
Simone Selva. *Integrazione Internazionale e Sviluppo Interno. Stati Uniti e Italia nei Programmi di Riarmo del Blocco Atlantico (1945–1955)* [International Integration and Internal Development. United States and Italy in the Rearmament Programme of the Atlantic Block (1945–1955)]. Rome: Carocci, 2009. 384 pp. ISBN 978-88-430-5253-0, €40 (paperback).

We have been expecting for some time a monograph by Simone Selva, a young scholar who has shown great seriousness and precision with some essays that have appeared in scientific journals. His works, which demonstrate his first-rate ability to delve into archives, analyze the post–World War II period and the Italian economic miracle, which he studies from the point of view of production choices in Italy, the Cold War, the building of the Western bloc, and Italy’s international economic relations with their political and diplomatic implications. The book is the result of a long path of archival research in both Italy and the United States (see the author’s note on sources in pp. 365–74) and opens new fields of research in Italian and international economic and political history.

As the title of the book says (truthfully rather abstrusely), Selva studies the relationships between Italy and the United States during the first decade after World War II. This was a crucial period in Italian history. In times of tension between the capitalist and communist models, Italy experienced its first period of rapid economic growth since the 1930s Depression, which allowed vast segments of the population to enjoy an unprecedented high standard of living. Selva focuses on the debate within the Italian ruling classes regarding what

model of economic development to adopt and how to enter the ever more integrated and dynamic Western market while at the same time analyzing the United States' attempt to use the Marshall Plan and other financial instruments to veer Italy's productive structure toward the creation of a mass market. With these two elements, Italy was on the road to become a business partner of the United States, a valuable ally in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization's rearmament programs, and a showcase of capitalist economic well-being for other countries.

The post-World War II dynamics in Italy are already present in the historiography, but at a superficial and vague level. In this book, Selva goes beyond widely accepted assumptions on the Italian political landscape based on declarations of intent or slogans and analyzes the Italian political reality through detailed analysis of some particular cases. He focuses in particular on the purchase orders by the United States to the Italian aviation industry which he also uses to analyze the strategies and (in a broader sense) the economic culture of Italy's ruling class in that period, in particular of the technocracies of the economic ministries, the Fiat car company, Confindustria (Italy's main industrial association), and Banca d'Italia. Selva's reproduction of these debates provides an interesting prism for our understanding of the internal dynamics and mechanisms of these political itineraries. Selva does not focus on well-known aspects such as anti-communism, the rise of a moderate middle class, or the political use of the Trieste question. He rather contributes with an analysis that shows unequivocally how the government and the centrist political forces chose to develop an economic policy focused industries with average technological content (especially those connected to the defense industry) and on the so-called machinery industry. This choice allowed them to have suppliers from the dollar area while at the same time developing export markets in Western Europe, which was consistent with Italy's ruling class goal of economic integration with the rest of Europe.

The U.S. post-war economic program in Europe included not only elements of monetary stability and equilibrium in the balance of payments but also innovation and technological transfer. From this perspective, Selva's book fits very well into the recent debate on the Italian industrial development of the second half of the twentieth century, which challenges the myth of Italian creativity and places emphasis on the processes of international collaboration, imitation, and use of foreign technologies. *Integrazione Internazionale e Sviluppo Interno* also makes a contribution to the historiography on European economic integration, on Confindustria's operations in the second half of the twentieth century, and on the relationship between large

and small business that characterized the post–World War II Italian economic development.

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