

Military Sciences: a space for articulating the phenomenon of war and professional experience

Ciências Militares: espaço de articulação entre o fenômeno da Guerra e a experiência profissional

Abstract: This is a reflection on the importance of professional experience for the deepening of the study of Military Sciences, in a context of the analysis of the phenomenon of War. With a qualitative bias, a deductive perspective was adopted, based on bibliographic research, with the support of content analysis. Since war is a concrete social phenomenon, which is expressed on the battlefield, the perspective that Military Sciences are close to Applied Social Sciences is corroborated. Thus, it is suggested that experience, resulting from professional practice, provides elements of reflection that contribute analytically to the study of War and, consequently, to the improvement of Military Sciences. In this context, the need to structure a coherent methodology for conducting analyses and observations is highlighted, in order to avoid subjectivity and personalism, as well as to report the gain in the quality of analyses with the increase of experience as a substantive factor in the process of studying War and Military Sciences.

Keywords: Military Sciences; War Theory; Military Education; Professional experience; Content analysis.

Resumen: Este texto reflexiona sobre la importancia de la experiencia profesional para profundizar en el estudio de las Ciencias Militares en un contexto de análisis del fenómeno de la Guerra. De naturaleza cualitativa, este estudio adoptó una perspectiva deductiva basada en la investigación bibliográfica a partir del análisis de contenido. La guerra es un fenómeno social concreto que se expresa en el campo de batalla, lo que confirma la idea de que las Ciencias Militares están cerca de las Ciencias Sociales Aplicadas. Así, se apunta que la experiencia del ejercicio profesional aporta elementos de reflexión que contribuyan al análisis del estudio de la Guerra y, en consecuencia, a la mejora de las Ciencias Militares. En este contexto, destaca la necesidad de formular una metodología coherente para realizar análisis y observaciones, con el fin de evitar la subjetividad y el personalismo, así como es importante informar un aumento en la calidad de los análisis con la experiencia como un factor clave en el proceso de estudio de la Guerra y de las Ciencias Militares.

Palabras clave: Ciencias Militares; Teoría de la Guerra; Educación Militar; Experiencia profesional; Análisis de contenidos.

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What genius does is the best rule, and theory can do no better than show how and why this should be the case¹.
Clausewitz. *On War* (1832, p. 136)

1 INTRODUCTION

Several studies on war, military history, and, consequently, Military Sciences, are not from this century. Strachan (1983, p. 6 *apud* Smith, 2004b, p. 56), for example, points out that, in eighteenth-century Germany, 16 new journals related to Military Sciences emerged between 1766 and 1790. However, despite efforts to study the facts or factors surrounding war, the possibilities are endless, but the personal combat experience of each soldier has always been significant (Strachan, 1988), demonstrating a potential to collaborate with the understanding of war.

From the sixteenth to the eighteenth century, Machiavelli and most military writers considered that war could be reduced to a science. Thus, it was not merely a reflection of reason, demonstrating its relevance to the academic world, since science is structured by facts (Davies, 1968). In this context, revisiting the concept of war and its relationship with Military Sciences is, currently, a great epistemological challenge.

Since the phenomenon of war cannot be fully understood by studying the facts surrounding it, this study aims to highlight the relevance of the knowledge of those who have experienced it in various ways², and not just with abstract concepts. Thus, this study seeks a new perspective for approaching the common view of analyzing only the causes of war, starting with the study of states, essential organizations, strategies, and others, which, sometimes, ignores the people who sustain and benefit from war at the expense of the interactions created. Studying war from the perspective of the experience requires use to place humans as the main targets of the violence and the fervor of war (Scarry, 1987; Shinko, 2011).

The main goal is not to debate and establish the concept and causes of war, nor to delve into the interrelationship between body, sexuality, gender, and emotions. Instead, the aim is to establish a new debate regarding the relevance of professional experience when studying Military Sciences as a field of scientific knowledge, within the context of the phenomenon of war.

Hence, it is appropriate to differentiate the terms “perception” and “experience” to facilitate the understanding of the following discussions. According to Ferreira (1989), experience is a skill resulting from the continuous exercise of a profession, art, or craft. However, perception consists of knowledge acquired by the senses. Thus, experience is a consequence of acts that are performed repeatedly, whereas perception is based on senses such as hearing, sight, and others.

