

Editorial / Editorial

Since time immemorial, the willingness to kill and die for the collective remains strongly nurtured. In modern times, military personnel serve the State, but they must be integrated in a wider community, which recognises itself and is itself recognised: the nation. The difficulties in understanding this term are the enigmas that involve the nation, an entity that is rooted in the 20th century, when the exchanges of goods and services intensify, the ideas of rights and duties are widely disseminated, and the accumulation of scientific knowledge allows for mass communication in a wholly unprecedented scale.

In the face of heterogeneity and the conflicts of the urban-industrial society, a unifying sentiment, the “love for the homeland”, is indispensable to the armed branch of the State. In large part, this is due to the special status that military personnel assign themselves. Besides their mission to protect the nation against foreign threats, they present themselves as guarantors of political order and stability in their country. In Brazil, under the strong influence of a positivist doctrine, military personnel perceive the nation as a sacred entity, which rests above the social processes that forged the military corps as a guardian of the patriotic spirit.

At the time of Independence, Brazil was an undefined entity, with uncertain borders, and a community that was aware of the similarities amongst its own members was still in formation; different visions guided the mobilisations that had a strategic political role towards territorial unity in that context. But it is at the Proclamation of the Republic that the role of the members of military corps in the national socio-politic process.

Seeking to legitimise its negative intrusions, the Armed Forces, in particular the Army, try to present themselves as the builders of nationality, despite their limited history with fighting external enemies. Since then, they have represented a systematic obstacle

to the formation of democracy in Brazil. Nowadays, the political activism of the higher echelons of military hierarchy have imposed a setback on the democratic experience established under the aegis of the constitution of 1988: it has fostered fraud within the electoral process, and delivered the presidency to a far-right politician, accelerating the unravelling of democratic institutions.

Regardless of the relevance of military corps throughout different periods and aspects of national life, the academic literature that discusses the organisational and functional issues of these institutions is still relatively narrow. Research and essays on strategic thought and the conceptions of National Defence have been developed over the last few decades, as well as the reflexion on Brazil's international relations, with emphasis on hemispherical security. The same cannot be said for proper military organisations or its members, nor for the prominent role that they perform in the formation of the national community.

This thematic edition of *World Tensions* presents works that help in understanding, from a multidisciplinary perspective, the extraordinary political activism from military personnel, with a focus on Brazil's republican timespan.

A known military scholar, with a prolific academic career, the founder of the Observatory of Nationalities and its academic journal, Manuel Domingos Neto presents an insightful analysis of what the "nation's project, Brazil in 2035" document represents, which was released by a group of generals and colonels and has the execrable pretension of tutoring the country's society. The interview given to *Carta Capital* is revelatory: on one hand, there are no innovative proposals, since they already have been being realised, in large part, by the far-right government, in which participate around seven thousand military personnel; on the other hand, innovation is the apparatus for its dissemination, which could be seen as a gesture of certainty (or impunity?) in their hosts for seizing power. Manuel presents an important alert in the sense that we must understand with further rigour, amplitude, and depth the threat that this project for democracy in the Latin-American continent represents.

Siniša Malešević, a professor of sociology at the University of Dublin and member of the consulting council at World Tensions, is a renowned intellectual with countless works on war, violence, nation, and ethnicity. In his riveting article, he explores the relationships between nationalism and racism in the contemporary world. Despite being ideologies with intrinsically differing concepts, there is a substantial degree of compatibility that allowed them, in some historical contexts, to be joined as a political project, while in other situations, they have developed as adversaries.

Re-democratisation, civil control, and reaction is the theme chosen by professors of the Institute of Strategic Studies of the Federal University Fluminense (INEST/UFF): Eduardo Heleno de Jesus Santos, Erika Kubik da Costa Pinto, Vagner Camilo Alves. The authors examine, from a comparative perspective, the presence of military reserves personnel in groups that exert political pressure in the founding countries of Mercosur, which are characterised by anti-communism, and by the support for the intervention of the Armed Forces during moments of crisis. Their demands are mainly focused on not punishing military personnel involved in humanitarian crimes, which translates to a strong reaction to civil control in a region marked by military governments in the 1980s and 1990s.

