

Colombian police and military schools and training: from a 'problematic country' to an 'exporter of security models'?

Manuela Trindade Viana (PUC - Rio, Brazil)

Historically, the stigma of the “problematic country” has triggered engagements of a myriad of countries and organizations towards Colombia. More recently, however, the Colombian military and police have come to host courses to students from countries such as Brazil, Ecuador, El Salvador Mexico and Peru. Likewise, after years of training by the DEA and the seizure of more than 40 leaders of narcotraffic organizations, the Colombian National Police claims an expertise in intelligence gathering, search and seizure of criminal organizations. Although the stigma of a “problematic country” still surrounds Colombia, its Armed Forces have managed to capitalize the experience they claim to have acquired in irregular combat and have built an image of Armed Forces with expertise and, hence, in a position to teach others how to perform operations in irregular combat. The paper looks precisely to how military and police schooling and training programs articulate this move from a “problematic country” to a “country with expertise”. Considering that professionals of security from France, United States and Israel have engaged directly in the creation and capacity building in Colombian schools and training centers, the paper sketches a transmission circuit of security/public order expertise in Latin America with Colombia as its hub and argues that there is no such thing as an “authentic Colombian model” being exported.