1 “O que o gênio faz é a melhor regra, e a teoria não pode fazer melhor do que mostrar como e por que isso deve ser o caso” (tradução nossa).

2 Throughout this article, the term “war” is broadly used as equivalent and agglutinating of the most varied forms of conflict between sociopolitical entities (warfare).

2 EPISTEMOLOGICAL AND METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

According to Tesser (1994), in general, science is the product of contemporary culture, encompassing a breadth of empirical and pragmatic knowledge of applied research, building the relevance of epistemology. Hence, defining the philosophical framework in which ideas will be explored is essential, bringing to light the philosophical assumptions of the method used while guiding the construction of objective solutions to the problems encountered, suited to the reality of scientific research.

Moreover, evaluating contextualized theoretical and empirical tendencies has beneficial consequences, such as stimulating discussion on relative merits, contributing to the clarification of epistemological positions, methodologies, and the communicability of arguments, as well as enhancing awareness and reflection.

This epistemological basis demonstrates how the writer visualizes and reasons with the environment around them. Consequently, epistemology consists of a careful study of hypotheses and results from numerous sciences, transforming itself into a theory of knowledge and greatly influencing the future choice of research designs and methods to be used (Tesser, 1994). Coupled with the dynamics and complexity of the themes involved in this research, a theory connected to diversity is needed, leading to a direct connection with the Complexity Theory, introduced in the academic field at the end of the twentieth century (Richardson; Cilliers, 2001).

Thus, simply reading epistemic concepts does not provide a clear understanding between different scientific fields, whether they are Social Sciences (Byrne, 1997), Political Sciences (Cairney, 2012), or Military Sciences (Cameron; Larsen-Freeman, 2008). The Complexity Theory favors the discontinuous integration of concepts, as well as amplifies and broadens understanding, offering other possibilities grounded on space and time (Richardson; Cilliers, 2001).

Therefore, the Complexity Theory enables the connection between knowledge regarding evolution of War studies, the importance of experience for scientific studies, and Military Sciences. By exploring, classifying and interpreting epistemic concepts, one recognizes limits and understands the complexity and issues, enabling a perspective of the smaller parts and the comprehension of the perception of the whole (Mitchell, 2009).

Methodologically, this is a qualitative research, seeking the main points of view regarding the topics at hand. Different understandings on the subject enable an in-depth debate and the construction of other understandings. Collecting information helps with illustrating knowledge and building a universe of meanings, without being limited by variables (Minayo, 2001).

These meanings will be addressed with the support of the “content analysis” concept (Bardin, 1977), from which typology, taxonomy, and associated indicators are extracted (Franchi *et al.*, 2017). This creates conditions for processing and grounding of conclusions within a social context.

To this end, this study is characterized by a bibliographic review of theoretical references previously analyzed, investigating and contrasting the issues. The association of different

perspectives enables the understanding of the conceptual evolution of experience and of Military Sciences within the debate on the concept of war, structuring networks and alliances (Paris, 2004). The systematized and integrated verification of concepts enables equality in the investigation process, contrasting concepts and ensuring better transparency in the process.

Literature review was used to locate and summarize studies on the central topic. This review included some conceptual and opinion pieces, providing initial frameworks to reflect on Military Sciences and experience. The following steps were taken to achieve a solid review.

Initially, useful keywords were identified to locate materials in various online sources. Keywords (Table 1) were obtained after reading *On War*, by Carl Von Clausewitz, from 1832, considering other works in chronological order. However, this preliminary reading did not intend to conduct a historical survey on the epistemology of war, but rather to maintain a primary focus on knowledge obtained from experiences.

After defining the keywords, according to guidelines by Lehmann (1990) and Coghlan and Brydon-Miller (2014), a search in the main databases was carried out using the following terms: War, Violence, and Experience. With the deepening of the central theme, the following words were incorporated: Art of War, Military Sciences, and Clausewitz.

Table 1 – Details of the mapping of terms in the literature.

