

Debates on teaching in military academies and their articulation in the brazilian scientific field

Debates sobre la enseñanza en las academias militares y su articulación en el campo científico brasileño

Debates sobre o ensino nas academias militares e sua articulação no campo científico brasileiro

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ABSTRACT

Focusing on our object of study, which is the officers' training at the Brazilian Air Force (FAB), we have initially resorted to several sources of data to gather researches addressing military education in Brazil. In this process, the small number of productions found in the educational field has motivated the researcher to an exercise of reflecting on the perceived gap in the literature and its articulation with the considerations of Pierre Bourdieu's theory on the scientific field. Thus, the purpose of this study is, in summary, to present the way in which military affairs are being established in the field of research on education, elucidating historical aspects of this movement. To reach the objective proposed, in the methodology adopted, bibliographical and Internet researches were used, specifically in books, articles, dissertations and theses by authors who approach the process of social practice development in the military field in Brazil, which allowed us to describe, analyze and discuss how the research in the military field has been carried out in our country. The obtained result has shown that the experience of dictatorship and the absence of external threats in our territory have left the topic out of discussions for a long period. However, in circumstances of current challenges in the 21st century and the end of the dictatorship, military studies in Brazil have been gradually resumed.

Keywords: Debates. Military topics. Military studies. Education.

RESUMEN

Enfocados en nuestro objeto de estudio, que es la formación de los oficiales de la Fuerza Aérea Brasileña (FAB), recurrimos inicialmente a diversas fuentes de datos para identificar investigaciones que abordasen la Enseñanza Militar en Brasil. En este proceso, el reducido número de producciones encontradas en el campo educativo motivó a la investigadora a un ejercicio de reflexión sobre la percepción de la laguna en la literatura y su articulación con las consideraciones de la teoría de Pierre Bourdieu sobre el campo científico. Así, la propuesta de este estudio consiste, en síntesis, en presentar la manera por la cual los asuntos militares se están estableciendo en el campo de investigación en Educación, elucidando los aspectos históricos de ese movimiento. Para alcanzar el objetivo propuesto, en la metodología adoptada, se recurrió a la investigación bibliográfica y la investigación vía internet, específicamente, en libros, artículos, disertaciones y tesis de autores que abordan el proceso de desarrollo de la práctica social del campo militar en Brasil, que permitió describir, analizar y discutir la forma en que se realiza la investigación en el campo militar en nuestro país. El resultado obtenido demostró que la experiencia de la dictadura y de la ausencia de amenazas externas en nuestro territorio dejó el tema fuera de la agenda de discusiones por un largo período, sin embargo, en circunstancias de los actuales desafíos surgidos en el siglo XXI y con el fin del régimen dictatorial, los estudios militares en Brasil están siendo paulatinamente retomados.

Palabras clave: Debates. Asuntos militares. Estudios militares. Educación.

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The acronyms and abbreviations contained in this article correspond to the ones used in the original article in Portuguese.

RESUMO

Focados em nosso objeto de estudo, que é a formação dos oficiais da Força Aérea Brasileira (FAB), recorreremos inicialmente a diversas fontes de dados para levantar pesquisas que abordassem o Ensino Militar no Brasil. Nesse processo, o reduzido número de produções encontradas no campo educacional motivou a pesquisadora a um exercício de reflexão sobre a percebida lacuna na literatura e sua articulação com as considerações da teoria de Pierre Bourdieu sobre o campo científico. Assim, a proposta deste estudo consiste, em síntese, em apresentar a maneira pela qual os assuntos militares vêm se estabelecendo no campo de pesquisa em Educação, elucidando os aspectos históricos desse movimento. Para alcançar o objetivo proposto, na metodologia adotada, recorreu-se à pesquisa bibliográfica e à pesquisa via internet, especificamente, em livros, artigos, dissertações e teses de autores que abordam o processo de desenvolvimento da prática social do campo militar no Brasil, o que permitiu descrever, analisar e discutir o modo como a pesquisa no campo militar vem sendo realizada em nosso país. O resultado obtido demonstrou que a experiência da ditadura e da ausência de ameaças externas em nosso território deixou o tema fora da pauta de discussões por um longo período, contudo, em circunstâncias dos atuais desafios surgidos no século XXI e com o fim do regime ditatorial, os estudos militares no Brasil vêm sendo paulatinamente retomados.

