

Nuova Rivista Storica

Anno CIV, Settembre-Dicembre 2020, Fascicolo III

Abstracts

MARCELLO RINALDI, Tornare protagonisti nel Levante. La politica economico commerciale dell'Italia verso la Grecia nell'immediato Secondo dopoguerra, tra ambizioni e limiti

Immediately after the signature of the Peace Treaty (10 February 1947), the Italian Foreign Minister, Carlo Sforza, undertook a new Mediterranean policy for his country, in sharp contrast to the old Fascist politics of domination. After her defeat in the WWII, in fact, Italy strove to return to play a leading role into Eastern Mediterranean Sea promoting her friendship towards the States present in this area, where the Cold War was starting. With this aim, Italian diplomacy worked to foster a commercial and economic cooperation with other States, such as Greece and Turkey, reaching the signature of the Treaties of Friendship in Sanremo (5 November 1948) and in Rome (24 March 1950).

This essay deals with the Greek particular case and the commercial and economic policy lead by Italy towards a still resentful Nation after the Italian aggression (28 October 1940). However, at the same time, the Greek Government, engaged in the Civil War against the pro-communist militants of the Hellenic National Liberation Front, needed a new friendship with the Italian Republic in order to let Greece come out from the isolation in the Balkan area. Not just in a geopolitical perspective, but also in an economic one, trying to break partially the monopoly of Great Britain and USA: in fact, tightening a friendship with the Italians would have meant to give to the Greeks a new commercial partner, exporting to them for example tobacco, the most important production of the country.

Actually, the Government of Athens desired to have Italy as the main importing market of the Hellenic tobacco, replacing so Germany in this role after her defeat in the war. Despite Palazzo Chigi and Italian diplomacy were very interested in this perspective, State Monopoly and the Foreign Commerce Ministry affirmed the unsustainability for Italy to import large volumes of tobacco. So, put aside the tobacco, the Italian Foreign Office attempted to penetrate economically into Greece through the war reparations; more precisely, Italy would have paid to Greece 105 million dollars (Art. 74 - Italian Peace Treaty) taking part to the reconstruction of this country, specifically in the field of his electrification. The Economic Collaboration Agreement signed in Rome on 31 August 1949 between Italy and Greece assigned so Vodas and Ladon rivers electrification to Italian Companies. However, the Italian Companies should have necessarily worked within the limits imposed by the Americans, having become the USA the true hegemonic Power in Greece after the British Empire withdrawal from Mediterranean Sea and the launch of the Truman Doctrine.

Keywords:

Carlo Sforza

Economic Collaboration Agreement between Italy and Greece

31 August 1949

Greek Tobacco

Italian reparations