Database	Search strings
<i>Google academic</i> <i>Scientific Electronic Library</i> <i>SciELO</i> <i>Science Direct</i> <i>CAPES</i> <i>SAGE journals</i> <i>Routledge</i> <i>Fundação Getulio Vargas</i> <i>RAND Corporation</i>	<i>War</i> <i>Violence</i> <i>Experience</i> <i>Art of War</i> <i>Military Sciences</i> <i>Clausewitz</i>

Source: Prepared by the authors (2024).

Initially, about 70 research articles/books/monographs related to the topic were located. Considering the number of citations, research articles/books were prioritized to delve deeper into the topic. The list of keywords was constantly updated to cover the main authors who could contribute to the research. For a solid bibliographic search, the author analyzed databases regarding their academic relevance to research, prioritized the available literature, assessed the quality of the literature before including it in the research review, took written notes and/or abstracts for each source, and organized the sources.

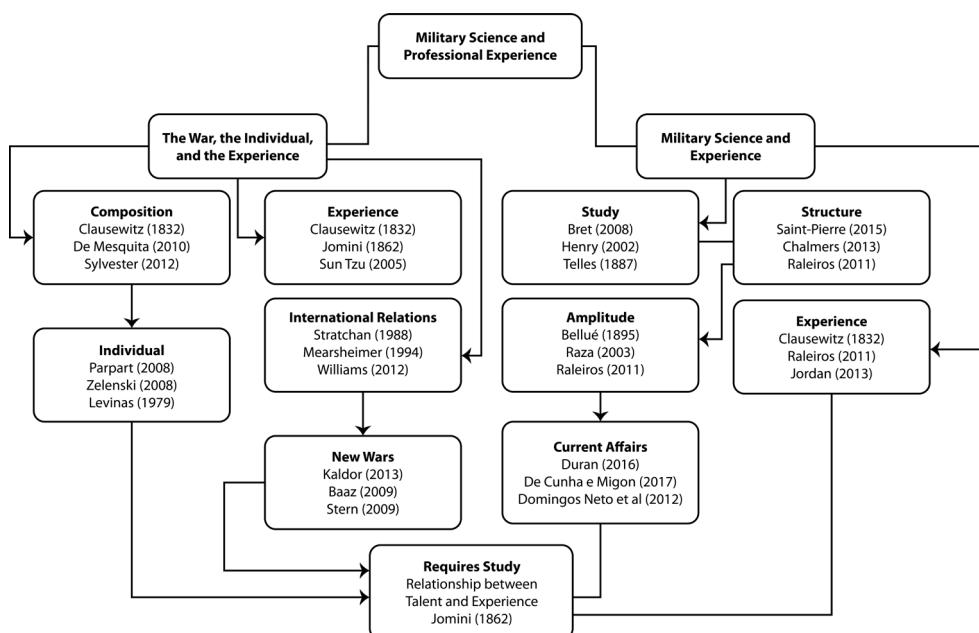
Literature databases available on the internet, such as Google Academic, Scientific Electronic Library, Science Direct, Routledge, and others, are relevant research sources. These databases provide easy access to thousands of journals, conference papers, and materials on a variety of topics, including those related to Military Sciences. After prioritization, abstracts of the research

articles/books were read to define which sources could contribute to the debate in question. Of the 70 sources previously found, a total of 51 could contribute to the research topic.

The investigation process was carried out in the listed databases from November 4, 2023, to September 23, 2024. The language used for research on international websites was English, due to the restricted collection of publications in Portuguese. To select research articles/books/monographs, the evaluation process used by journals for reviews was considered, providing a robust collection of sources, since editorial boards reviews manuscripts and establish acceptance criteria via an editorial statement.

As the literature was identified, the construction of a literature map began by grouping sources that could illustrate how the current research might enrich the existing literature, as well as propose a new perspective within the central research topic, as shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1 — Literature Map



Source: Prepared by the authors (2024).

According to Janovec (2001), this map provides a visual summary of the literature, positioning the study within existing work and clearly illustrating its theoretical alignment. The current map was organized hierarchically, presented from left to right and from top to bottom, concluding at the bottom with the proposed study. It should be noted that some branches are more developed than others due to the quantity and depth of exploration.

Subsequently, we began reading the texts to extract relevant ideas and to provide precise references. After consolidating the main ideas, the key concepts were structured to establish a logical sequence of thought and identify gaps within the central topic. One of these gaps in the academic debate is primarily related to considering professional experience as a relevant factor in the study of Military Sciences.