Palavras-chave: Debates. Assuntos militares. Estudos militares. Educação.

1 INTRODUCTION

This study is the result of reflections initiated in **Communication and Scientific Production on Education** discipline held on the post graduation program in Education at Federal University of São Carlos (UFSCar) in the second semester of 2012, which has made possible to understand scientific and academic field productions and disclosures.

Discussions on such aspects have instigated us to develop this study precisely in the doctoral project reformulation phase, which central axis deals with officers' training at Air Force Academy (AFA).

The study presented here has as its main goal the analysis, through history, of the way in which military field topics have been established in Education research

field with considerations by Bourdieu (1994) on the scientific field and authors who address the process of social practice development in the military field in Brazil, among them, Eurico de Lima Figueiredo¹, Manuel Domingos², the researcher Amanda Pinheiro Mancuso³, Mauro Barbosa Siqueira⁴ and Celso Castro⁵.

Attempts are towards elucidating, from the information collected, the historical aspects of this movement and the relations in the movement that has occurred more widely at the national level, in order to obtain clarification on the perspectives of consolidation of the thematic in the area of education and, at the same time, being aware that it would not be possible to exhaust the subject in these few pages.

What justifies conducting this study is that studies directed to officers' training in military academies are rare, which demonstrates the absence of this topic in the academic field and in the area of education.

In this sense, a bibliographical survey was carried out on literary works, articles, dissertations and theses which deal with topics related to the object of study.

Also, in an attempt to locate other studies developed close to this topic, a database research was carried out in Scientific Electronic Library Online (SciELO) and in journals available at the Coordination for the Improvement of Higher Education Personnel (CAPES) portal. However, it was not possible to gather much information, since results from the research on the educational field was always directed to studies in which reflections dealt with the problematic of teaching in civil public schools at the time of the military dictatorship.

In the educational field, it was verified that there was a small number of researches addressing the internal dynamics of military institutions. ; And, in the field of political sciences, there was the not such an extensive predominance of studies focusing the political participation of military personnel in the country and on relations between civilians and the military. This finding can also be verified in studies developed by Figueiredo (1985), Domingos (2008), Mancuso and Siqueira (2008) and Castro (2004).

The political dialogue established among the authors mentioned in relation to the subject in the field informs that the topic has been dealt secondarily in relation to other questions in the field of research in Brazil. And,

¹ Figueiredo (1985) occupied the position of Political Science Department Chair at Fluminense Federal University (UFF).

² Domingos (2006) was a former Chair at National Counsel of Technological and Scientific Development (CNPq), researcher and editor of Journal of *Tensões Mundiais* (World Tensions).

³ Mancuso (2008) was an associate at Military History Archives *Ana Lagôa*.

⁴ Siqueira (2008), as Lieutenant Colonel Aviator, had worked at the postgraduation coordination at Air Force University (UNIFA).

⁵ Castro (2004) has a doctor's degree in social anthropology and is currently the director at Center for Research and Documentation of Contemporary History of Brazil (CPDOC), who has been extensively researching the military in Brazilians history and society.

the gap existing in the academic literature is shown under two historical aspects: first, because, unlike other countries which have faced and/or are facing constant armed conflicts, in Brazil, there is an ample period of peace and absence of external threats, as stated by Mancuso (2008, p. 7), [...] the widespread perception of the absence of external threats has meant that the military topic did not occupy a prominent position in academies". The second point refers to the greater involvement of the Armed Forces in Brazil in internal issues. Castro (2004, p. 13) has highlighted that "military involvement in politics has discouraged academic research on the Armed Forces."

In contrast to Brazil, in the United States, during the Second World War, a fertile scientific community was interested in studying the interactions between civilians and the military mobilized for the conflict. Similarly, in the context of the (state of geopolitical tension after World War II) Cold War, with the formation of a new international order, the topic gained a broader treatment and conquered its importance in the agenda of North American Political Science, highlighting, in this context, the seminal work by (American political scientist) Samuel Huntington, titled **The Soldier and the State** in 1957 (HUNTINGTON, 1996).

