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The Impact of the Italian Occupation of Cyrenaica with Reference to Benghazi, 1911-1942

By

Aesha M. Mohammad Suliaman, B. A.; M. A.

Dissertation

Presented to the Faculty of the Graduate School of

Bangor University

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of the Requirements

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Abstract

The Impact of the Italian Occupation of Cyrenaica with reference to Benghazi, 1911-1942

By

Aesha M. Mohammad Suliaman, B. A.; M. A

Bangor University, 2017

Supervisor: Peter shapely

The purpose of this research is to examine the impact of the Italian colonialization on the Libyan province of Cyrenaica by studying the colonial legacy in its largest city. This study provides a description of the social and economic conditions prevailing in the Libyan city of Benghazi from 1911 until 1942. There is a lack of historical political studies about the city of Benghazi and the available historical studies about the city are mainly concerned with following certain historical events during a specific period. Therefore, the researcher turned to archives of *Mahkamit Shamal Benghazi*, *Sijil al-Mahkama al-Shar'ia* (MSBSM) Benghazi's shari'a court records, *Dar al-Mahfuzat al-Tarikhiyya* (DMT) Tripoli's Libyan archives, and *Markaz Dirasat al-Jihad al-Libi* (MDJL) Tripoli's Centre for Libyan Studies. The researcher used those records and documents as a primary source for this study and they offered a comprehensive insight into the social and economic life of the people of Cyrenaica and Benghazi. The researcher also relied on primary and secondary Libyan history sources written by both Italian and Libyan scholars. Additionally, the researcher consulted biographies and memoirs of colonial Italian officials. Economically, colonial Italy failed to achieve its agricultural settlements program which was operating at a deficit throughout the colonial period. The colonial educational policy was oriented to educate students to secondary school level only and by the end of the colonial rule illiteracy rate was at 90%. The Italian colonial policies in Libya affected the social institutional structure through a lengthy armed conflict that produced the Cyrenaican resistance's alliance between the religious Sanusi Movement and the tribal leaders such events helped to reinforce the role of religion in political life as the religious Sanusi movement was being transformed into a political movement. In Libya, religion and tribal kinship still have a major role in politics.

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I express my cordial thanks to Dr Peter Shapely of Bangor University for having read the entire research most meticulously, and for having offered numerous suggestions for improving the study; to Dr Christian Koller for his valuable insights; to Chief Judge of the Court of Benghazi Saed Al Baresi for his encouragement and support; to Mr. Abdulrahman Al Awami, Chief Clerk of the Court of North Benghazi, for his enormous help around the Court; to the staff of the Court of North Benghazi's Archives; to the staff of the Court of South Benghazi's Archives; and to Mr. Ashour Al Bejo for help around Benghazi's old landmarks.

Aesha M. Suliaman

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Table of Contents

Declaration	ii
Abstract	vi
Acknowledgements	vii
Table of Contents	viii
Abbreviations	x
Introduction	1
 Chapter 1: Political conditions in Libya during the Italian colonisation	 35
Political conditions in Libya during the late nineteenth century	35
The first colonial (liberal) period, 1911-1922	43
The second colonial (fascist) period, 1922-1942	66
Conclusion	84
 Chapter 2: Italian Colonial Impact on Benghazi's Urban Development	 88
Benghazi's Urban Form in the Second Ottoman Period (1835-1911)	89
Benghazi's Urban Development in the Italian Liberal Period (1911-1922)	94
The 1914 Benghazi Development Plan	97
Benghazi's Urban Development in the Fascist Period 1922-1942	104
Benghazi's 1930 Organisational Plan	106
Conclusion	111
 Chapter 3: Social impact of the Italian colonisation on Cyrenaica's population ...	 114
Social conditions in Cyrenaica before the Italian Occupation	115
Social impact of the Italian colonisation on Cyrenaica's population in the pre- fascist period, 1911-1922	 120
Imprisonment in Benghazi	124
Imprisonment in the Italian islands	125
Cyrenaica's democratic experience, 1920-1922	131
Social impacts on Cyrenaica, 1922-1942	134
Internment camps	141

Refugees and exiles	144
Conclusion	145
 Chapter 4: The Impact of Italian Colonisation on Benghazi's Economy	147
Benghazi's economy in the late Ottoman period (1835-1911)	159
The impact of Italian colonisation on Benghazi's economy in the pre-fascist period (1911-1922)	157
The impact of Italian colonisation on Benghazi's commerce in the pre-fascist period (1911-1922)	158
The impact of Italian colonisation on Benghazi's agriculture in the pre-fascist period (1911-1922)	164
The impact of Italian colonisation on Benghazi's real estate in the pre-fascist period (1911-1922)	166
The impact of Italian colonisation on Benghazi's economy in the fascist period (1922-1942)	171
Commerce	171
Industry	180
Agriculture	184
Conclusion	192
 Chapter 5: The Italian colonisation and education	194
Education in Benghazi during the Ottoman period	194
Italian educational policy in Benghazi 1911-1922	198
The impact of Italian colonisation on Benghazi's cultural life in the fascist period 1922- 1942	225
Education	225
Media	234
Conclusion	238
 The Conclusion	242
Appendices	254
Bibliography	280

Abbreviations

MSBSMS	Mahkamit Shamal Benghazi, Sijil al-Mahkama al-Shar'aia (Benghazi)
MJBSMS	Mahkamit Janoub Benghazi, Sijil al-Mahkama al-Shar'aia (Benghazi)
DMT	Dar al-Mahfuzat al-Tarikhiyya, Libyan archives (Tripoli)
MDJL	Markaz Dirasat al-Jihad al-Libi, Centre for Libyan Studies (Tripoli)
MAI-AS	Ministero dell'Africa Italiana, Archivio Segreto

Introduction

Over the past three decades, research about the Italian colonial period in Libya has focused on either the Eurocentric (Italian) socio-economic perspective or nationalist anti-colonial studies by Libyan studies centres. However, the history of most of Libya's cities and Benghazi during the Italian colonial period is still under-examined. This lack of attention is significant because knowing about the impact of the Italian colonialism of Libya's three provinces provides a comprehensive understanding of that period of transformation in modern Libyan history, preceding the phase of the formation of a new Libyan state. To address this problem, the researcher examines and analyses various elements of the impact of Italian colonialism on the city of Benghazi: the political, social, economic and cultural. This introduction begins by presenting the aims and objectives of this study. The second section in this introduction covers the broad context of Benghazi's pre-twentieth century development. The third section details the historiography of this study, giving an overview of how historians have approached the topic and what they have argued in the past. In the fourth section, the focus is the theoretical approach and research methodology for this study. The introduction concludes with an overview of the thesis's contents, outlining how it has been organised.

