

The War in Ukraine and beyond: some contributions from the Meira Mattos Collection to the reflection on the current conflict and other topics.

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COLEÇÃO MEIRA MATTOS

ISSN on-line 2316-4891 / ISSN print 2316-4833

<http://ebrevistas.eb.mil.br/index.php/RMM/index>



On February 24th the world witnessed the Russian invasion of Ukraine. In a matter of days the Russian Army reached the vicinity of the capital Kyiv, while other fronts were advancing towards their objectives in southern Ukraine and the Donbass region. The Ukrainian Army offered all possible resistance to the Russian advance. In parallel with the military campaign, the use of non-kinetic means was present from the very beginning of the conflict. Campaigns in the media sought to disseminate their arguments and versions, seeking to consolidate the constructed narratives and to seek support from allies. A few weeks later, member countries of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) began to provide support in terms of resources and equipment. The material and political support of NATO countries has been growing successively – at all times – creating a real 'proxy war'. The conduct of the war has gone beyond the limits of the Theater of War in Ukraine and the strategies of employing military means, showing the world the use of other expressions of national power (economy, diplomacy, communication and others) to achieve the goals set by each of the sides involved.

The use of other expressions of national power in the conflict, while at the same time broadening the limits of the Theater of War, is not new to scholars of war.

The Meira Mattos Collection, over the past few years, has published studies that collaborate to understand these dynamics, whether Russian or Western. Articles such as “Russian Reflexive Control: military theory and applications” (CROCE, 2021), explain in detail the use of information instruments to induce enemy decisions. Also presenting the phasing of the nation’s engagement in a war, prepared by Army General Valeri Vassilievitch Gerassimov, current commander of the Russian Armed Forces, and his staff, as a way of translating the Russian national objectives outlined and matured since the period of the First Minister Yevgeniy Maksimovich Primakov (1989-1999). Other articles have also discussed the geopolitical aspects of the National Strategy of the Russian Federation (DE FREITAS COUTINHO, 2020). In order to think about the non-kinetic characteristics of war and its impacts, the text “The Two Dimensions of Financial Warfare” brings some reflections (SILVA AZEVEDO, 2021). The use of mercenaries and/or volunteers from other countries who are not regular soldiers of

the Russian or Ukrainian armies is nothing new, as they have been employed in different conflicts and scenarios throughout history. In this sense, the article “The Impact of Private Military Companies in Military Operations” (NYATI, 2021) can help a reader to reflect on the topic. Two interesting reflections on the understanding of war and the characteristics and limitations of the employment strategies by the western armed forces can be found in the articles: “The art of war in the 21st century: advancing to the Multi-Domain Battle” (SANTOS et al., 2019) and “Winning in multi-domains is not enough: thoughts on the new doctrine and the gray zone conflicts” (VISACRO, 2020).

Leaving the war in Ukraine, the current issue brings a series of articles that present other important topics for thinking about National Defense in its various dimensions. Observing issues related to areas affected by Science, Technology and Innovation: “Anomaly Detection in the Global Innovation Index’s Indicators” (GALDINO; FRANÇA, 2022). An analysis of the strategic projects of the Brazilian Air Force (FAB) can be found in: “FAB Dimension 22 in terms of defense and integrated security: analysis of the FX2 Gripen and KC 390 Millennium strategic projects” (SANTOS, 2022). Bringing contributions to think the theme of victory, from a point of view of military history, we have the article “Victory Beyond Superiority: How the Allies won the World War II in Europe” (MACEDO et. al. 2022). Still in dialogue with the theme of the recently released dossier on borders and integrated security (ESPÓSITO NETO, et. al., 2022), we have the article: “Coordination and planning: central categories in interagency relationships” (FIGUEIREDO; MOREIRA, 2022). The article “Knowledge creation in the Armed Forces: an analysis of the lessons learned systems in the light of the SECI model” (BARROS, 2022) presents internal reflections on the Forces, pertinent to their continuous improvement. Closing the articles section, Barcellos (2022) emphasizes the importance of the military-industrial complex for the economic development process and for the geopolitical strategy of the countries with analysis of the cases USA and China. The edition also brings an interesting article that proposes a dialogue between Machiavelli’s work with the area of Science, Technology & Innovation, and the consequences of this evolution in the military expression of national power (GALDINO; SCHONS, 2022).

We hope that readers can benefit from the articles published in the Meira Mattos Collection, either to seek to understand a little better some of the dynamics and strategies related to the current War in Ukraine; or to dive into current topics to think about National Defense in its different facets.

Have a pleasant reading!

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