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The Anglo-Albanian trade relations during the 1920s and 30s

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Abstract

In this paper we seek to make a modest contribution to the history of Albania and more specifically to the history of Anglo-Albanian international trade relations in the light of evidence from English archive sources. The aim is to achieve a complete and objective perspective of these relations. The English sources at the Archives of the Institute of History in Albania provide much information about the years in question. English archive sources, British Foreign Affairs Ministry confidential and official correspondences, give us the possibility to deal with these issues under an English perspective. This brings to light facts and events so far unknown to Albanian readers.

It is precisely in the 20s and 30s that the English diplomacy was ever present and active in playing a role in the Albanian political destiny. To Great Britain, trade with Albania was important for two main reasons: first, it did challenge the Italian exclusiveness in Albania; second, it served as a good footing for British capital for further expansion in a more suitable international environment. Even though from the outward Great Britain did not directly participate in the Balkan and Albanian affairs, it did have a lot of influence in the way events took place in the region. In this framework, the principal issue emphasized in this paper is the position occupied by Albania. How far did the “lack of interest” declared by London towards Albania at this time go?

We will look into facts to demonstrate that the English government, in the framework of greater political interests in the Anglo-Italian relations, begins to reduce its interest in Albania, thus leaving Albania in the hands of Italy and anticipating Albania’s occupation on 7 April 1939 by the fascists.

Key words: *Anglo- Albanian trade, expansion, import, export*