There is a lack of documented social, economic, and cultural academic studies covering the Ottoman and Italian colonial periods about most of Libya's cities, and Benghazi. The importance of the study's subject stems from the idea that, despite the status occupied by this period in the history of Libyan-Italian relations, its various phases have not been studied in an objective manner, nor was this period subject to extensive or

comprehensive studies. Studies in Libya by Libyan studies centres about the period of this research were not without partiality and appeared to serve certain goals, such as pressuring the Italian government about compensation issues or to support a certain political view. In contrast, Italian scholars treated this period from Eurocentric (Italian) economic or social angles only. This study's period was one of transformation in modern Libyan history preceding the phase of forming a new state.

The aim of this study is to examine the political, social, economic and cultural elements of the Italian colonial legacy in the city of Benghazi. Such elements cannot be discussed separately and in isolation from how Italian colonialism impacted the province of Cyrenaica, as Benghazi is its largest city and its capital. The researcher, to achieve that goal, analysed the literature of contemporary Italian and Libyan historians and the memoirs of key Italian colonial officials, and interpreted archival documents from both the official Libyan archives and the Benghazi's *shari'a* court records. This research seeks to analyse a history of a city through a period that witnessed many transformations and upheavals, starting with the political and economic penetration of the Italian capitalist state, and the reaction of the residents of the province and the city to the defeat of the Ottoman Empire and the Italian occupation of the coastal towns. Such events helped to reinforce the role of religion in political life, especially inland, by forming an alliance between the tribal chiefs and Muslim shaykhs. The intransigent Sanusi-led tribal resistance to colonialization shaped most of the political and social relationships in Cyrenaica, polarised within the dichotomy of being either *mettalian* (Italianised) or

ikhwani (Sanusi follower).¹ The two decades following Italy's invasion were turbulent years alternating between military confrontation and attempts to reach peaceful arrangements of joint Italian-Libyan rule.

The emergence of Libya as a political entity dates from its inclusion in the Ottoman Empire in 1551, although it was not a clearly defined area for many years. From 1630, the authority of the Governor of Tripoli was extended to Benghazi and Derna, and in 1711 a Tripolitania family, al-Qaramanli, of Janissary descent, won temporary autonomy. The sphere of their authority was roughly coterminous with the Libya of today, although there was no precise form of government over the nomadic and semi-nomadic tribes which covered most of the country. The dynasty al-Qaramanli managed to maintain the appearance of independence until 1835, when the Ottomans reoccupied Tripoli.² Libya became *Tarabulus al-Gharb*, the province of Tripolitania, but the province of Benghazi – modern Cyrenaica – was directly responsible to Istanbul, although remaining a part of the province. This was mainly due to the rise of the al-Sanusiyya religious brotherhood, a movement which, in a few years, brought about sufficient unity among the tribes of Cyrenaica by establishing primitive administrative systems called *zawiya*, each under a shaykh who, in addition to giving religious instructions, settled tribal and individuals' disputes with a success that the Ottoman Turks could not achieve.³

¹ Being classified as *mettalian* did not necessarily imply actively supporting the coloniser but also referred to anyone living in areas under Italian control and not supporting the resistance (i.e. being neutral).

² Mohammad Fouad Shukri, *al-Sanusiyya deen wa-doula (al-Sanusiyya: Religion and State)*, (Cairo, 1948), p. 25.

³ Ibid, pp. 9, 29; Mohammad 'Ali al-Sanusi (1787-1859), the founder of this religious movement, was a native of Algeria who settled in Cyrenaica in about 1851. It was his mission to enlighten the Arabs, who were divided in their sectarian as well as their tribal allegiances, by preaching a return to the basic beliefs of their religion and self-rule,---

By the mid-1850s, the Ottomans began implementing reforms known as *tanzimat* in both provinces.⁴ For the next twenty-five years, administrative and educational reorganisation proceeded, as agriculture slowly began to supplant the commerce of the caravan trade. Land reforms and agricultural development undermined the tribal organisation of nomadic pastoralism, encouraging settlement and loosening tribal kinship ties. The activities of the Sanusi religious movement, whose extensive political and commercial organisation also encouraged educational development and sedentariness, provoked many of the same changes, as institutional affiliation – whether Ottoman or Sanusi – began to supersede tribal support as the basis of political power and economic wealth. The growth of villages around forts and markets established by the Ottoman governors reflected a general trend toward urbanisation in the northern regions of the province. By the early twentieth century, Tripoli's population was about 30,000 people, and Benghazi's 19,000; almost half the population was considered sedentary by the Italian colonial officials.⁵

-which recognises no distinction between spiritual and temporal authority; moreover, each *zawia*'s shaykh collected customary dues for the support of his *zawia* and remitted the balance to the head of the movement. It was not long, therefore, before al-Sanusi had created a modest state within a state; indeed, he had selected Cyrenaica for his activities because there the Ottoman Empire was at its weakest. The al-Sanusi system of administration was loose, relying mainly on the effective application of the nomads' 'uerf customary law, coupled with Islamic *shari'a* law in matters of personal status. The first Sanusi *zawia* was established in al-Bayda, 200 km east of Benghazi in 1842. Strict in matters of religion, the founder and his followers discouraged local additions to orthodox Islam, forbidding the worship of saints and preaching a return to the observance of the fundamentals of orthodoxy. The order grew quickly in Cyrenaica and the Sahara, promoting sedentariness, trade, and education.

