

Version 1.0 | Last updated 10 October 2019

Historiography 1918-Today (Italy)

By [Nicola Labanca](#)

Italian historiography of the Great War has been deeply affected by the close link between historical studies and the climate of public opinion, which can be broken down into five major phases: the first post-war period, fascism, the second post-war period, critical historiography, and the last twenty-five years. This article details the relationship between political and social context and historical writing on the First World War.

Table of Contents

- [1 Introduction](#)
- [2 The Post-war Period](#)
- [3 Fascism](#)
- [4 The Second Post-war Period](#)
- [5 Critical Historiography](#)
- [6 Twenty-Five Years](#)
- [7 Glimpses from the Centenary](#)

[Notes](#)

[Selected Bibliography](#)

[Citation](#)

Introduction

In a celebrated essay, [Jacques Le Goff \(1924-2014\)](#) emphasised the close, even circular relationship between monument and document, between collective memory and [historiography](#).^[1] Given the note of caution sounded by the famous French historian, we would be well advised to consider the links between such different fields as public memory and historical research, between the political uses of memory and professional history. In examining the evolution of Italian

historiography of the Great War, we need, therefore, to bear in mind the close reciprocal links between collective memory and historical studies. While bestowing particular attention on the evolution of these links, we need also to take into account the public mood, the political uses to which history is put, and the public sphere in which they evolved. In this way, we will be able to observe how the phases in the development of First World War Studies dovetail with the more general progress of national and international history.

In the first [post-war](#) period, the lack of archival material weighed heavily on Italian studies and likewise on research undertaken in the other European countries. Shortly afterwards, the rise of [fascism](#) rendered even the publication of collections of official documents and memoirs problematic, although similar items were then appearing in the rest of Europe. Indeed, the regime would not countenance placing the victory in question and, despite a number of new initiatives, this reticence had a profound impact upon memory and upon Italian studies. In the second post-war period, the possibility of a more open debate and access to archival documents led to a new wave of studies, still based however on the line that the First World War had been the “fourth war of independence”. It was in fact only at the end of the 1960s that a rupture was discernible, which gave rise to the critical historiography that would dominate during the next three decades, placing greater emphasis upon critical aspects and the actual experience of war. With the end of the Cold War and the collapse of grand historical narratives, although there was no lack of new ideas, such as studies on the efficacy of [propaganda](#) and on local social and political behaviours, narratives of the conflict seem to have become fragmented. The risk is, then, that the memory of the war will shatter into tiny pieces.

The Post-war Period

In the immediate aftermath of the war, the social, [economic](#), cultural, and political demobilization after the first truly global conflict was complex and assumed somewhat peculiar characteristics. The gains and losses suffered in the war were polarised, in that the middle classes emerged in pieces while the popular classes were hard-pressed to recover the gains of the pre-war period and were, therefore, compelled to engage in widespread agitation. The economic restructuring was painful. The war itself had infected and divided Italian culture: the liberal political system, as is well known, failed to hold up against the impact of the war and the post-war period. As a consequence, between 1922 and 1925, ten years after the opening of hostilities on the [Italian front](#), the country lost its political freedoms.

Italy's post-war crisis was also reflected in scholarly research. When the guns fell silent, historians had no archival documents at their disposal. Italian archives were no exception, save perhaps in a negative sense. Even in the case of diplomatic history, the documents arrived late. Historians are familiar with the historiographical and political battles occasioned at an international level by the publication of collections of diplomatic documents produced in the aftermath of the [Conference of Versailles](#), when disputes flared up around the question of the responsibility of the Central Powers. Even if, in the years and decades following 1918, there was no lack of texts and interventions by

Italian historians on this subject, we should not underestimate the fact that the first volume of the *Documenti diplomatici italiani* was only published in 1954, followed by a further two volumes in the 1970s. The series in question (the fifth) was only completed in the 1980s. This lengthy delay demonstrates, among other things, just how much the fascist regime inhibited unfettered historical enquiry.

The aftermath of the Great War was above all else a period of [mourning](#) and was devoted to political discussions and polemic, rather than to historical research. Those who had advocated [neutrality](#) – the pacifists, the socialists, and the Catholics – charged the Italian ruling class with having dragged the country into war. This same ruling class was also attacked for what it had failed to do in peacetime, that is to say, from [Versailles](#) onwards. Extreme nationalists, the followers of [Gabriele D'Annunzio \(1863-1938\)](#), and the fascists challenged it immediately after the end of the conflict with the assault on [Fiume](#) and more generally during the post-war period. Meanwhile, a highly acrimonious debate regarding [Caporetto](#) was unleashed. It was set aside following the publication of the volumes of the relevant *Inchiesta*.^[2] White-hot in 1919, as much as and perhaps even more than elsewhere, political debate then cooled, only to be buried once and for all by the fascist regime. For the time being, historians kept silent.