After the reading and selection processes, it can be inferred that the debate on Military Sciences is longstanding, non-consensual, and virtually inexhaustible. Moreover, it became an increasingly prominent topic in national and international academic communities (Da Cunha; Migon, 2019). Despite this debate, this study does not aim to define such concepts, but rather to discuss the relevance of professional experience in advancing studies in Military Sciences.

3 RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN WAR AND EXPERIENCE

In International Relations, when analyzing the war phenomenon, individuals are excluded from the process of analysis, with a tendency to generalize them, disregard their identity, and, consequently, their acquired experience (Caprioli, 2003; De Mesquita, 2010). Brighton (2011) states that core traditions of International Relations reduce war as being a consequence of fundamental processes, with political units competing in conditions of anarchy, contradictions of capital, extension of democratic norms, and disorderly effects of non-democratic governance.

International Relations, as a field of study, associates war with realist academic traditions, emphasizing aspects related to state security, which thus becomes its primary rationale (Mearsheimer, 1994; Williams, 2012). States use their military capabilities to conduct war and achieve their set objectives. However, citizens recognize the sublimity of military virtue as a value that goes beyond the defense of the state, and the readiness to risk oneself in the service of a greater cause highlights this assumption. In summary, individuals challenge their natural survival instinct in pursuit of a goal shared by a community (Williams, 2012).

Thus, states hesitate when they deviate from the rational calculations of costs and benefits of actions, sometimes accepting the risk of failure in their attempt to remain competitive and prepared. This can be observed as the price of commodities rises, the currency depreciates, putting external trade at risk, while individuals' standard of living of simultaneously declines, with the state seemingly indifferent (Williams, 2012).

The U.S. foreign policy toward Israel is an example, described in *The Israel Lobby and American Foreign Policy*, by John Mearsheimer and Walt (2012). It was adopted shortly after the 2006 Israeli-Lebanese war, in which people and their experiences were not taken into account, aiming only at Israel's well-being. In this context, a conflict was found between what is strategically desirable and what is economically feasible. Therefore, a strategy should not only be related to war and politics, but also to war and individuals (Stratchan, 1988).

However, Christine Sylvester (2013) introduces a different perspective, addressed by Caprioli (2003), De Mesquita (2010) and Brighton (2011), in which the phenomenon of war is composed of individuals, inserted in space and time. Hence, people extract and absorb experiences they deem useful. Neto (2005) reinforces the idea that war becomes a clash of wills, which are not always controllable, and that its occurrence goes beyond the narrow horizon reported by Clausewitz (1832). This demonstrates that, not only States and nations, but individuals are also involved in the phenomenon of war.

Clausewitz (1832) stresses that investigation, the art of observation, philosophy, and experience should neither be disregarded nor exclude one another. In war, the weaker the motives

for action, the more they are influenced by experience, determining the difference between attack and defense. Additionally, Sun Tzu (2005) points out that, over time, opportunities to accumulate experience become increasingly rare.

Jomini (1862) adds that, in battles or wars, theory becomes an uncertain guide; in emergencies, talent can never be surpassed nor replace the insight gained by a general's experience, forged by bravery and composure in combat. It is emphasized that expected results cannot be predicted with certainty, leading to the dissolution of assumptions and creation of new ones (Jomini, 1862).

In the realm of certainties, it is inferred that war disrupts claims of fundamental thought, functioning as a process of violent reciprocity in an attempt at conceptual capture, thus being conducted by experience. Furthermore, in war, determining the decisive point of a battle becomes a complex task. However, skill and experience make a difference, diminishing the weight of theory (Brighton, 2011).

Yet, when studying war from the perspective of experience, Sylvester (2013) highlights certain adversities, two of which being the experience and the body. Experience is usually measured based on oppressive experiences that one undergoes (Grant, 2013). This experience can be gathered from people's accounts of how they lived and worked. Studies on experiences in war focus on the individual, that is, what happened to their body and how it reacted to the stimuli of the war zone (Parpart; Zalewski, 2008).

