proved that there is indeed a strong, positive, and significant effect of MPR on democracy and economic growth, and due to the strong correlation between MPR and Private MPR, it may be affirmed that the privatization of security does have a positive effect on democracy and economic growth.

These findings offer new alternatives for other countries affected by armed conflicts: while it is important to evaluate the inherent risks of using private providers of military and security services, these private companies might be helpful to overcome political instability and economic crisis. Finally, the study encourages the need to broaden the current concept of militarization in order to refer not only to military and police institutions, but also to the various expressions and mechanisms of legal coercive means and organized violence. This wider notion of militarization should definitely include the private security sector.

This dissertation provides various relevant elements that may stimulate further discussions in current academic debates. For instance, is the use of PMSC part of the evolution of the modern state? Is this new modern state handing over the monopoly of the use of force back to the private sector? Is privatization of security essential for a successful security sector reform? Does private security promote social inequality?