Fascism

With the advent of fascism, memory and historical studies became in large part tied to the policies of the regime. Indeed, in no other European country did a [government](#) continue to proclaim itself to be a child of the Great War, which is effectively what the *squadristi* and [Benito Mussolini \(1883-1945\)](#) were doing with their claim to represent “the Italy of Vittorio Veneto”. In other European countries, the memory of the Great War could obviously not be eliminated, but there was an attempt to file it away, to neutralise it, to reduce it to [commemoration](#). In Italy, by contrast, that memory was loudly proclaimed – and, in extreme cases, replaced by other bellicose emphases (for example, the war in [Ethiopia](#) from 1935-1936). The reason was obvious: for fascism the memory of the Italian Great War was supposed to unleash a rhetoric of the warlike qualities of the Italian people and of the ruling regime. It was a time for myth, as Mussolini himself had said. The victory was not up for discussion, and people looked askance at those who wished to analyse it or recall too many details. One can all too easily intuit the consequences this attitude had for the collective memory of the conflict and for Italian studies.

Unrestricted research was in fact accepted by the fascist regime, that is, insofar as it did not clash with the regime's political and cultural interests. The position of historians improved in relative rather than in absolute terms, with respect to other actors in the public sphere. Around the 1920s, the Carnegie Endowment volumes paved the way for a social and economic history of the war in Italy and elsewhere.^[3] Other studies, organised by the military establishment itself or stemming from documentation produced by it, prepared the ground for studies informed by social history, covering soldiers' [religious](#) practices, their mentalities, and general [attitudes](#) (thanks, for example, to the

precedent set by army health services or by military courts).^[4] [Adolfo Omodeo's \(1889-1946\)](#) research into the [feelings](#) of combatants, ordinary soldiers, and especially reserve officers was of fundamental importance.^[5] These exceptions aside, in the historiography of Italian participation in the conflict, traditional diplomatic, political, and military accounts were favoured.

The shadow of [censorship](#) hung over scholarly debates. Thus, only between 1932 and 1938, with a sympathetic Roman printer, did General [Roberto Bencivenga \(1872-1949\)](#), a follower of [Giovanni Amendola \(1882-1926\)](#) who had been sentenced to imprisonment, manage to get his five important volumes on the war published.^[6] [Piero Pieri \(1893-1979\)](#), for his part, was only able to discuss them in the form of reviews appearing in the *Nuova rivista storica*, a scholarly journal that was not widely distributed.^[7]

The Second Post-war Period

In the course of the Second World War, Italians came to realise, if they had not already intuited it before, that the regime's military and bellicose qualities were in reality quite minimal. Defeat on the battlefield in 1940-1943 and the division of the country in 1943-1945, by virtue of operations affecting the entirety of national territory from south to north, represented a dramatic confirmation of this fact.

After twenty years of dictatorship, the country had recovered its liberty and the most diverse and even critical views and interpretations were now possible and tolerated. But, albeit in the oppositional dialectic typical of the Cold War, a considerable number of images had already been impressed on the minds of Italians and a considerable number of judgements had been shared, even across the ever-so-bitter political polarisation. This would have numerous and complex consequences for collective memory and for studies of the Great War.

After 1945 the first global conflict was no longer perceived as a "great" war. This implied that, in public memory, the Second World War took precedence over the first. Once depictions of the earlier conflict as a liberal war or as the first step in the warlike expansion sought by fascism had "faded", how was the Great War to be remembered?

The conflict began to be "sanitized" and purged of its most dramatic aspects. 1914-1918 had certainly not been a chivalrous war, and yet, in contrast to the genocide of the European Jews and the harshness of widespread resistance, the first global conflict assumed the calming attributes of a (more) regular war. At the same time, the old national-liberal interpretation advanced in the very earliest post-war period now seemed implausible and old-fashioned. This led to the rehabilitation of the version already dear to democratic interventionists, of the "fourth war of independence" for Trento and Trieste. This version harmonized with the moderate interpretation of the more recent war of liberation and resistance as precisely another "war of independence" from the Nazi invader, a "second Risorgimento". Following this general line, even if very cautiously, between 1945 and 1965, historians went along with the conflict's "passing over into history".