Given this context, war is not just about injuring or annihilating, but about the interruption of the continuity of individual development, materialized in the experience acquired throughout their lives (Levinas, 1979). Clausewitz (1832) points out that the experience of war, where certainties are constantly undone, forms an order of disorder, in which combatants or individuals involved are not just units of strategic calculation, but also repositories of meanings, reshaping social and political relations (Levinas, 1979).

Hence, there is a need for a more descriptive and reflective engagement regarding the lived realities, given the evidence linking war and experience. One of the questions raised would be "where" to observe in order to acquire the experience of those who lived through war (Brighton, 2011). Arendt (2006) contextualizes that war is an inheritance left without a will, since what was experienced does not belong to just one individual, but to all those involved. Moreover, such an experience can lead to changes as a way to avoid what one went through.

Vivienne Jabri (2007) addresses another way of acquiring experience regarding war, which can occur in different ways depending on the circumstances, such as the level of involvement in conflicts. In this situation, one can exemplify the way people engage in war, whether from a greater or lesser distance, such as those who produce materials or those directly involved in combat. This shows a significant difference in the experience acquired by the people involved.

Judith Butler (2011) adds that experience also depends on physical, social, and other characteristics³, distinguishing sex as a bodily biology and gender as social practices attributed to biological-reproductive differences. Shane Brighton and Barkawi (2011) argue that war consolidates

³ To delve deeper into sex and gender, the article by Judith Butler (2011) is a recommended read.

as a form of social relationship, encompassing economic and technological relations, which enables a reordering of knowledge and social identities.

Mary Kaldor (2013) reports a concept of “new wars” in the post-Cold War period, in which new tensions are aligned with the growth of indiscriminate political violence, due to social relations modified by conflicts. These relations are connected to globalization (Barkawi; Brighton, 2011), due to easy access to information and its dissemination, among other factors, with the aim of inciting fear, going against the idea of peace and security (Baaz; Stern, 2009; Kaldor, 2013).

In the context of the “new wars,” another idea emerges, according to MacKenzie (2012) women and children constitute a vulnerable part of the conflict. Many women and children actively participate in various conflicts, such as in Sierra Leone. However, their experiences are not considered, thus failing to acquire a more defined image of war through different perspectives, had such accounts been gathered (Elshtain, 1987; Das, 2006).

Shane Brighton (2011) points out that breaking certain paradigms is difficult within International Relations, such as including the analysis of the individual’s experience of war. To this end, the major challenge is to create a chain of theories that can connect different levels of experience with varying meanings, including individuals, groups, bureaucracies, economies, states, international organizations, and others within this framework. (Brighton, 2011). With such accounts, it is possible to observe that experience encompasses different perspectives, from the experience lived by those immersed in the conflict to the experience of those who lead the battles and work directly for the war, acquired over time.

Christine Sylvester (2007) points out that International Relations is vast, with room for a wide variety of interests, approaches, and intersecting investigations.

4 THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MILITARY SCIENCES AND EXPERIENCE

At the end of the eighteenth century, Sebastião Telles (1887) recounted, in the words of Napoleon I, the relevance of experience for the military, viewing it as a scientific knowledge (Henry, 2008). Similarly, Bret (2002) reports a conversation between Berthollet⁴ and Napoleon, which highlights the military commander’s concern with the difficulty of acquiring knowledge at the time, especially regarding how to assess the importance and accuracy of the knowledge acquired for scientific research and the production of knowledge concerning the phenomenon of war.

Such thought is supported by Thomas Kuhn⁵, in *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (1962, p. 21), regarding the facts observed in the past and today:

⁴ French chemist, born in 1748 and died in 1822, who dedicated himself to studies in various chemistry fields. Claude-Louis Berthollet studied in Turin and, later, in Paris. He began publishing his research in 1776, and in 1780 was elected a member of the French Academy. In 1798, Napoleon entrusted him with organizing scientific work on an expedition to Egypt, where he created the Egyptian Scientific Institute.

⁵ Thomas Kuhn (1922-1996) was an American physicist and scholar in the field of philosophy of science, establishing theories that deconstructed the objectivist paradigm of science. According to him, scientific theories are subject to questions and debates from the social environment, interests and communities that formulate them (Bartelmebs, 2012).

The more carefully they study, say, Aristotelian dynamics, phlogistic chemistry, or caloric thermodynamics, the more certain they feel that those once current views of nature were, as a whole, neither less scientific nor more the product of human idiosyncrasy than those current today.