In South America, the actions of the Armed Forces towards Venezuelan migration at the Brazilian border are a part of the history of military political activism in Brazil. The work of Denise Marini Pereira, Mariana da Gama, and Adriano Freixo, researchers of the Strategic Studies Post-Graduation Programme at UFF, analyses the main elements of the so-called “Operation Fostered”, which has been being instrumentalised as humanitarian aid from the Brazilian Armed Forces. To this end, a debate on the role of the military in activities that go beyond its role in external defence has been proposed, as well as on the contemporary military actions within Brazil’s internal ordering.

The next article discusses the relevance of the Air Force Academy’s education in Political Science and International Relations. The authors question whether this higher education institution would be qualified to prepare future officers of the

Brazilian Air Force and how can they respond to the challenges brought about by the democratic State of Law. With support from bibliographic and documental research, Tamires Andrade, Alexandre Manhães, and Humberto José Lourenção correlate the contents established in the plans of disciplinary studies with their applications in the current context, taking into account the specificities of the military profession.

An officer of the Army's reserves, coordinator of the interdisciplinary professional master's programme "Humanities in Military Sciences", and currently undertaking a post-doctoral study at the University of Salgado de Oliveira, Fábio Facchinetti Freire regales us with an essay on the political usage of military colleges, elevated to the condition of mark of reference for public education. The author begins by arguing about the aims of the creations of the colleges, and next identifies the real conditions – material, human, and symbolic – for the colleges' success, and concludes that such conditions are not intrinsically "military".

Gustavo Josué Simoni Paes and Francisco César Alves Ferraz, members of the Post-Graduate Programme of the State University of Maringá, contribute with an article that expands on the creation of the discipline of Moral and Civic Education, from the conference "Freedom and Democracy", announced by General Moacir Araújo Lopes, in 1968. The objective is to discuss the representation of communism in Brazilian society, and, specifically, to military personnel, what underlines the militarisation of the fabric of society and the existence of a project of repressive upsurge, independent of the fight on guerrillas.

The analysis of conservative culturalist thought in Brazil's Army is the goal of Wallace da Silva Mello's article, a doctoral student in Political Sociology at the State University of the Fluminense North Darcy Ribeiro. The author presents results of his research on democracy and politics within the ideologies of the officers of the Brazilian Army, starting with the critical appreciation of monographies from the Agulhas Negras Academy. Based on the imaginary, on the traditions and the presence of the military in national history, he demonstrates the persistence of a mentality that interprets the Brazilian past and guides contemporary policies.

Euclides da Cunha questioned the borders between civilisation and barbarism, revealing how the so-called civilised society could be barbaric itself. However, the Euclidian analysis fails to disentangle itself from stances imposed by “civilisation”, which, based on “scientific” foundations, justified imperialistic advances. Such orientation is owed, in large part, to the formation of the writer who, in Military School, had contact with this scientism e with a sense of “commitment to the nation”. The title of the article is “Amongst weapons and letters”, by our colleagues of the Post-Graduation Programme in Sociology at the State University of Ceará, Pedro Victor Lima and Kadma Marques Rodrigues.

Social relations and bonds of belonging built by military personnel, in light of the familial category, are the objects of reflexion by Nádia Moreira and Viviane Caminha, both professors at the Higher School of War, and by Sabrina Celestino, leader of the research group Public Policies and Military Forces. Of a socio-ethnographic character, the work “Brothers in arms, brothers in life” has as a reference the expression “military family” and explores the bonds brought about by adverse circumstances experienced by these subjects of the Brazilian Navy, stemming from movement across national territory and by the distancing from one’s original family.

Paulo Henrique Matos de Jesus, member of the group Military, Political Research and Amazonian Borders, and doctoral student in the Post-graduation Programme in History at the Federal University of Maranhão, investigates the transition of the State of National Security to the democratic regime, as far as the inclusion of the basic principles of the Public Security in the Federal Constitution of 1988 is concerned. His article postulates: what is the treatment given to the Police relative to the Military Fire Corps during such a process and its importance to the construction of a possible military identity among the components of the auxiliary Forces?

We conclude this special edition by wishing you a pleasant reading!
The editors.