⁴ M. Sukru Hanioglu, *A Brief History of the Late Ottoman Empire*, (New Jersey, 2008), p.74.

⁵ Enrico Agostini, *Sukkan Libya (Barqa)*, tr. Ibrahim al-Mahdawi, (Benghazi, 1988), pp. 415, 444; Agostini, *Sukkan Libya (Tarablus al-Gharb)*, tr. Khalifa al-Tallisi, (Tripoli, 1978), pp. xvii, 2; as early as 1851, the Ottoman government supported the trend to settlement; every encouragement is given to the people to adopt a fixed habitation.

In 1863, Benghazi became an Ottoman province ruled directly from Istanbul and was no longer subject to the Ottoman governor of Tripoli. Benghazi in 1856 had an unpaved port with a water depth that did not allow access to any vessel drawing more than three metres of water.⁶ By 1867, Governor al-Mushir had requested that the authorities in Istanbul agree to deepen the port of Benghazi.⁷ By 1896, the Ottomans began to enlarge the port, which had a role in the reconstruction of the city, thus increasing the size of population.⁸ The number of vessels entering and exiting Benghazi in 1900 was a total of 654 vessels, including 86 cargo ships with a shipping weight of 65,261 tons, and 568 dhows able to handle cargo weight of 11,911 tons.⁹ The products shipped through the port at this stage were cattle, cereals, wool, clarified butter, salt and products from the central African region, such as ivory, gold, and wild animal skins.¹⁰

The districts of Benghazi lacked almost all services, such as a source of drinking water, sewage system and health services. The town suffered from a lack of drinking water sources and most homes were not provided with cisterns, except for homes in Sidi Ghrebeal district with mainly Turkish and European residents.¹¹ The water from the water wells in that district was salty and used for purposes other than drinking.

⁶ James Hamilton, *Jawlat fi Shamal Afriqia (Wanderings in North Africa)*, tr. M. al-Soi'ei, (Tripoli, no date), p. 27.

⁷ Bazama, *Tarikh Barqa fil'Ahd al-Qaramnli*, (Beirut, 1994), p. 245.

⁸ M.al-Hachaici, *al-Rihla al-Saherawia 'abr Aradi Tarabulus wa Bilad al-Touareg 1896 (Desert Journey through the Territory of Tripoli and the Touaregs' Country 1896)*, (Tunis, 1988), p. 59.

⁹ Bazama, *Tarikh Barqa fil 'Ahd al-'Uthmanial-Thani*, (Beirut, 1994), p. 418.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Ibrahim Ahmed al-Mehdawi, *Hekaya Madinati (The Story of My City)*, (Benghazi, 2008), p. 105.

Drinking water was carried on donkeys and camels from outside the town.¹² There was one Ottoman military hospital and a pharmacy administered by Benghazi's municipality. In 1902, an Italian medical clinic was established, providing medical services both to Italian residents of Benghazi and Libyans.¹³ In 1891, the first ever railway line was built for a length of six kilometres between Benghazi's port and the Sidi Daoud district to transport cargo such as salt and building materials.¹⁴

There was a small Ottoman garrison commanded by Governor Murad Fouad Bek (1910-1911). The administrative system of Benghazi's municipality consisted of the chief mayor, a district mayor, and a district imam for the ten districts.¹⁵ This system continued during the period of Italian colonisation. The judicial system in Benghazi in the late nineteenth century consisted of two courts: civil court and *shari'a* court. The civil court was officially named the *majlis al-huqouq wa-l-jinayat* (the council of rights and criminal cases) and handled all criminal cases, commercial cases, state cases and the affairs of European residents.¹⁶ The *al-mahkama al-shar'iyya* (the *shari'a* court) had jurisdiction over personal status law, family law, inheritance and sale contract of land and real estate.¹⁷ The diplomatic corps in Benghazi, at the end of the nineteenth

¹² Ibrahim Ahmed al-Mehdawi, *Hekaya Madinati*, p. 105; for example, in 1895, the price of a 15-litre water barrel was between 12-30 *qursh* (Ottoman piastres).

¹³ Raouf Mohamed Bin amer, *Ta'ar al-Wade' a al-Suhi fi Libya (Health Development in Libya)*, (Benghazi, 1997), pp. 87-88.

¹⁴ Abdulsttar M. al-Feqei, *Masajed Benghazi al-Qadima (Benghazi's Ancient Mosques)*, (Benghazi, 1996), p. 45.

¹⁵ Bazama, *Tarikh Barqa fil 'Ahd al-'Uthmanial-Thani*, p. 193.

¹⁶ Amar Jahider, *Afaq wa wath'aq fi tarikh Libya al-hadith (Vistas and Documents in Libya's Modern History)*, (Tripoli, 1991), pp. 188,189.

¹⁷ *Ibid*, p. 189.

century, consisted of consulates of European countries such as Britain, France, Italy, Austria, Spain, and Greece.¹⁸

Tripolitania and Cyrenaica were among the most underdeveloped regions in the Ottoman empire. At the end of the second Ottoman period, Benghazi was not as developed as other Ottoman-ruled Mediterranean cities as the Ottomans neglected Benghazi's development and a significant amount of the province's income from taxes was sent to Istanbul. That which was left over was not enough to achieve any meaningful development in Benghazi, despite the good intentions of some Ottoman governors like Rashid Pasha and Taher Pasha, who tried to provide some services to the town.¹⁹ Benghazi at the end of the nineteenth century was, however, an important trade centre and the main port of Cyrenaica.