The best example of this is the short book that Piero Pieri published on the war's fiftieth anniversary, which was based on an earlier intervention and synthesis. *L'Italia nella prima guerra mondiale* (1965) represented by far the best introduction to the theme, as it was somewhat critical of previous militaristic interpretations. However, it was also permeated by the democratic interventionist conception of Italian involvement in the global conflict; it was construed as a fulfilment of national aspirations.^[8] For example, [Luigi Cadorna's \(1850-1928\)](#) handling of the war was criticised, but never to the extent of casting doubt on the national need for the conflict.

Archives became more accessible in the 1960s, through the convergent effects of the government permitting the release of archival documents after fifty years and the belated establishment of an independent institution in the form of a central state archive separate from the state archive in Rome (a separation decided upon in 1953 but put into effect only in 1960). For this reason, up until then the work of identifying other sources, [literary](#) or biographical, had been important. This period therefore saw the publication of the Cadorna family papers and the private papers of [Angelo Gatti \(1875-1948\)](#) and [Ferdinando Martini \(1841-1928\)](#).^[9]

Using these documentary sources and the first archival deposits as they gradually became available, historians began to study the diplomacy surrounding Italy's intervention in the war, the stances of the main political groups, the interests represented by major economic forces, the ill-defined actions of the leadership of the [workers' movement](#), and the actions of the [papacy](#) and the lay Catholic movement. Noteworthy advances in knowledge were made and an initial debate took shape, above all if one considers that this was after twenty years of dictatorship. Yet up until the fiftieth anniversary, these studies failed to break with the traditional patriotic interpretation favoured by democratic interventionists. For this reason, up until then the history of the world war by Italian historians could be defined later by a critical observer like Giorgio Rochat, in terms of the once customary diplomatic, political, and military history, as "a version, updated in form, but unaltered in political substance, of the traditional interpretation of the conflict", even in the best of cases.^[10]

Critical Historiography

[Jay Winter](#) has noted that, at the international level, the generation of "fifty years later" was still caught up in nostalgia, while it was only with the advent of the "Vietnam" generation that critical historiography succeeded in demolishing the old myths.^[11] Other observers, perhaps with the benefit of hindsight, have dated the birth of a historiographical revision, and, more generally, of a judgement of Italian public opinion regarding the Great War, to 1968. While not wishing to underestimate the role played in this respect by the "years of collective action" and by social movements in the transformation of Italy and the mindset of Italians, this dating seems particularly inexact, even misleading.

Around the time of the fiftieth anniversary, the First World War loomed large in the public sphere. When 1968 and 1969 erupted in the squares of Italy, a new interpretation of the Great War had

already been broached. Of course, extensive use was made of the anti-institutional mood of those years and the years immediately following. Consequently, these were the years in which historians built up a more critical memory of the war.

First through a handful of monographs and then a more wide-ranging series of studies, the image of the Great War began to change, even for Italians. The most original and important studies were *I vinti di Caporetto* (1967) by Mario Isnenghi,^[12] *L'esercito da Vittorio Veneto e Mussolini* (1967) by Giorgio Rochat,^[13] *Plotone di esecuzione* (this publication dates from 1968 and had an extraordinary impact) by Alberto Monticone and Enzo Forcella (1921-1999),^[14] and *Storia politica della Grande guerra* (1969) by Piero Melograni (1930-2012),^[15] followed again by Isnenghi with *Il mito della Grande guerra*^[16] (published in 1969-1970 but in fact a graduate dissertation that had been written a good deal earlier). These were all works conceived well before 1968: they represented a reaction against a centre-left that was ossifying, and against the old national interpretation of the conflict as the fourth war of independence, a reading which was now at last deemed to be inadequate.

The interpretative turn was a radical one, and from then on it was central to all that followed. If for its protagonists the Great War had been at the origin of modern memory, as Paul Fussell (1924-2012) put it,^[17] it is certain that, for the Italian peninsula, the new critical historiography that emerged between the fiftieth anniversary and 1968 lay at the origin of the modern Italian perception of the conflict. Historical analyses no longer included only the plans and strategies of the generals but also the actual experiences of the combatants. There was no longer only heroism but also repression; not only victories but also defeats, no longer the end of 19th century liberalism but – by virtue of the powerful mechanisms for the mobilisation of consciousness and the effective system of repression – an anticipation of the totalitarian or, at any rate, authoritarian and repressive systems of the 20th century. In fact, in the climate of the 1970s and after these pioneering works, historical research into the First World War changed.

