On a transnational basis, mobilization during the First World War was a major process of material and imaginative engagement unfolding on a military, economic, political and cultural level. Not only were mass armies, supplies and resources raised: sets of values, beliefs and representations underlying the life of national communities played a crucial role in securing consensus and commitment of both specific social groups and individuals.

This massive cultural circulation cannot be considered just as a top-down process imposed by state agencies onto passive recipients: both pre-war culture and striking voluntary forms of full engagement and participation in the war hybridized with and reacted to the official paths of mobilization, opening up a dynamic space of floating cultural materials. Political, national, cultural, and gender identities were dramatically challenged and questioned by the whirl of discourses and representations that called to mobilization. Accordingly, existing identities were mobilized in a twofold sense: they were urged to respond actively and concretely to the war and they were also symbolically put in motion by it, that is, confronted with unsettlement and reshaping.

The aim of this conference is to gather together scholars in a diverse range of disciplines (history, classics, philosophy, literary and cultural studies) and discuss to what extent and how the war, its representations and its contemporary memory, can be considered as a laboratory for testing identities at large.

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Thursday 11 May 2017
School of Literatures, Languages and Cultures - Project Room 1.06

09.30 Welcome and coffee
10.00 Opening remarks

Art and Politics
10.10-11.30
Simona Storchi (University of Leicester)
The Artist as Veteran: Artistic Identities and Politics in Post-World War I Italy
Selena Daly (University College Dublin)
‘Moderate Futurism’ and the shifting identities of the Futurists at war

11.30-11.50 Coffee Break

Intellectuals at war
11.50-13.10
Elizabeth Pender (University of Leeds)
Hellenic Idealism in WW1: from Gilbert Murray to the Union of Democratic Control
Franziska Heimburger (Université Paris-Sorbonne)
Allied identity? André Maurois’ experience of the First World War

13.10-14.30 Lunch

Friday 12 May 2017
School of Literatures, Languages and Cultures - Project Room 1.06

09.30 Welcome and coffee

Male Identities
10.00-11.20
Marco Mondini (University of Padua & Italian German Historical Institute)
Brothers in arms, or “the genuine family of my extraordinary youth”. Male bonding in the Italian War Literature
Cristina Savettieri (University of Edinburgh)
Gender Trouble in Italian Narratives of Captivity of the First World War

11.20-11.40 Coffee Break

Civilian Mobilization
11.40-13.00
Angie Hobbs (University of Sheffield)
Women, Heroism and WW1
Daniel Steinbach (University of Exeter)
Empire, Nation, Race: Contested Identities in Wartime Africa, 1914-1919

13.00-14.20 Lunch

Remembering
14.20-15.40
Tea Sindbaek Andersen (University of Copenhagen)
Croatia and the First World War: National Forgetting in a Memorial Shatter Zone
Ross Wilson (University of Chichester)
Remembering the Great War in Britain: centenaries and the making of modern identities

15.40-15.50 Coffee break
15.50-16.30 Closing remarks and final discussion

Friday 12
May 2017
Italian Cultural Institute

17.30 Memoria per l’Europa - An encounter with writer Paolo Rumiz (In Italian and English)