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978-1-107-15724-8 - *Morale and the Italian Army during the First World War*

Vanda Wilcox

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Morale and the Italian Army during the First World War

Italian performance in the First World War has been generally disparaged or ignored compared to that of the armies on the Western Front, and troop morale in particular has been seen as a major weakness of the Italian army. In this first book-length study of Italian morale in any language, Vanda Wilcox reassesses Italian policy and performance from the perspective both of the army as an institution and of the ordinary soldiers who found themselves fighting a brutally hard war. Wilcox analyses and contextualises Italy's notoriously hard military discipline along with leadership, training methods and logistics before considering the reactions of the troops and tracing the interactions between institutions and individuals. Restoring historical agency to soldiers often considered passive and indifferent, Wilcox illustrates how and why Italians complied, endured or resisted the army's demands through balancing their civilian and military identities.

VANDA WILCOX is Adjunct Assistant Professor of European History at John Cabot University. She has published on Italian military leadership, training and battlefield performance as well as the popular experience and memory of the First World War in Italy.

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A Note on Translation

Unless otherwise specified, all translations from the Italian are my own. Where possible the original tone and style have been maintained, which in the case of some soldiers' letters entails an attempt to reproduce ungrammatical structures or dialect.