The conflict was now considered to constitute a radical caesura between the liberal 19th century and both the Giolittian early 20th century and the advent of fascism. The features of coruscating and disturbing modernity were highlighted, along with the operation of robust repressive structures. Themes such as the authoritarian politics of the various governments, repression in the factories, the heavy hand of military justice to which the troops were subjected, the ruthless and intractable military mobilization of the country's natural resources (and furthermore the political choice of governments to extend only the most minimal help to prisoners held by the enemy so as to stop combatants conceiving of prison as a means to evade the drama of the conflict), and so on, served to shatter the modicum of Risorgimento consensus that the traditional and national patriotic interpretation of the fourth war of independence could still suggest. Then, later on, around the mid-1980s, thanks in part to the translation of studies by John Keegan (1934-2012),^[18] Paul Fussell, and Eric Leed,^[19] a perspective more closely attuned to the actual experience of war emerged, above all to that of the

combatants themselves.^[20] To the authors mentioned above we should therefore add studies that were based upon autobiographical sources or documentation from the [medical](#) sphere, which served to illustrate “the transformation of the mental universe” of the combatants and the tragic psychiatric disturbances from which they suffered.

A synthesis of this historiographical tendency appeared relatively late, in 2000, with the publication of *La grande guerra 1914-1918* by Mario Isnenghi and Giorgio Rochat.^[21] Its authors made a fundamental contribution to the process of rethinking the conflict and neither subsequently abandoned this field of study. While still adopting a wide-ranging and synoptic approach, the two historians gave free rein to their own scholarly interests, but their historiographical preferences, for example, in the case of the sections on diplomatic history, or even on the economic aspects of the war and the history of actual experiences of war, which, though in evidence, were somewhat muted. Isnenghi and Rochat were moreover preceded, if only by a little, by a pair of shorter syntheses by Giovanna Procacci and [Antonio Gibelli](#),^[22] a symptom of the fact that scholars were mindful of the need for a new general history. That said, for its sheer breadth and interpretative power, *La grande guerra 1914-1918* has remained the synthesis of a whole period of historical studies, side-lining the short book by Piero Pieri from 1965 once and for all.

Twenty-Five Years

For Italians, as for many Europeans, around the end of the Cold War, many of the conditions deemed necessary for understanding and remembering the Great War up until then waned. By the 1990s, the last eyewitnesses had died. But there was something far more significant in play. Italians – with some exceptions regarding those from the north-east – had less and less understanding as to why the war had been fought and knew less and less about it. As a consequence, the conflict appeared to them ever more distant and less comprehensible.

The end of the Cold War brought about a crisis, in some cases a final one, for some of the grand narratives that had served as axes for the whole of that short century: a kind of [nationalism](#), faith in liberal democracy, and communism. Yet, once they had been eclipsed, it became ever harder to identify the keys that could provide an explanation as to why, from 1914 (in the case of the Italians, from 1915) to 1918, the world had fought uninterruptedly for fifty-one (in the case of the Italians, forty-one) months of total and devastating war. Furthermore, wars were no longer fought by mass armies. Archivaly, politically, militarily, and even culturally, the Great War became ever less “thinkable” for all Europeans, the Italians among them.

Now not a national war, a militaristic anticipation of subsequent expansionism, the fourth war of independence, or an imperialist and repressive war, the eclipse of the 20th century grand narratives left the Italian 1915-1918 with no other option but to be “only” a war. Its character as a terrifying war, with more than 600,000 dead, and its propensity to now seem absurd derived precisely from temporal distance and from the fading of the ideologies for which it had been fought, glorified, or

opposed, for almost a century. Without classical liberalism, nationalism, militarism, revolutionary faith, and so forth to call upon, the Great War remained, for Italians, simply something horrifying. Ever more distant, and therefore mysterious, indecipherable, irrational and inhuman, the memory of the Great War shattered into tiny fragments. If this was the general picture of collective memory, or of oblivion, one can perhaps also more readily grasp why institutions have become ever less interested in the Great War. Politics has remembered it in a somewhat intermittent fashion, when anniversaries come around (we have no recollection of any important speeches that address it by politicians, from Silvio Berlusconi to Romano Prodi, only those by the presidents of the republic, usually on 4 November,^[23] which was celebrated in Italy as “Victory Day”, then as “Armed Forces Day”, and nowadays as “Armed Forces and National Unity Day”). Memorialization has continued at a somewhat reduced pace, while actual monuments are hardly ever erected now.

This assessment of public memory is necessary if we are to understand the preconditions and consequences of the historiographical work from this period. Between the end of the Cold War and the [centenary](#), historians have, in reality, continued to take an interest in the Great War, but less than they once did, and to undertake research, that, though of high quality, is ever more academic and often local (relating to the north-east). For this reason, the memory of the Great War has become less and less a national heritage.

