



City and Nation in the Italian Unification: The National Festivals of Dante Alighieri (Italian and Italian American Studies)

By Mahnaz Yousefzadeh

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This study of the first national festival of modern Italy historically reconstructs the event, using a mass of un-catalogued and unpublished documents left by the organizers, which positions the Centenary as a platform upon which an alternative definition of Italian national identity emerged.

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Editorial Review

Review

"An important contribution to this exciting field of study." - The Journal of Modern History

"This study narrates and documents the events leading up to, during, and immediately following the three day Festa di Dante that took place in Florence in May, 1865, following the unification of Italy under the Piedmontese Monarchy of Victor Emanuel II. Based on exhaustive investigations of unpublished documents, reviews of original sources, and more recent literature, the author provides an important micro-history whose impact had broader implications for the movement toward total unification, to include Rome and Venice, and independence from the papacy and Austria. The book is mainly addressed to specialists in Italian history, sociology, and politics, including those interested in ritual and performance studies, the history of journalism, and even, to a lesser degree, feminist concerns. Scholars in related fields, such as British or American history of the nineteenth-century will also find the book of interest." - Anita Moskowitz, Professor of Art History and former chair of the Art Department, Stony Brook University

"A vivid picture and an innovative approach to one of the major symbolic events celebrating Italian unification, this book - based on very rich archival material - provides useful insights into the top-down construction of a national consensus. And yet it goes far beyond that. Through the microcosm of the Dante festival, Yousefzadeh's work aids in the understanding of the complex structure of Italian society, its hierarchies, and the relationship between Florence and the new nation-state. Novel, and of particular interest, is the text's analysis of the participation of the worker societies in the event." - Ilaria Porciani, University of Bologna

About the Author

MAHNAZ YOUSEFZADEH Professor in the Liberal Studies Program of Arts and Sciences at New York University, USA.

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