Expanding the magnitude of related issues, Jover (2008) points out that the study of the phenomenon of war enables better training for the armed forces, as well as ensures more robust security for the state, based on observations and experiences lived on the battlefield.

In this context, Domingos Neto *et al.* (2012, p. 210, our translation) adds that “there is no state or society that does not rely on instruments of force, and history does not record societies immune to bloodshed.” Additionally, in an environment permeated by war, the officer is no different from the citizen, and political power merges with military power (Domingos Neto *et al.*, 2012). Such close relations demonstrate the intimate association of lived experiences.

Therefore, science works with hypotheses formed by the mind, requiring creativity and experience (Smith, 2004a). The challenge is to organize facts in a way that minimizes distrust in judgments. Moreover, this organization should seek to enable validation by testing, involving routine and objective procedures that do not require subjective judgments from the observer (Chalmers, 2013).

Ferreira (1989) states that science is a set of knowledge about a specific object, acquired by observation, based on a methodology. The *Coordenação de Aperfeiçoamento de Pessoal de Nível Superior* (CAPES – Coordination for the Improvement of Higher Education Personnel) (2017) organizes areas of knowledge into ten major fields or sciences: Exact and Earth Sciences, Biological Sciences, Engineering, Health Sciences, Agricultural Sciences, Applied Social Sciences, Human Sciences, Linguistics, Languages and Arts and, finally, multidisciplinary, demonstrating the breadth of the taxonomy of conceptual understanding.

Domingos Neto *et al.* (2012, p. 208, our translation) reinforce that an area of knowledge essentially consists of a “set of interrelated knowledge, collectively constructed, gathered according to the nature of the object of investigation, with the purposes of teaching, research, and practical applications.”

Among the various existing perspectives, CAPES (2017) and the National Council for Scientific and Technological Development (CNPQ) (2007) adopt a taxonomy that strengthens the relationship between the content of Military Sciences and Humanities, while also incorporating knowledge from Political Science and International Relations. Further expanding this idea, Domingos Neto *et al.* (2021) highlight the possibility of creating the “Defense and Security” area, which would bring together scientists and researchers focused on Humanities, particularly on topics related to Military Sciences, such as Strategic Thinking, Defense and Security Policies, Military Studies, and Defense Institutions, demonstrating the relevance of the knowledge involved in these debates.

Raleiras (2011) also observes that science is linked to the materialization of a structure of knowledge, related to objects of the same nature, with an organization of continuous improvement of new perceptions. As knowledge becomes more specialized, the emergence of new

knowledge fields is possible, in line with Kuhn's⁶ (1962) ideas about the crisis of paradigms. Additionally, Migon (2014) emphasizes the heterogeneous nature of scientific development and the possibility of various approaches.

However, defining the taxonomy of science is not a simple task within Military Sciences, due to the existence of multiple factors involved in the phenomenon of war and the interests of other sciences (Raleiras, 2011). Science is also political, making it appropriate to inquire who it serves, as well as how it influences decisions that impact the scientific community, which develops, publicizes, and manages science (Saint-Pierre, 2015).

Clausewitz (1832), when stating that war is the continuation of politics by other means (Domingos Neto, 2005), demonstrates that war involves more than one factor. At the end of the eighteenth century, Bellv  (1895) reinforced that Military Sciences were a set of disciplines in which knowledge is connected to how to conduct war through analysis, linking to knowledge related to the existence of society and human beings. Moreover, Clausewitz (1832) regarded the phenomenon of war as a social event and its relationship with other areas, thus defining the Art of War, leading to the construction and development of perspectives that would guide Military Sciences.

Jordan (2013) also establishes that Military Sciences symbolize an analysis of the components of States, armies, and individuals, alongside the study of war, based on theories and postulates dedicated to the use of the Armed Forces. Raza (2003) adds that the compartmentalization of knowledge can evolve, change, and disappear, according to the integration of areas of knowledge, providing a new approach without hindering its advancement. Da Cunha and Migon (2017) reinforce that Science and Military Art are inseparable in conducting war, and that the scientific character of the study of war consists of investigating the essence of the phenomena involved, in addition to enabling the connections between these phenomena and the nature of the parts (Clausewitz, 1832).