As the interest in studies by Huntington (1996) would not be confined to the investigation of civil-military relations and the liberal-democratic system of his country, he devoted himself to study the pattern that best suited the security and defense of his country. Theoretically understood by the author that the role of the military in the United States and Western European countries was different from the political roles of the military in the rest of the world, from the perspective of the US strategic interests in the Cold War context, such roles would deserve to be investigated.

It should be noted that the role of the Brazilians Armed Forces and other Latin American countries which, during the Cold War, was aligned with an ideology that the United States tried to spread to the population, the conception of which would be based on the threat that the Soviet communism would pose to democracy and to freedom. In this sense, between 1945 and 1990, the main mission of the Brazilians Armed Forces and the Latin American countries returned to being the defense of the territory or internal order⁶.

However, according to Figueiredo (1985), it was only after Fidel Castro that the attention given to Latin America ceased to be secondary

and, influenced by Huntington (1996), that a new generation of social scientists and historians devoted to teaching and researching of the Latin American reality appeared. But the attention was not focused on the external dependence of the State or on the political action of the military and their approximation to the dominant hegemony.

Mancuso (2008, p. 7) understands that the position occupied by the topic in the Brazilian academy may be linked to the fact that,

[...] whereas in many countries the military history was undergoing a process of reevaluation, a regime led by the Armed Forces was being experienced in Brazil and the disqualification of everything related to this subject could be considered as a natural consequence.

These findings can be better understood in Bourdieu (1994), when he explains the establishment of the social hierarchy of scientific fields, which determine and command the points of view, the topics chosen and the operation of scientific productions at a given moment. According to the author, these actions are due to the hegemonic struggle existing in the constitution of the scientific field where there is no neutrality. In this social environment structured by individuals and institutions, a permanent component of strength and dispute is presented in the pursuit of knowledge and recognition of scientific authorities.

This justifies the substantial volume of work that followed the 1964 military coup, the focus of which was extended to the political involvement of the military and interests in the field, aimed at explaining the historical origins of the movement that led to the coup. With this focus, studies have been developed on different approaches. While some focused on problems of class origins, others sought, on the organizational origin, some clarification to understand the military's political behavior and all were primarily based on military education and the process of socialization of officers, as explained by Mancuso (2008, p. 9).

In this context, much of the discussion was about the problem of civilian control over the military, in comparison with other armies, especially the American one, where professionalization promoted the military's withdrawal from politics. In Brazil, on the contrary, deepening the professionalization process caused the Armed Forces to establish themselves as relevant political actors. Likewise, the institutional weakness of the political system combined with the recurrence of institutional crises would serve as a reinforcement to the military's political role.

⁶ Possibly occurring in the national territory, internal conflicts or civil wars, which involve the issue of order and internal security of the State, also encompassing in these issues actions of a "parapolice" nature, problems that transcend police capacity, such as repressing terrorism, illicit drugs or other forms of organized crime (ditto).

Resorting again to Bourdieu (1994), it is verified that the interest for a scientific activity is double-faced, since all practices are oriented toward the acquisition of scientific authority, and the researchers' tendency to concentrate on problems considered more important is explained by the fact that contribution or discovery bring a more significant symbolic profit.

What is perceived as important and interesting is what has a chance of being recognized as important and interesting by others. therefore, what has the possibility of making those who produce appear as important and interesting in the eyes of others. (BOURDIEU, 1994, p. 125).

Regarding the context experienced after the period of military dictatorship in Brazil and provided the understanding of the interest in the scientific field with Bourdieu (1994), Figueiredo's (1985, p. 1) explanation becomes clear when stating that,

[...] the reflections on the State have been better able to conduct theoretical and empirical research on business people and the working class, on institutions such as political parties and interest groups, on the Catholic church and universities, rather than on the military personnel's political role.

Arguments by Castro (2004) have emphasized that the involvement of the military in Brazilian politics has discouraged academic research on the Armed Forces. However, Figueiredo (1985) justifies that, although small, the community of historians and political scientists⁷ has proven to be capable of innovation and creativity on its own merits, producing bibliography of the best quality and an admirable instructive content.

2 STUDIES ON MILITARY EDUCATION AND INSTITUTIONS TODAY

Since the 1990s, issues related to Military Institutions have gained ground in academic discussions. At the end of the military regime in Brazil and at the end of the Cold War, there has been a gradual increase in the number of research and publications, in this area, involving a diversification in matters less related to the problem of military involvement in politics (MANCUSO, 2008).