Those were the conditions of Cyrenaica and Benghazi at the time of Italy's invasion and during the ensuing struggle for the next several decades, as Italy tried to gain full control of the province to establish agricultural settlements and Italian colonial policies amid Libyan opposition, vacillating between the use of force and negotiating for an accommodation with the Libyans. It is now left for researchers to analyse this legacy and to try to reach a conceptual understanding of this phenomenon.

The methods and concepts used to study the colonial phenomenon vary considerable among scholars. The differences on the interrelated issues of researchers studying

¹⁸ Francesco Coro, *Libya Athn 'a al- 'Ahd al- 'Uthmani al-Thani (Libya during the Second Ottoman Era)*, tr. Khalifa al-Tallisi, (Tripoli, 1984), p. 23. Diplomats serving in Benghazi in 1911 were: Francis Jones, consul for Britain; Lecoutour, consul for France; and Bernabei, consul for Italy.

¹⁹ Rashid Pasha was governor for two terms: the first (1882-1885) and the second (1889-1893). Taher Pasha was governor from 1893 to 1904.

colonialism in Africa focused on its importance to African history, its nature, its various kinds, and its legacy. Those elements were answered depending on the various analytical traditions: colonial, nationalist, radical, and post-colonial. Colonial approaches dominated the field in the early twentieth century and emphasised the civilising mission. The nationalist struggle gave rise to an opposing historiography that was critical of the colonial period, stressing the actions and ability of the colonised. The failure of democracy and the development model in the former colonies gave rise in the 1970s to a new Marxist radical approach, highlighting economic issues. After the collapse of the Soviet Union in the 1990s, the post-colonial perspective was increasingly in use to reinterpret the multi-layered dynamics and complexities of colonialism.

Colonial and nationalist historiographies represent almost diametrically opposed views of the impact of colonialism in African history, with one regarding it as a pivotal event, the other, as only an interval. To the colonials there was no pre-colonial vital and creative history in those societies. It envisioned those societies as composed of traditional tribal societies, always on the verge of rebellion, with cities ruled by tyrant states headed by kings who treated them as subjects; before colonial administration, those societies were in a state of continuous conflict.²⁰ In the view of colonial scholars, Africa was a land of unhistorical and undeveloped spirit, with man in a wild and untamed state; European colonialism, therefore, was a civilising mission.²¹

²⁰ Edmund Burke III, 'The Image of the Moroccan State in French Ethnological Literature: A New Look at the Origins of Lyauty's Berber Policy', in Ernest Gellner and Charles Micaud, eds, *Arabs and Berbers: From the Tribe to Nation in North Africa*, (Lexington, 1972), pp. 195-199; also, see Archie Mafeje, 'The Ideology of Tribalism', *Journal of Modern African Studies*, 9:2 (1971), pp. 25-361.

²¹ G. W. F. Hegel, *The Philosophy of History*, tr. J. Sibree, (New York, 1956). pp. 82,86; Italy's intellectual justification for colonialism came under the guise of spreading civilisation in the provinces of Tripolitania and Cyrenaica and rescuing those two Ottoman provinces from backwardness: "Civilization has a right to spread to the far corners of earth. Can Turkey help in the development of those regions while its culture is based on religious-

Consequently, colonial historians discussed the policies of colonial governments and their activities in a positive light. Colonial historians regarded colonialism as a progressive force, and therefore, one with legitimacy; this is clear from the writings of Tocqueville and Marx on Algeria.²² When their narrative mentioned the colonised people, it was to condemn their societies and cultures or to chronicle their Westernisation or modernisation, while in-depth study of colonised societies was left to anthropology, which mostly exonerated colonialism.

Nationalist historians offered an ideological revolt against colonial historiography. Using new sources, including oral traditions and written local sources on pre-colonial history, they chronicled the histories of African states and societies before the European colonial conquest and celebrated the growth and eventual triumph of nationalism during the colonial era.²³ In sub-Saharan Africa they were led by J. F. Ade Ajayi and Cheikh Anta, they emphasised continuity in Africa's long history and reduced colonialism to an episode that had altered African cultures and societies only slightly.²⁴

concepts that cannot conform to the new civilized development?"; in DMT, Al-Saraya al-Hamra, *Mahader al-Barlamani al-Itali, al-Sanna 22, al-Dowra 1, al-Jalssa al-Aema fi 3 June 1908* (Minutes of the Italian Parliament, 22nd Legislative Year, 1st General Session), vol. 230, p. 22235.

²² Edmund Burke III, 'Theorizing the histories of colonialism and nationalism in the Arab Maghrib', *Arab Studies Quarterly*, spring (1998), p. 8.

²³ See Jan Vansina, *Oral Traditions: A Study in Historical Methodology*, (Chicago, 1956); Jan Vansina, *Oral Traditions and History*, (Madison, 1985); see also James C. Scott, *Weapons of the Weak*, (New Haven, 1985), pp. 27-37; Oral traditions could be used to recover history from Arabic sources, since the history of the hinterland in the Maghrib has been mainly Arabic, either written or preserved in various oral traditions such as songs, proverbs, epics, and poetry; there is a new literature on subaltern resistance, especially in the colonial social history of India. See the works of the subaltern studies group led by Indian scholar Ranajit Guha. For an overview, see Rosalind O'Hanlon, 'Recovering the Subject, Subaltern Studies and Histories of Resistance in Colonial South Asia', *Modern Asian Studies* 22:1 (1988), 187-224. See also Theodore Swedenburg, 'Memories of Revolt: The 1936-39 Rebellion and the Struggle for a Palestinian National Past', Ph.D. dissertation, The University of Texas at Austin, 1988.

²⁴ Cheikh Anta Diop, *The African Origin of Civilization: Myth or Reality*, tr. Mercer Cook, (New York, 1974).