This does not mean that there are no important works. The aforementioned synthesis regarding Italian participation in the Great War by Isnenghi and Rochat dates from 2000 and remains the best study. These same years saw the publication of some other fairly important works, although they were the culmination of an earlier historiographical cycle (Gibelli 1991, Procacci 1993). Finally, these were also the years in which some themes were brought to light in the context of Italian studies, rendering them advanced points in the international historiographical debate (such as studies on the experience of war, popular literature written by the soldiers themselves, and popular agitation during the conflict).^[24] Historiographical research in Italy has, however, worked in an ever more forgetful country and collective memory.

Nevertheless, there has been no shortage of publications. For example, in 2014, Lisa Bregantin and Daniele Ceschin furnished the new edition of Isnenghi and Rochat’s 2000 volume with an updated bibliography and compiled a list of around one hundred and fifty titles, covering the last fifteen years, which includes only book-length studies, although it does not mention all of the major works. Some space is allotted to studies of mass culture during the conflict,^[25] together with discussion of the concept of “war culture”,^[26] along with those, typically cultural, studies of the mobilisation of consensus, [artists](#), memory, monuments etc. This is only one theme among many. The coexistence of richness and a degree of fragmentation and dispersion of approaches and interpretations after Isnenghi and Rochat’s synthesis of 2000, is somewhat evident in the seventy or so contributions featuring in the two collective volumes from 2008 edited by Isnenghi and Ceschin. This aspect was, all in all, due not to the editors or the authors, but to the time in which they were living.^[27]

Glimpses from the Centenary

Over all this, the tsunami of the centenary came crashing down. It is hardly possible in the space of a few lines, and when we have only just emerged from it, to draw up an accurate balance sheet, though some tendencies can be identified.

The centenary proved to be a veritable “spectacle”.^[28] Institutions at the communal, provincial, and regional level, state institutions and those of civil society, print media, radio, and television programmes, cinema, websites, publishing houses and historians as well as freelancers, journalists,^[29] amateur enthusiasts, and even the wholly incompetent felt compelled to organise conferences, seminars, publications, and public initiatives on the theme of the Great War. The government set up a designated official committee, presided over by a politician and endowed with fairly meagre funds. Between 2014 and the end of 2018, the committee permitted the use of its official logo for around 2,500 initiatives, which represents only a portion of those actually undertaken. In the course of those same years, over 2,000 new books that contained the words “First World War” or “Great War” in their titles were printed. Seen in perspective, and with regard to the lack of interest (if we exclude the north-east) shown over the previous twenty-five years, the centenary can be understood as a major event, one that will certainly leave a mark on public memory.

It is not an easy matter to gage whether historians played a crucial role in this huge media and celebrity circus. Important collective works were published.^[30] The many conferences held certainly led to a deeper understanding of various issues. Above all, many documentary sources were consulted, read, and published. For a genuinely scrupulous historian, however, truly innovative studies were few and far between.^[31]

There was some research on the front itself, but most attention was devoted to the home front.^[32] Interest in the cultural history of the conflict, which arose some years prior, continued and perhaps peaked.^[33] Admittedly, some cultural historians held themselves to be the sole combatants, or “victors”, of the battle of the centenary. In my opinion, they are mistaken. Alongside mass culture, the centenary was “filled up with” local politics,^[34] society distant from the front,^[35] the contributions to the war made by the most diverse and scattered localities (there were countless reprints of wartime comics [*albi d'oro*] in these years), and even some new studies on the combatants themselves.^[36] Often, works such as these recall a horrific war, a senseless slaughter, the reasons for which were lost, which had happened in the previous twenty-five years. It is, then, but a short step to an impassioned remembering of the victims. In parallel to these developments, and from another perspective, alongside all those who were intent upon representations of victimhood and a markedly local celebration of those same victims, there have also been those determined to lay claim – this is a new phenomenon – to honour for the victory and to stress the need for pride in a war won^[37] (with some exaggeration: even in the case of Caporetto, there has been some attempt to turn it into a victory^[38]). On this same front, some historians have once again proclaimed the war to be a

moment at which the national unification of Italians first occurred.^[39]

Thus, although apparently opposed and not politically correct, and certainly at variance with the common sense of the fiftieth anniversary, in the Italian centenary, a sense of victimhood and a new pride advanced together. This may well be a sign of the times.

If these would seem to have been the most conspicuous tendencies of the centenary, in the 2,000 volumes published during these years, anything and everything can be found: regional studies, local studies, studies of propaganda and of welfare, studies of the part played by [women in war](#), studies of the [colonies](#) in wartime, and so on. All of these themes are, of course, not infrequently encountered in contemporary international historiography. What is striking here, however, is the odd combination of a preoccupation with victimhood and nationalistic pride.