⁷ Under this perspective are highlighted works by Alfred Stepan, *The military in politics: changes of patterns in Brazilian life* (STEPAN, 1975), book by Edmundo Campos Coelho, *In search of an identity: the army and politics in Brazilian society* (COELHO, 2000) and *Armed Forces and Politics in Brazil* by José Murilo de Carvalho (CARVALHO, 2005), books by Nelson Werneck Sodré, *Military History of Brazil* (SODRÉ, 2010) and Frank D. MacCann in *Homeland Soldiers* (MacCANN, 2009).

⁸ The author holds a doctor's degree in social sciences, is a professor and leader of the research group *Anthropology of the State and War* at the Social Sciences Department at Federal University of São Carlos (UFSCar), where he develops, together with other researchers, the lines of research *The forms of hierarchy: power and reciprocity in chains of command from an anthropological perspective and Ethnography of the State and bureaucracy*.

The growing interest in security and defense issues is related to the prospects of threats to global security that the twenty-first century is undergoing, where today's challenges are considered more complex than those ones motivated by the ideological dispute between the two superpowers during the Cold War.

In the current context, problems related to drug trafficking and terrorism have become major issues since the beginning of the decade and are encompassed by the concept of new threats. This concept has gained more importance after the terrorist attack on the World Trade Center in September 2001 (HOBSBAWM, 2007).

Threats posed by this concept are transnational and unrestricted, such as arms trafficking, trafficking in human beings (prostitution, organ trade, sex tourism), international migration, international environmental, economic and financial pressures, infectious diseases, which, coupled with technological development, have considerably altered the modern warfare scenario.

Siqueira (2008) explains that, within the scope of the Ministry of Defense, guidelines encouraging the interest and growth of knowledge production in defense matters, especially in the academic sector, are strongly emphasized. In this trend, diverse topics emerge, which, however, bring different contributions to the discussion of some of the military institutions' main educational issues today.

However, stimuli to this involvement are very restricted and are not yet consolidated, as written by Domingos (2006, p. 145).

With no resources for research and without post graduation programs focusing the study of military thinking, military corporations and national defense policy subject matters, civilian academics' participation in strategic debate tends to be fragile and timely, since it is based only in personal commitment from a small contingent of researchers.

Despite the new momentum for military studies in Brazil, it is still a very incomplete field. According to the data indicated, there is not an expressive number of pieces of research which presenting analysis of the military institution's internal dynamics.

Specifically with this focus, studies by Castro (1990) and Leiner⁸ (1997) are highlighted who, as civilians, have dared to immerse themselves in the military context.

In the field of anthropology and in the minutiae within military environment, they have advocated the military profile based on the formation of the military identity and hierarchy that indoctrinates this body of professionals. Both present in their studies the reality of military institutions and the military profession, as well as theoretical presuppositions related to education and to this specific professional field, some material that shall certainly support and assist this researcher in the interpretation of reality, ensuring that their objectives in the research will be reached.

2.1 Studies and research on officers' training at the Air Force Academy

A study by Gualazzi⁹ (1985), the result of his master's dissertation, has been developed within the AFA in the 1980's but with a current discourse so it has always been revisited in the most recent studies aimed at military training.

In addressing curriculum-related issues, he argues that any curricular proposal requires prior knowledge of the results expected, which are obtained from the functional requirements of the Brazilian Air Force (FAB) career and needs, and states that,

[...] several affirmations of the same content allow us to suppose that survey or professional study have not been done at any time to ascertain whether the educational purposes formulated were in accordance with the expectations and needs of the Force. (GUALAZZI, 1985, p. 8).

Another researcher is Tânia Regina Pires de Godoy Torres de Oliveira¹⁰. She shows that successive curricular changes and reduction of disciplines specific to the military preparation jeopardize the formation of future officers and thus the accomplishment of the Institution's mission in preparation for war and therefore the defense of our sovereignty. At two opportunities, Oliveira (2001, 2004) presents AFA's reality, addressing in her master's dissertation the teaching of history for this military institution's cadets. Later, in her doctoral thesis, she extends her analysis of the formation of the **Warrior Leader** to the Military Academy of Agulhas Negras (AMAN), the Naval Academy and AFA.