Military Sciences are guided by a set of knowledge related to the art of warfare, especially by the experience and observations of wars and conflicts (Brasil, 2010). This experience and observations shape the doctrine for employing military force, highlighting the principles of war and military operations, based on a methodology that considers the decision-making process at various operational levels, conducted by individuals (Raleiras, 2011). In summary, Military Sciences are defined in an independent scientific field, representing a set of skills related to the study of the war phenomenon in a dynamic and evolving manner, without a specific methodology, which enable interdisciplinary exchange and scientific enrichment (Saint-Pierre, 2015).

However, the purpose of Military Sciences is not translated into the production of military doctrine since there is a conceptual distinction between doctrinal production and the production of scientific studies. The former assimilates knowledge without a proper methodology

6 For Thomas Kuhn (1962), a paradigm is a set of knowledge and practices that guarantee the execution of scientific research. A paradigm determines how far one can think, since data and theories, when used in research, will confirm the existence of a given paradigm. The crisis of paradigms consists of conceptual and procedural changes that occur within a field of knowledge. It arises within the so-called normal science, through anomalies that do not conform to the traditional ways of conceiving the scientific process and product (Kuhn, 1962).

or questioning, whereas the latter is centered around open debates of concepts, methods, and results, aiming to seek the essence of knowledge (Domingos Neto *et al.*, 2012). In other words, to achieve the desired reliability, the use of a methodology is necessary to establish a hierarchical order of procedures, aiming at the set goal, without determining the object or the approach (Raza, 2003).

In Brazil, the field of Military Sciences continues to grow, as discussed by Duran (2016), leading to the consolidation of an increasingly larger group of scientists, as well as an integration of the Brazilian academic community, especially throughout the 1990s. This integration contributes to a better visibility of the topic within Brazilian Society, by introducing related issues in academic debates.

Moreover, the restructuring of the Ministry of Defense (Brasil, 2018, 2019), started in 1999, was another initiative to intensify the debate around topics related to Military Sciences. Other initiatives by the Federal Government can also be mentioned, such as the implementation of the National Defense Policy (PND) (Brasil, 2012a), which conditions the planning of actions aimed at National Defense, focusing on external threats; the National Defense Strategy (END) (Brasil, 2012a), which reorganizes and reorients the Armed Forces and other actions, enabling the execution of the National Defense Policy and strengthening Brazil's image internationally; and the National Defense White Paper (LBDN) (Brasil, 2012b), which complements the PND and the END, providing publicity and transparency to the information in Brazilian defense. Reinforcing this initiative, Domingos Neto *et al.* (2012) emphasize that only with concrete government demands and measures can one think of improving and building scientific knowledge.

By joining efforts, the implementation of Graduate Programs in Military Sciences, such as the creation of the Meira Mattos Institute (IMM), the Army Command and General Staff School (ECEME) (Brasil, 2013), a pioneering structure within the Armed Forces, increases efforts to deepen knowledge in this field. This initiative results in the development of a new model of a comprehensive and skilled military professional in the decision-making process, capable of identifying the complexity of situations and, therefore, anticipating possible solutions (Duran, 2016).

Additionally, the creation of the IMM⁷, aimed at intensifying the integration of the Armed Forces, particularly the Brazilian Army, with society and the academic community (Brasil, 2016), enables the growth of scientific research carried out by both military personnel and civilians⁸ for the Brazilian Army, as well as the development, analysis, and publicity of the military doctrine on land warfare (Da Cunha; Migon, 2017). It can thus be said that this new educational structure follows the evolution of military education in Brazil, particularly due to the approval of Law No. 9,394, on November 20, 1996 (Brasil, 1996), which enables, within the scope of Military Sciences, a legislative alignment and foundation that allows for equivalence with other fields, according to the standards established by the Federal Government, especially the Ministry of Education (Da Cunha; Migon, 2017).

⁷ The article "Postgraduate education in Brazil: Military Sciences" (Da Cunha; Migon, 2017) is recommended to delve deeper into the structure and specific objectives of the courses at the IMM.

⁸ Every year, the IMM launches a public notice calling for military and civilian volunteers to participate in the selection process.

