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Fascicolo 24. Novembre 2025 Storia Militare Contemporanea (6)



Società Italiana di Storia Militare

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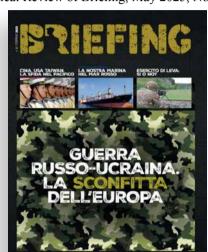
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Estandart Reyal u d'a Cheneralisma, prencipal bandera carlista d'a primera guerra bordada por María Francisca de Braganza em 1833 Royal Standard of the General in Chief, main Carlist flag of the First War embroidered by Maria Francisca de Braganza in 1833). Wikimedia Commons

A Global Fight for a New World Order

A Strategic Agenda on Deterrence, Identity, and Technology.



Critical Review of Briefing, May 2025, No. 3

n its third issue of 2025, the Italian Briefing magazine, directed by Mirko Campochiari (parabellum site) offers a collective and articulate analysis of the ongoing systemic transition within the global geopolitical framework. Under the implicit theme of the structural crisis of 20th-century equilibria, this collection of essays, editorials, and operational analyses tackles, through a multidisciplinary lens, the decline of imperial hegemony, the return of symmetrical war, the fracture between legal and strategic orders, and the increasing interaction between ideology, technology, and military power. The issue stands out for the diversity of its approaches and the depth of its interpretation, successfully integrating historical narrative, strategic-political analysis, and military-technical reporting into a coherent and well-calibrated structure.

Pietro Licciardi opens the issue with an editorial that sets the conceptual tone for the entire volume. He adopts a classical geopolitical and historicist perspective to outline the United States' imperial decline in terms of systemic exhaustion:

NAM, Anno 6 – n. 24 DOI: 10.36158/979125669253849 Novembre 2025 legitimacy crises, strategic overstretch, unsustainable debt, and growing domestic fatigue with the burdens of empire. According to Licciardi, the perceived collapse in Afghanistan and the ambiguous handling of the war in Ukraine mark the breaking point of U.S. unipolar dominance. Europe, by contrast, is described as politically irrelevant and strategically aphasic—a passive actor incapable even of making non-decisions.

The India–Pakistan crisis is explored in two complementary contributions. Paolo Mauri offers a historically grounded analysis of the May 2025 Kashmir flare-up, framing it as the latest episode in a long-standing dialectic between nationalist ambitions and unstable nuclear deterrence. He contextualizes the confrontation within a regional framework that includes transboundary terrorism, treaty violations, and proxy conflict. Leonardo Lanzara expands on this with a highly technical evaluation of the aerial conflict, discussing the operational use of Rafales, J-10Cs, BrahMos and PL-15 missiles, drones, and AWACS. Particularly innovative is his reflection on the concept of combat proven and its implications for defense markets, procurement decisions, and global competition in arms manufacturing. Together, these two pieces form one of the most interdisciplinary and analytically robust sections of the volume.

The post-October 2023 Middle East is dissected in a sweeping piece by Mauro Indelicato. With methodical clarity, he maps the domino effect triggered by Hamas's attacks and Israel's military response, extending through Lebanon, Syria, and Yemen. He effectively traces the interplay of regional actors—Turkey, Iran, and the Gulf monarchies—while underscoring the inability of external powers, especially the United States, to manage the fragmentation of the Middle Eastern order. His conclusion suggests that the current chaos is not an aberration, but rather the symptom of a systemic reordering in which local actors seize the strategic initiative.

Sarah Crielesi's contribution on the evolution of Hamas provides a pedagogical yet incisive exploration of the group's ideological metamorphosis—from a religious welfare network influenced by the Muslim Brotherhood to a dual-faceted political-military actor. Crielesi skillfully draws comparisons with the IRA and ANC, highlighting the interplay between social legitimacy and the legitimization of violence. Her analysis helps disentangle the paradoxes of Hamas's identity and the Palestinian impasse, showing how unresolved grievances perpetuate militancy even as formal institutions fail.

In an outstanding ideological essay, Amedeo Maddaluno reconstructs the intellectual lineage of Erdoğanism. He traces its roots to 19th-century pan-Turkism and pan-Islamism, dissecting the synthesis of nationalism, authoritarianism, and religious identity that underpins modern Turkish strategic behavior. Maddaluno's treatment of the Grey Wolves, the Turkish "Deep State," and the ambiguous role of nationalist-Islamist movements offers a precise taxonomy for understanding Ankara's posture in both regional and Eurasian contexts. The essay is valuable not only for its historical depth, but for its capacity to relate ideology to foreign policy.

