

Britain and Italy in the Era of the Great War

This is an important reassessment of British and Italian grand strategies during World War I. Stefano Marcuzzi sheds new light on a hitherto overlooked but central aspect of the war experiences of Britain and Italy: the uneasy and only partial overlap between Britain's strategy for imperial defence and Italy's ambition for imperial expansion. Taking Anglo-Italian bilateral relations as a special lens through which to understand the workings of the Entente Cordiale in World War I, he reveals how the ups and downs of that relationship influenced and shaped Allied grand strategy. Marcuzzi considers three main issues – war aims, war strategy and peace-making – and examines how, under the pressure of divergent interests and wartime events, the Anglo-Italian 'traditional friendship' turned increasingly into competition by the end of the war, casting a shadow on Anglo-Italian relations both at the Peace Conference and in the interwar period.

Stefano Marcuzzi is a Marie Curie fellow at the University College Dublin, an analyst in emerging challenges at the NATO Defense College Foundation and an external fellow at Boston University.

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Defending and Forging Empires

Stefano Marcuzzi
University College Dublin



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*To the memory of my great grandfather,
Corporal Vincenzo Nicolini, awarded
the Silver Medal of Military Valour
during the retreat from Caporetto,
and of his son, Faustino*

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