In this narrative, independence marked a moment of historical recovery in which the agency of the precolonial past was restored and reconnected to the post-colonial future. The linear and celebratory tales of nationalist historiography were later found wanting by numerous critics. In North Africa, Alal al-Fasi and Mohamed Lacharef rejected, point-by-point, the assertions of colonial historians, and presented colonialism as seen from the native's point of view.²⁵ If, for French colonial historians, France was the bearer of progress, and those who resisted were reactionaries, nationalists told the opposite story, in which the French were the oppressors and Algerians as noble defenders of their way of life and their culture. Similarly, in Libyan history, the image of benevolent Italy in Enrico de Leone's writings is juxtaposed to Ruth First's nationalist version.²⁶

While both the dependency and Marxist scholars focused on the exploitative economic structures and processes of colonialism, the former was more interested in explaining the external forces that produced and reproduced Africa's underdevelopment; the latter preferred to concentrate on the internal dynamics. To the dependentistas, colonialism marked a second stage in Africa's incorporation into an unequal world capitalist system that was ushered in during the fifteenth century, with the onset of the Atlantic slave trade.²⁷ Marxist scholars sought to transcend the ubiquitous and homogeneous capitalism of dependency theory. Colonialism, they argued, entails the articulation of

²⁵ Alal al-Fasi, *Independence Movements in Arab North Africa* (Harakat al-Istiqlaliyah fi al-maghrib al-'Arabi), tr. H. Z. Nuseibeh, (Washington D. C., 1954); Mohamed Lacharef, *Algerie: Nation et histoire*, (Paris, 1965).

²⁶ Enrico de Leone, *La Colonizzazione del Africa del Nord*, (Padua, 1960); Ruth First, *Libya*, (Harmondsworth, 1973).

²⁷ Walter Rodney, *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*, (Washington D.C., 1981).

modes of production, whereby pre-capitalist modes are articulated in their diverse relations with the capitalist mode.²⁸ Hence the introduction of capitalism by colonialism does not eliminate the pre-capitalistic modes but re-shapes them; the latter are progressively subordinated to capital through a contradictory process of destruction, preservation, and transformation.

For the former colonies, during the 1970s, prospects of economic development, political stability and democracy, individual freedom, and social justice all seemed to be receding out of sight, and a kind of “post-colonial melancholia” began to settle in.²⁹ Post-colonialist historiography as it developed presented an expanding list of reasons for this let-down. Colonialism, Davidson and others argued in the 1970s, had left an inheritance that undermined, even doomed, efforts at solidifying national cohesion, at making democratic and constitutional politics work, and at moving the mass of the people out of poverty.³⁰ New nations had been crippled at their birth by the continuing institutions, arrangements, and culture of their colonizers. Neither exploitative economic structures nor hierarchical and Eurocentric educational and cultural institutions were easily remoulded to more beneficial ends. Nor was it to be wondered at that tribal and religious divisions, encouraged, and exasperated, under colonialism's policies of “divide and rule”, now flared up, nor that as soon as the first generation of leaders faced such

²⁸ Samir Amin, ‘Underdevelopment and Dependence in Black Africa: Historical Origins’, *Journal of Modern African Studies*, 10, no. 4 (1972), pp. 503–524.

²⁹ Frederick Cooper, *Colonialism in Question: Theory, Knowledge, and History*, University of California Press, (London, 2005), p. 39.

³⁰ Basil Davidson, *Black Star: A View of the Life and Times of Kwame Nkrumah*, (London, 1973), p. 94.

predictable difficulties they fell back on the authoritarian and militarist ways of their former rulers, or the repressive laws still in many cases in operation.³¹

One consequence of neglecting pre-colonial history, Ballantyne notes, has been a misunderstanding of the extent to which colonialism changed things.³² This suggests a second misunderstanding post-colonial historiography has shared with the colonial: an overestimation of the power and the influence of the colonial regime. As colonial regimes are examined more deeply, and particularly when they are placed in the context of what preceded them, they are both more complex and less powerful. Even in the nineteenth century the Raj, Bayly has recently insisted, was weak as one moved away from the centre, often split into competing agencies, and reliant on Indian agency everywhere.³³ Bourdieu portrayed colonialism as a racialized system of domination, backed by force, which restructures social relations and creates hybrid cultures. His theory entailed insights on the limits and promises of colonial reform, anti-colonial revolution, and post-colonial liberation.³⁴

Earlier studies in the West were focused on the needs of the colonial administrations in the colonised regions, especially North Africa, and adopted the modernisation theory, which is essentially a derivative colonial concept as it shares the main premise of a

³¹ Crawford Young, *The African Colonial State in Comparative Perspective*, (New Haven, 1994), p. 225.

³² Tony Ballantyne, 'The Changing Shape of the Modern British Empire and Its Historiography', *The Historical Journal*, 53 (2010), p. 452.

³³ C. A. Bayly, 'Indigenous and Colonial Origins of Comparative Economic Development: The Case of Colonial India and Africa', in C.A. Bayly, Vijayendra Rao, Simon Szreter, and Michael Woolcock, eds, *History, Historians and Development Policy: A Necessary Dialogue*, (Manchester, 2011), p. 44.

³⁴ Julian Go, 'Decolonizing Bourdieu: Colonial and Postcolonial Theory in Pierre Bourdieu's Early Work', *Sociological Theory*, 31:1 (2013), pp. 49-74.

traditional, pre-colonial society that was inhabited by unruly tribesmen on the one hand, and governed in the towns by corrupt patrimonial states on the other.

Modernization theorists like Daniel Lerner viewed the modern Maghrib and the rest of the third world as composed of traditional societies that began to modernize under European colonialism.³⁵ Traditional tribal and religious values were said to be passing away, replaced by modern, Western, "rational" values.³⁶ An approach to modern North Africa has been the British social anthropologists' segmentary model, as articulated by E. E. Evans-Pritchard and Ernest Gellner.³⁷ The segmentary model assumes the existence of a tribal society comprised of homogeneous tribal segments. In the absence of state control, order was kept through mutually deterring tribal segments in any clan that threatened to disrupt the balance of power. This model was derived from colonial literature and official tribal ideologies. The segmentary model, like colonial literature, perceives the pre-colonial Maghrib society as an agglomeration of tribes or tribal states basically isolated from the larger social and economic structures of the region.