Andrea Muratore's analysis of the election of Pope Leo XIV—an American-born, mathematically trained pontiff—as a "geopolitical move" by the College of Cardinals is both original and persuasive. He situates the papacy as a unifying institution in a fragmented international system, capable of reintroducing moral authority into a landscape dominated by techno-libertarianism and transhumanist ideologies. Muratore reads Leo XIV as a counterweight to the cultural collapse of Western political traditions and as a spiritual actor aligned with multipolarity and global reconciliation. It is one of the most innovative and intellectually provocative pieces in the issue.

Three technically detailed articles focus on air and naval power. Leonardo Lanzara's reconstruction of Italy's pioneering use of aircraft in the Italo-Turkish War of 1911 is a valuable contribution to the historiography of military aviation. Giulio Poggiaroni's piece on the Japanese Maritime Self-Defense Force contextualizes the evolution of Japanese naval power from postwar constraints to its current carrier-capable configuration. Particularly insightful is his analysis of the Izumo-class ships, which blur the line between defensive doctrine and power projection. Lanzara's second article, analyzing the Indo-Pakistani air conflict in May 2025, ties tactical performance to global perceptions of weapon system reliability and cost-efficiency—an excellent example of how technological variables shape strategic outcomes.

Roberto Milani's article on cyber warfare and artificial intelligence is among the most compelling. He presents the digital realm not merely as a supplementary battlefield, but as a primary strategic domain, linking industrial espionage, AI warfare, and the fragility of Western infrastructure in the face of hostile cyber capabilities. The essay is grounded, up-to-date, and sufficiently technical to be useful to both practitioners and scholars.

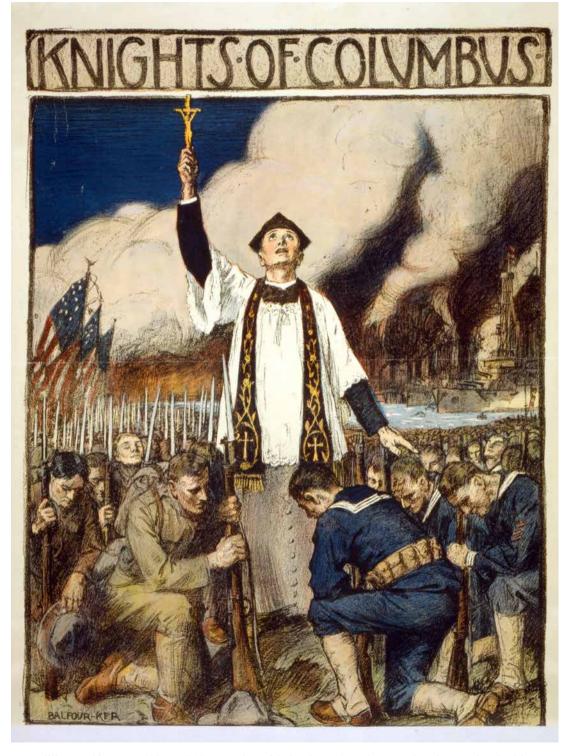
Paolo Capitini's piece on "Quantity versus Quality" questions the modern fetish for technological superiority in military thinking. He returns to strategic fundamentals by arguing that mass, resilience, and logistics remain decisive in high-intensity conflicts. Using examples from Ukraine, Iraq, and military history, he warns against overreliance on elite units, special forces, or smart weapons in scenarios where attrition and endurance may prove more valuable. It is a refreshing contribution that brings balance to discussions often dominated by techno-optimism.

Finally, the issue closes with a curated selection of book recommendations, reinforcing the magazine's educational and strategic vocation.

Conclusion Briefing – May 2025, Issue No. 3 confirms the editorial maturity of a journal that successfully bridges the gap between popular and academic writing. Its thematic coherence, analytical depth, and interdisciplinary reach make it a valuable resource for students of strategic studies, military officers, and policy analysts alike. What distinguishes this issue is its ability to treat current events as expressions of deeper historical and systemic dynamics, without sacrificing operational detail or technical clarity. It is, in short, an essential publication for understanding the shifting balance of power in the early 21st century.

Keywords: imperial decline, deterrence, Middle East, Kashmir, naval and air power, cybersecurity, Erdoğanism, Vatican diplomacy, hybrid war, strategic doctrine.

GIUSEPPE GAGLIANO



William Balfour Ker (1877-1918), *Knights of Columbus*, 1917 / Poster showing a priest looking heavenward and raising a crucifix, blessing kneeling soldiers. Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division Washington, D.C. 20540 USA. Reproduction Number: LC-USZC4-10131 Rights Advisory: No known restrictions on publication. https://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/2002711996/

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