In Demo's¹¹ (2006) master's degree dissertation, the object of study of which is the AFA officers' training, can also be found the officers' training courses curricula changes implications. The researcher describes, in a historical context, the reasons and consequences of such changes in training officers at AFA. She presents an account of the difficulties faced in allocating the very high number of class times in the curricular matrices that the implementation of the Administration Course has brought with it and instigates to reflect on what our society expects from its military, on what should the profile of the military in this society be and how the FAB officers' training should take place so that they can develop their main role.

Research by Takahashi¹² (2002) has had as starting point the admission of women as cadets in training courses for intendant officers. It is a study on the formation of the military identity of male and female cadets at AFA.

In this same sense, Baquim¹³ (2008) analyzes the educational process of military aviators training at AFA, seeking to develop the issues that emerged from the pioneering female participation in a training course for officers to constitute FAB's main framework, aviation. Both pieces of research offer support and collaborate with studies developed in the area of education, strengthening the ties between the civil academy and the military academy, as well as pointing out some analysis that may contribute to a better adaptation of FAB's organizational structure to the profile of the military who hopes to graduate from the AFA.

It is worth highlighting that Takahashi's (2002) doctor's degree thesis and Gualazzi's (1985) master's degree dissertation have been respectively developed in the Education post-graduation program at State University of Campinas (UNICAMP) and in the Education post graduation program at Methodist University of Piracicaba (UNIMEP), whereas Oliveira's (2001, 2004), Demo's (2006) and Baquim's (2008) master's and doctor's degrees dissertations and theses have been developed in the Education post-graduation program at UFSCar.

Despite all the limitations described, Domingos (2006, p. 145) explains that significant steps have been taken in the study of the military field, which is reflected in the growing involvement of academic researchers

⁹ The researcher has worked as a professor of the civilian professorship staff at AFA.

¹⁰ The author is part of a civilian professorship staff at AFA and she teaches Military History.

¹¹ In 2006, the researcher has worked as a pedagogue in the Temporary Officers staff of the Teaching Division (DE) at AFA.

¹² The author is a professor of Social Psychology at AFA.

¹³ In 2008, the researcher has worked as a pedagogue in the Temporary Officers staff of the Teaching Division (DE) at AFA.

in the study of military institutions, in the political performance of officers and in various national defense issues, and highlights that,

[...] the holding various national strategic studies events and meetings, reflection exercises organized by the department of studies and cooperation of the Brazilian Ministry of Defense and debates in the Brazilian Chamber of Deputies, increases the number of publications, dissertations and theses produced in Brazil on such topics.

In this movement verified at present, it is possible to find researchers of military and national defense topics in several Brazilian universities (UNICAMP, UFSCar, UFRJ, UFF, UNIMEP, among others).

3 CONCLUSIONS

Throughout this study we have tried to describe and analyze the way in which research in the military field has been carried out more widely in our country.

Right at the beginning of this path, it was possible to perceive a gap in the academic literature, explained under two historical aspects – the long moment of peace experienced in our country and the long period marked by the military dictatorship in Brazil.

The bibliographical survey result has shown that the not so extensive predominance of the studies has focused the military's political participation in the country and on the relations between civilians and the military. Another result found when searching keywords **military teaching in Brazil** was the majority of the

diverse works, whose approach would involve the problematic of the nonmilitary public schools in Brazil at the time of the dictatorship; in a very small number, publications emphasizing the internal dynamics of the military institution appeared.

In order to investigate the apparent gap, we have resorted to authors who have developed studies on the development of the military field in Brazil. Such authors have confirmed that, in view of the experience of dictatorship and the absence of external threats in our territory, the subject has been treated in a secondary way before other issues in the academic field.

However, with the challenges that have arisen in the 21st century, such as possible threats of ruptures in the areas of political order, economic well-being and personal security, regional conflicts, civil wars, economic and political instability and social inequalities in the current scenario, it has been noted that the number of academic researchers and different approaches to military institutions have significantly expanded. Besides fomenting the discussion of the main questions about the military universe, this addition strengthens the bonds between the civil and military academies.

Understanding the research topic position in the academic field becomes clearer with what could be learned from Bourdieu, that is, to understand the process of constituting the scientific field, the contents addressed and the productions included in the field, it is necessary to consider the game plan that exists among the different positions in the field, their interactions and the relations among the social, political and economic fields.

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