³⁵ Daniel Lerner, *The Passing of Traditional Society: Modernization in the Middle East*, (New York, 1958), p. 47.

³⁶ Lisa Anderson, *The State and Social Transformation in Tunisia and Libya 1830-1980*, (Princeton, 1986); for more details, see Samuel Huntington, *Political Order in Changing Societies*, (New Haven, 1968). For a critique of Huntington's writings, see Colin Leys, 'Samuel Huntington and the End of Classical Modernization Theory' in Hamza Alavi and Theodor Shanin, eds, *Introduction to the Sociology of Development*, (New York, 1982), pp. 33-249; for a systematic critique of modernisation literature, see Irene Gendzier, *Managing Political Change*, (Boulder, 1985).

³⁷ For the classical formulation of the segmentary model, see E. E. Evans-Pritchard, *al-Sanusioun fi Berga (The Sanusi of Cyrenaica)*, tr. Omar al-Dirawi Buhajela, (Beirut, 1969), pp. 59-60. Today the most prominent advocate of this model is Ernest Gellner, *Saints of the Atlas*, (Chicago, 1969), pp. 35-70; for the application of this model in political science, see John Waterbury, *The Commander of the Faithful*, (New York, 1970); for a summary of critiques of the segmentary model, see David Seddon, 'Economic Anthropology or Political Economy: Approaches to the Analysis of Pre-Capitalist Formation in the Maghrib' in John Clamer, ed., *The New Economic Anthropology*, (London, 1978), pp. 61-107; Talal Asad, *The Idea of an Anthropology of Islam*, (Washington D.C., 1986), p. 811; and Janet L. Abu-Lughod, 'Zones of Theory in the Anthropology of the Arab World', *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 18 (1989), pp. 87-280; for a general critique of the anthropological analysis of kinship, see David Schneider, *A Critique of the Study of Kinship*, (Ann Arbor, 1984).

Even some French Marxists such as Lacoste have viewed the pre-colonial Maghrib as an instance exhibiting the classic "Asiatic mode of production"; an Asiatic mode assumes the existence of a strong state and self-sufficient village communities.³⁸ Marx, adopting the orientalist European views of the Orient, saw this structure as being different from the European feudal mode of production and this view denied the pre-existence of private property, described a strong state without the existence of classes, and finally omitted the dialectical method in predicting that change came from outside for example, from British colonialism.³⁹ The state in the pre-colonial Maghrib can hardly be viewed this way, since it was weak and quite different from the despotic image in Marx's Asiatic model.⁴⁰

The literature suffers from two major deficiencies. First, Eurocentric views of the Maghrib society as unruly, segmentary, traditional, or Asiatic assume change to have come from Europe, the "rational," revolutionary, and detribalized region that produced capitalist transformation. This line of reasoning also assumes that Europe has had a history that is dynamic, whereas North Africa has had a passive history, one composed of "closed Muslim tribes" doomed in the face of progressive, capitalist Europe. This point of view is Eurocentric in that it negates the existence of a fluid social history in North Africa prior to the colonial period, and it is also simplistic, ahistorical, and

³⁸ Karl Marx, 'The Future of the British Rule in India', in Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *On Colonialism*, (New York, 1972), p. 81; for a critique of the Asiatic mode of production, see Perry Anderson, *Lineages of the Absolutist State*, (London, 1974), pp. 46-295.

³⁹ Yves Lacoste, 'General Characteristics and Fundamental Structures of Medieval North Africa', *Economy and Society* 3:1 (1974), pp. 10-11.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

essentialist in the way it reduces North African social history to some changeless emanation from the Muslim mind, an allegedly static force informing tribal structure.⁴¹

The second inadequacy of existing analyses, especially modernization theories, is their inability to explain social transformation and the nature of politics in today's North Africa. Despite capitalist colonialization and post-colonial modernisation, one is nevertheless struck by the persistence of non-capitalist relations such as share-cropping, tribal ownership of land, and self-sufficiency in household production even as late as the 1970s, especially in Libya and Morocco.⁴²

The literature on the urban development of colonial cities intersects different methodological approaches e.g. the political, economic, social and so on. However, this thesis discusses topics considered most relevant to the research problem, such as the transformation from rural and pastoral life to urban life in the Mediterranean Ottoman ports, the significance of the segregation between the colonists and the colonised in the colonial cities, and whether different colonial powers had similar urban development policies. Caglar Keyder's work states that the main reason for the rise of Ottoman Mediterranean port cities was the nominal control by the central government in

⁴¹ Aballah Laroui, *History of the Maghreb*, (Princeton, 1982), pp. 26-287; new scholarship shows the existence of world systems and capitalist trading economies in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries; see K. N. Chaudhuri, *Trade and Civilization in the Indian Ocean: An Economic History from the Rise of Islam to 1750*, (Cambridge, 1985), p. 222; Janet L. Abu-lughod, *Before European Hegemony*, (New York, 1989), pp. 35-354, 372.

⁴² H. A. Benzabih, 'The Jabal al-Akhdar: A Half Century of Nomadic Livelihood', in E. G. H. Joffe and K. S. Malachlon, eds, *Social and Economic Development of Libya*, (Kent, 1982), p. 148; and Abdelai Doumou, 'The State and Popular Alliances: Theoretical Preliminaries in the Light of Moroccan Case', in Peter Anyang Nyong'oed., *Popular Struggles for Democracy in Africa*, (London, 1987), pp. 48-69.