Nicola Labanca, Università degli Studi di Siena

Reviewed by external referees on behalf of the General Editors

Translator: [Martin Thom](#)

Notes

1. ↑ Le Goff, Jacques: Documento/Monumento, in: Enciclopedia Einaudi, volume 5, Turin 1978, pp. 38-43, and Le Goff, Jacques: Storia e memoria, Turin 1982, pp. 443-456.
2. ↑ Commissione d'inchiesta: Relazione della commissione d'inchiesta, Dall'Isonzo al Piave (24 ottobre – 9 novembre 1917), 3 volumes, Rome 1919.
3. ↑ It is worth recalling, among others, Bachi, Riccardo: L'alimentazione e la politica annonaria in Italia, Bari 1926; De Stefani, Alberto: La legislazione economica della guerra, Bari 1926; Serpieri, Arrigo: La guerra e le classi rurali italiane, Bari 1930; Einaudi, Luigi: La condotta economica e gli effetti sociali della guerra italiana, Bari 1933.
4. ↑ Mortara, Giorgio: La salute pubblica in Italia durante e dopo la guerra, Bari et al. 1925; Mortara, Giorgio: Statistica dello sforzo militare italiano nella guerra mondiale. Dati sulla giustizia e disciplina militare, Rome 1927.
5. ↑ Omodeo, Adolfo: Momenti della vita di guerra. Dai diari e dalle lettere dei caduti, Bari 1934.
6. ↑ Bencivenga, Roberto: Saggio critico sulla nostra guerra, 5 volumes, Rome 1930-1937.
7. ↑ Collected in the second post-war period in Pieri, Piero: La prima guerra mondiale, 1914-1918. Problemi di storia militare, Turin 1947.
8. ↑ Pieri, Piero: L'Italia nella Prima guerra mondiale, Turin 1965.
9. ↑ Gatti, Angelo / Monticone, Alberto (ed.): Caporetto. Diario di guerra (maggio-dicembre 1917), Bologna 1964; Martini, Ferdinando / De Rosa, Gabriele (ed.): Diario 1914-1918, Milan 1966; Cadorna, Luigi / Cadorna, Raffaele (ed.): Lettere famigliari, Milan 1967.

10. † Roachat, Giorgio: L'Italia nella Prima guerra mondiale, in: *Rivista di storia contemporanea* 5 (1976), p. 169.
11. † Winter, Jay (ed.): *The Legacy of the Great War, Ninety Years on*, Columbus 2009, pp. 4-5.
12. † Isnenghi, Mario: *I vinti di Caporetto: nella letteratura di guerra*, Padua 1967.
13. † Roachat, Giorgio: *L'Esercito italiano da Vittorio Veneto a Mussolini*, Bari 1967.
14. † Monticone, Alberto/Forcella, Enzo: *Plotone d'esecuzione, I processi della Prima guerra mondiale*, Bari 1968.
15. † Melograni, Piero: *Storia politica della grande guerra*, Bari 1969.
16. † Isnenghi, Mario: *Il mito della Grande Guerra*, Bari 1970.
17. † Fussell, Paul: *The Great War and Modern Memory*, Oxford 1975.
18. † Keegan, John: *The Face of the Battle*, London 1976.
19. † Leed, Eric J.: *No Man's Land. Combat and Identity in World War 1*, Cambridge 1979.
20. † Diego, Leoni / Camillo, Zadra (eds.): *La Grande guerra. Esperienza, memoria, immagini*, Bologna 1986.
21. † Isnenghi, Mario / Roachat, Giorgio: *La Grande Guerra 1914-1918*, Florence 2000.
22. † Procacci, Giovanna: *Soldati e prigionieri italiani nella Grande guerra*, Rome 1993; Gibelli, Antonio: *L'officina della guerra. La grande guerra e le trasformazioni del mondo mentale*, Turin 1993.
23. † Labanca, Nicola: *Una storia immobile? Messaggi alle forze armate italiana per il 4 novembre (1945-2005)*, in: Calamandrei, Silvia (ed.): *I linguaggi della memoria civile. Piero Calamandrei e la memoria della Grande Guerra e della Resistenza*, Montepulciano 2007, pp. 75-130.
24. † Consider the huge documentary compilations and studies fostered by the review "Materiali di lavoro" and likewise by the Museo storico italiano della guerra di Rovereto and by the Museo storico in Trento.
25. † Mondini, Marco: *La guerra italiana: partire, raccontare, tornare: 1914-18*, Bologna 2014; Mondini, Marco (ed.): *La guerra come apocalisse: interpretazioni, disvelamenti, paure*, Bologna 2016.
26. † Ventrone, Angelo: *La seduzione totalitaria. Guerra, modernità, violenza politica (1914-1918)*, Rome 2003; Procacci, Giovanna: *Alcune recenti pubblicazioni in Francia sulla "cultura di guerra" e sulla percezione della morte nel primo conflitto mondiale*, in: Labanca, Nicola / Roachat, Giorgio (eds.): *Il soldato, la guerra e il rischio di morire*, Milan 2006; Labanca, Nicola: *Cultura di guerra. Note su una nuova categoria storica*, in: Del Negro, Piero / Francia, Enrico (eds.): *Guerre e culture di guerra nella storia d'Italia*, Milan 2011, pp. 13-24; Labanca, Nicola: *Cultura di guerra 2011* and Mondini, Marco: *Culture di guerra e tipi guerrieri. L'immagine del conflitto e del combattente nella Grande Guerra in Italia tra mobilitazione culturale e politiche della rimemoranza*, in: Del Negro / Francia (eds.): *Guerre e culture di guerra 2011*, pp. 13-24, pp. 109-122.
27. † Isnenghi, Mario (ed.): *Gli italiani in guerra. Conflitti, identità, memorie, dal Risorgimento ai nostri giorni*, in: Isnenghi, Mario / Ceschin, Daniele (eds.): *La Grande Guerra, dall'intervento alla "vittoria mutilata"*, volume 3, Turin 2008.
28. † For a study of a specific conjuncture see Labanca, Nicola: *Caporetto nella sfera pubblica*, in: *Passato e presente* 106 (2018).