This institutionalization of education in Military Sciences by the IMM contributes to the formation of commanders and researchers who are well-rounded in understanding basic principles and orchestrating social relations, both within academia and society (Domingos Neto *et al.*, 2012). It also reinforces the connection between Military Sciences and the experience of those involved in this new field of knowledge, given the opportunity for both military and civilian members to engage in the same research and debate environment. This fosters an exchange of both academic and professional experiences between the parties.

5 FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

This study aims to reflect on the importance of professional experience for Military Sciences, revisiting the relationship between experience and war. To this end, the discussion began with an in-depth exploration of the relevance of the experience lived by individuals involved in war, enabling a better understanding of the phenomenon of war itself, as well as its consequences.

Due to the very nature of the object of study, an interdisciplinary approach was sought, since experience is not something observed only in Military Sciences, as mentioned by Thomas Kuhn (1962).

As a result of the present debate, the idea of reconsidering the tendency to exile individuals and, consequently, their experience (whether personal or professional) from the discussions surrounding International Relations requires a broad philosophical analysis. Moreover, it would be necessary to direct attention towards a theorization of the various possible ways of visualizing how and which experiences are important, as well as how these experiences shape and are shaped by the phenomenon of war.

Based on previous proposals, a significant transformation can be seen in the debate surrounding International Relation and Military Science. This clarifies several assumptions, such as the value of the individual and their professional experience in analyzing war. This shift in perspective would open up greater possibilities of analysis, especially regarding the experience acquired by individuals, which could be further identified and explored. Thus, the countless places frequented by ordinary people became invisible, since International Relations focus their analyses on Atates, strategies, and other aspects, excluding individuals.

This new philosophical conception of war and experience will enable the interaction and integration of a wide range of literatures, both fictional and factual, from Social Sciences, Arts, and Humanities, in search of unexpected or ambiguous perceptions, connections, places, and types of war experience, increasing the improvement of interpretations and the broader understanding of war. This concept will benefit from a range of approaches that have been neglected or marginalized by International Relations.

Aligned with Clausewitz's (1832) ideas, in this new way of observing the reality of war, individuals will be better understood, providing an intangible gain, since commanders carry all the intellectual apparatus of their knowledge within themselves. While this knowledge can be applied unconsciously, this new conception can only be developed from judgment and experience, continually reevaluating principles derived from the past and seeking new ideas for the future.

To this end, a clear and precise methodology must be sought for the recording and analysis of the facts narrated by individuals, since Science must be based on what can be seen, heard, and touched, and not on opinions or imaginations. If the observation of the world is carried out carefully and without prejudice, the observed facts will constitute a safe and objective foundation for science (Chalmers, 2013).

Regarding Military Sciences, there is an increasing evolution, demonstrating a robust body of knowledge, a specific methodology, a unique purpose, and a core of specific disciplines, granting it with relevant autonomy in relation to other areas of knowledge (Raleiras, 2011). Military Sciences ensures the distinction between the strategic, political, social, and other elements that are essential to support the military force and ensure the success of actions during both peace and war (Da Cunha; Migon, 2017).

Additionally, Military Sciences are fundamental within society, qualifying students and researchers for defense debates, as well as offering opportunities for professional training, project supervision, and management of defense-related affairs (Raza, 2004).

The interaction between civilian and military students, as seen at the IMM, reinforces the relevance of professional experience in Military Sciences studies, providing a different perspective on defense-related issues. Likewise, this interaction helps military students in the initiation of research methodologies and contact with other areas of knowledge, such as International Relations, highlighting the relevance of professional experience for both groups.

Based on the issues discussed, it can be inferred that Military Sciences are consolidated by their own vision and methodology, enabling a unique analysis of topics due to the experiences that scholars and scientists have on the debated subjects, strengthening the conclusions drawn.

However, the relationship between experience and war dates back to the earliest studies, even if incipient, as Clausewitz (1832) pointed out. Professional experience becomes significant knowledge to build the analyses produced in Military Sciences, reaffirming its value in debates and analyses produced. Such a paradigm shift is supported by the very crisis of paradigms addressed by Thomas Kuhn (1962).

Moreover, as a proposal for new studies, it would be appropriate to analyze the extent to which professional experience should be considered in the observation of the phenomenon of war.

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