Istanbul of the territory around them.⁴³ Such weakness, argues Keyder, led to the liberalisation of economic activities and elimination of restrictions.⁴⁴ An example of easing trade restrictions, he claims, is the Ottoman willingness to accept immigrants (from within and without the empire) into port cities and to grant them quasi expatriate status, with privileges such as special courts and consular protection.⁴⁵ Similarly, Ali Abdullatif Ahmida maintains that the Ottoman state in Cyrenaica could not exercise a *de jure* political authority over the tribes of the hinterland outside isolated coastal towns.⁴⁶ Nevertheless, there is ample evidence that the port of Benghazi was a major outlet for exporting Cyrenaican hinterland agricultural products and livestock, regardless of the Ottoman authorities' inability to collect taxes from the Cyrenaican tribes.⁴⁷ On the other hand, M. Sukru Hanioglu argues that a meaningful alliance with a major European power, however unpleasant, was necessary to secure the future of the empire.⁴⁸ Such concern induced the Ottoman government to sign the Anglo-Ottoman commercial treaty of 1838 that lowered tariffs and abolished monopolies and other trade restrictions.⁴⁹

⁴³ Caglar Keyder, 'Port-cities in the Belle Epoque' in *Cities of the Mediterranean from the Ottomans to the Present Day*, edit. Biray Kolluoglu and Meltem Toksoz, (New York, 2010), p. 15.

⁴⁴ Caglar Keyder, 'Port-cities in the Belle Epoque' in *Cities of the Mediterranean from the Ottomans to the Present Day*, p. 15.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Ali Abdullatif Ahmida, *The Making of Modern Libya: State Formation, Colonization, and Resistance, 1830-1932*, (Albany, 1994), p. 79.

⁴⁷ In 1908, the last year of Ottoman rule for which figures are available, the chief exports were sheep and goats (£180,000), camels (£54,000), cattle (£28,000), wool (£19,000), leather (£10,500), and salt (£10,700); see the Foreign Office, Historical Section, *Italian Libya*, (London, 1920), p. 52.

⁴⁸ Hanioglu, *A brief History of the Late Ottoman Empire*, p. 48.

⁴⁹ Ibid., p. 70.

Anthony D. King's considers Delhi as a case for studying colonial urban development and argues that colonial cities were, whether in Africa, Asia or middle America, laid out by the industrial rulers, not the pre-industrial ruled. The colonial city is most typically characterised by the physical segregation of its ethnic, social and cultural component groups, which resulted from the processes of colonialism.⁵⁰ Again, Janet L. Abu-Lughod, argues that the French instituted "caste cleavages" of social and spatial segregation in 1912; cleavages that were progressively transformed by the late 1940s into a 'complex but rigid system of class stratification along ethnic lines; and finally into a residential separation based upon class distinctions.⁵¹ With doubt as to the appropriate use of terms such as caste and Apartheid which have certain geographical connotations, this research confirms that colonial Benghazi was indeed constructed around the old Arab town, to be populated by Italian settlers in a form of segregated city and Italian-only farm settlements throughout Libya. Moreover, the Italian fascist government went a step further by instituting a form of segregation among the Italian settlers in colonial Benghazi per their social status. Krystyna von Henneberg states that by the late 1920s, Italian planners and administrators were building separate areas for "European" and "Libyan" residential and commercial use.⁵² There is an assumption that all colonial systems are essentially the same in intent and results; Studies such as Anthony D. King's

⁵⁰ Anthony D. King, *Colonial Urban Development: Culture, social Power and Environment*, (London, 2007), p. 32.

⁵¹ Janet L. Abu-Lughod, *Rabat: Urban Apartheid in Morocco*, (Princeton, 1980), p. 220.

⁵² Krystyna von Henneberg, 'Public Space and Public Face: Italian Fascist Urban Planning at Tripoli's Trade Fair' in Ruth Ben-Ghiat and Mia Fuller, eds, *Italian Colonialism*, (New York, 2005), p. 156.

suggest the significance of articulating such "subjective" factors with specific socio-historical contexts and of not regarding all colonial systems as alike.

Mia Fuller states that French and Italian architects in 1930s Algeria and Libya justified incorporating North African architectural elements into their designs—ostensibly borrowing from “inferior” colonised populations—by attributing “Mediterranean-ness” to these elements, thus casting their architectural appropriations as a continuation of a long history of shared traditions in a common geographical environment.⁵³ Fuller argues how understanding “Mediterraneanism” as a European invention, stemming directly from the colonial experience, broadens the understanding of Eurocentric analyses of the city in the Islamic world.⁵⁴ Similarly, Brian L. McLaren argues that the architectural movement towards adopting indigenous elements in Italian designs was shaped by the politics of the Italian Governor of Libya, Italo Balbo (1934- 1939), which called for Libya’s incorporation into Italy (the nineteenth province).⁵⁵ Two examples are the Uaddan Hotel in Tripoli, which suggest the indigenous architecture of the Libyan coast, and the ‘Ain al-Fras Hotel in Ghadams, which mimics the Saharan oasis architecture; both hotels were completed by 1935.⁵⁶ In Colonial Benghazi’s two urban development plans (1914 plan and 1930 plan), there was an attempt to adapt the Islamic-Arabic architectural style.

⁵³ Mia Fuller, ‘Mediterraneanism: French and Italian Architects’ Designs in 1930s North African Cities’, in *Cities of the Islamic World*, Salma K. Jayyusi et al, eds, Leiden, (Boston, 2008), p. 977.

⁵⁴ Ibid., pp. 977, 978.

⁵⁵ Brian L. McLaren, ‘The Architecture of Tourism in Italian Libya: The Creation of a Mediterranean Identity’, in Ruth Ben-Ghiat and Mia Fuller, eds, *Italian Colonialism*, (New York, 2005), p. 168.

⁵⁶ Ibid., pp. 170, 173.

In the former Ottoman provinces of the Middle East and North Africa, the archives of the *shari'a* court records represent a valuable source of information on the Ottoman and colonial periods. Those records and documents can be used to gauge the political, social, economic and cultural conditions in Middle Eastern and North African cities since they present to the historian raw material, without any preconceived ideas or predisposition. It is precisely this element which gives credibility to the data in those records, despite the nature of confidentiality and the limited scope of many cases in the records.