29. † The best-seller in Italy from the centenary was a book by a journalist working for the “Corriere della sera”, Cazzullo, Aldo: *La guerra dei nostri nonni 1915-1918. Storie di uomini, donne, famiglie*, Milan 2014.
30. † Including Procacci, Giovanna (ed.): *La società italiana e la Grande guerra*, in: *Annali della Fondazione Ugo La Malfa. Storia e politica* 27 (2013); Labanca, Nicola (ed.): *Dizionario storico della prima guerra mondiale*, Rome et al. 2014; Labanca, Nicola / Überegger, Oswald (eds.): *La guerra italo-austriaca 1915-18*, Bologna 2014 (German translation: Labanca, Nicola / Überegger, Oswald (eds.): *Krieg in den Alpen. Österreich-Ungarn und Italien im Ersten Weltkrieg (1914-1918)*, Vienna et al. 2015); Wilcox, Vanda (ed.): *Italy in the Era of the Great War*, Leiden 2018; Labanca, Nicola / Procacci, Giovanna / Goddi, Federico (eds.): *La guerra e lo Stato 1914-1918*, Milan 2018.
31. † In my opinion, amongst those few worthy of note are Leoni, Diego: *La guerra verticale. Uomini, animali e macchine sul fronte di montagna, 1915-1918*, Turin 2015; Antonelli, Quinto: *Cento anni di grande guerra. Cerimonie, monumenti, memorie e contromemorie*, Rome 2018; Castelli, Franco / Jona, Emilio / Lovatto, Alberto: *Al rombo del cannon. Grande Guerra e canto popolare*, Vicenza 2018.
32. † Gibelli, Antonio: *La guerra grande. Storie di gente comune 1914-1919*, Rome et al. 2014.
33. † Janz, Oliver: *Das symbolische Kapital der Trauer. Nation, Religion und Familie im italienischen Gefallenenkult des Ersten Weltkriegs*, Tübingen 2009; Bracco, Barbara: *La patria ferita. I corpi dei soldati italiani e la Grande guerra*, Florence et al. 2012.
34. † Cammarano, Fulvio (ed.): *Abbasso la guerra! Neutralisti in piazza alla vigilia della prima guerra mondiale in Italia*, Florence et al. 2015.
35. † For example: Scartabellati, Andrea / Ermacora, Matteo / Ratti, Felicità (eds.): *Fronti interni. Esperienze di guerra lontano dalla guerra, 1914-1918*, Naples et al. 2014; Barone, Giuseppe (ed.): *Catania e la Grande guerra. Storia, protagonisti, rappresentazioni*, Acireale 2014; Bonomo, Margherita / Poidomani, Gianarlo: *L'Italia chiamò. La Sicilia e la grande guerra*, Rome 2016; Ferraro, Giuseppe (ed.): *Dalle trincee alle retrovie. I molti fronti della Grande Guerra*, Arcavacata di Rende 2015; Gorgolini, Luca / Montella, Fabio / Preti, Alberto (eds.): *Superare Caporetto. L'esercito e gli italiani nella svolta del 1917*, Milan 2017; Franzina, Emilio / Nardello, Mariano (eds.): *La grande guerra. A due passi dal fronte. Città di retrovia e culture urbane nel prisma della grande guerra, volume 1*, Mantua 2018; Covino, Renato / Raspadori, Paolo / Venanzi, Marco: *L'economia umbra e la Grande Guerra*, Foligno 2018; and, most importantly, Degli Esposti, Fabio: *La grande retrovia in territorio nemico. Bologna e la sua provincia nella Grande Guerra (1914-1918)*, Milan 2017.
36. † Gaspari, Paolo: *Le bugie di Caporetto. La fine della memoria dannata*, Udine 2011; Labanca, Nicola: *Caporetto. Storia e memoria di una disfatta*, Bologna 2017; Barbero, Alessandro: *Caporetto*, Rome et al. 2017.
37. † Gaspari, *Le bugie di Caporetto* 2011.
38. † Lucchini, Stefano (ed.): *A Caporetto abbiamo vinto*, Milan 2017.
39. † Perfetti, Francesco (ed.): *La grande guerra e l'identità nazionale. Il primo conflitto mondiale nella politica e nelle istituzioni*, Florence 2014. From an earlier date, Della Loggia, Ernesto Galli in: *La grande guerra nella memoria italiana*, Rome 2008, pp. 64-76.

Selected Bibliography

[Forcella, Enzo / Monticone, Alberto: **Plotone d'esecuzione. I processi della Prima guerra mondiale**, Bari 1968: Laterza.](#)

Gibelli, Antonio: **L'officina della guerra. La Grande Guerra e le trasformazioni del mondo mentale**, Universale Bollati Boringhieri, 547, Turin 1991: Bollati Boringhieri.

Gooch, John: **The Italian army and the First World War**, Cambridge 2014: Cambridge University Press.

Isnenghi, Mario: **I vinti di Caporetto nella letteratura di guerra**, Padova 1967: Marsilio.

Isnenghi, Mario / Ceschin, Daniele (eds.): **Gli italiani in guerra. Conflitti, identità, memorie dal Risorgimento ai nostri giorni. La Grande Guerra. Dall'Intervento alla 'vittoria mutilata'**, volume 3, Turin 2008: UTET.

Isnenghi, Mario / Rochat, Giorgio: **La grande guerra, 1914-1918**, Scandicci 2000: La nuova Italia.

Labanca, Nicola: **The Italian front**, in: Winter, Jay (ed.): **The Cambridge history of the First World War. Global war**, volume 1, New York 2014: Cambridge University Press, pp. 266-296.

Leoni, Diego / Zadra, Camillo (eds.): **La grande guerra. Esperienza, memoria, immagini**, Bologna 1986: Il Mulino.

Melograni, Piero: **Storia politica della grande guerra, 1915-1918**, Bari 1969: Laterza.

Ministero della Difesa (ed.): **Dall'Isonzo al Piave, 24 ottobre - 9 novembre 1917. Relazione ufficiale della commissione d'inchiesta di Caporetto, 3 volumes**, Rome 1919: Stabilimento poligrafico per l'amministrazione della guerra.

Omodeo, Adolfo: **Momenti della vita di guerra. Dai diari e dalle lettere dei caduti, 1915-1918**, Turin 1968: Einaudi.

Pieri, Piero: **L'Italia nella prima guerra mondiale (1915-1918)**, Turin 1965: G. Einaudi.

Procacci, Giovanna: **Soldati e prigionieri italiani nella Grande Guerra**, Turin 2000: Bollati Boringhieri.

Rochat, Giorgio: **L'esercito italiano da Vittorio Veneto a Mussolini (1919-1925)**, Bari 1967: Laterza.

Citation

Labanca, Nicola: **Historiography 1918-Today (Italy)**, in: **1914-1918-online. International Encyclopedia of the First World War**, ed. by Ute Daniel, Peter Gatrell, Oliver Janz, Heather Jones, Jennifer Keene, Alan Kramer, and Bill Nasson, issued by Freie Universität Berlin, Berlin 2019-10-10. **DOI: 10.15463/ie1418.11416**. Translated by: Thom, Martin

License

This text is licensed under: **CC by-NC-ND 3.0 Germany - Attribution, Non-commercial, No Derivative Works**.