The use of *shari'a* court records in research did not begin recently but was not widely used until the last quarter of the twentieth century, when they became an important source for the study of the history of the Levant during Ottoman rule, thus forming a feature of the school of the historical study of the Levant since Assad Rustem studied parts of the *shari'a* court records in Syria almost half a century ago.⁵⁷ The first use of the *shari'a* court records was by Abdukarim Ghraiba, in a study of English merchants in Syria during the second half of the eighteenth century.⁵⁸ Aghnatus al-Khouri relied primarily on Tripoli's *shari'a* court records in Lebanon in his study about Tripoli's provincial governor, Mustafa Agha Berber.⁵⁹ Abdulkarim Rafeq became the most distinguished name in this field after he published a series of studies during the 1970s

⁵⁷ Farouq Hablus, 'Arshif al-Mahkema al-Shar'aia', *Majallet Tarikh al-Arab wa-l-Elim*, (Damascus, 1972); Abdukarim Ghraiba, 'al-Tejjar al-Enkliz fi Syria 1744-1794', Ph. D. dissertation, University of London (1950).

⁵⁸ Mohammad al-Arnaout, *Majallat al-Hayia*, vol. 17942, (Beirut, 2012), 19; Aghnatus al-Khouri's *Mustafa Agha Berber Hakem Iyalet Trabouls wa-Jiblla wa-Lathiqiyat al-Arab 1834-1867*, (Beirut, 1957).

⁵⁹ Ibid.

and 1980s which dealt with the economic and social history of Syria during the Ottoman period based on *shari'a* court records.⁶⁰ Rafeq studied the patterns of land and real estate ownership in Damascus, Aleppo and Hama in the last quarter of the sixteenth century.⁶¹ Hama's social, economic and administrative history in the late sixteenth century was also studied by Abdulwadoud Barghouth, who relied entirely on Hama's *shari'a* court records.⁶² James A. Reilly utilised Hama's *shari'a* court records to observe various events and incidents to represent a coherent social and economic study about the town over the course of two centuries; Reilly explained the social and economic relations among the town's inhabitants and their economic and social relations with Syrian cities, Istanbul and Arab provinces.⁶³

⁶⁰ Abdulkarim Rafeq, 'Mazaher Iqtiasadiyya wa-Ijtima'iyya fi Liwā Hama' (Economic and Social Aspects in Hama's Province), in *Dirassat Tarikhiyya*, University of Damascus, (Damascus, 1989); this study is based entirely on one record of the Hama *shari'a* court records, which contain cases for the year 1535-1536, totalling 1090 cases. The Hama *shari'a* court records were the second oldest *shari'a* court records after Jerusalem's *shari'a* court records and as such they were detailing cases in the early period of the Ottoman rule in Syria – the transition from the Mameluke to the Ottoman administration. Rafeq examined two types of cases: economic and social. The economic court cases dealt with bills of sale and debts and debt securities and from these cases the researcher distinguished different kinds of loans, the types of products available and their prices. The social cases included marriage and divorce cases and criminal cases. Rafeq could estimate that the population of Hama and its countryside in 1536 was between 26,000 and 27,000 based on marriage and divorce records. This method assumes that that all marriages were recorded in the Hama *shari'a* court records but not all marriages were recorded at the *shari'a* court since there was a percentage of marriage contracts conducted by the local shaykh; in this researcher's estimate, those marriage contracts could be over 25% of the total marriages.

⁶¹ Abdulkarim Rafeq, '*al-Fieat al-Ijtima'iyya wa-Milkiyat al-ard fi-Bilad al-Sham fi al-Ribā al-Akhir min al-Qern al-Sades Asher*' (Social Classes and Land Ownership in Syria during the Last Quarter of the Sixteenth Century), in *Dirasat Tarikhiyya*, University of Damascus, (Damascus, 1990); Rafeq examined land and real estate ownership in relation to social class and noticed that a higher percentage of the buyers were skilled craftsmen, whilst in second place came the notables (*āyan*). There were also a higher percentage of women as sellers of real estate. He noticed that the lease and sale prices of agricultural lands were higher than the lease and sale prices of real estate, most likely because of currency devaluation resulting in higher prices of agricultural products.

⁶² Abdulwadoud Barghouth, '*Tarikh Hama al-Ijtima'i wa-l-Iqtisadi wa-l-Idari Mustamedun min Sijil al-Mahkima al-Shar'iyya li-ām 1581*', in *al-Houliat al-Athriyya al-Arabiyya al-Souriyya*, (Damascus, 1966).

⁶³ James A. Reilly, *A Small Town in Syria: Ottoman Hama in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries*, (London, 2002); from the *shari'a* court records, Reilly analysed the social connections of the town's residents and their roles, especially the prominent religious families and the military elite in the social and economic sphere. Reilly also pointed to the role of that elite class in advocating against injustices and their stand against corrupt officials. In-

There is a lack of documented social, economic and cultural academic studies covering the Ottoman and Italian colonial periods for most of Libya's cities, including Benghazi. In addition, the studies available mostly focus on international agreements and diplomacy between the European powers throughout World War I (WWI) and World War II (WWII), or cover the history of Libya without including crucial details on the history of Libyan cities. In other research about the history of colonial cities in North Africa, there is a dearth of information about Ottoman and colonial Benghazi.⁶⁴ Of course, some understanding of the economic, social and cultural history of Benghazi can be achieved by a comparative study of other Ottoman and colonial cities in North Africa, but such understanding will fall short in many details. It is very noticeable when walking around Benghazi, Libya's second largest city, that it has two distinct and different parts – the old town and the modern city. The growth of the modern city around the old town of Benghazi is obvious and leads the scholar to ask some questions. Questions as to the rule of the Italian colonial government in the expansion of the city and its economy, and the general increase of the functional importance of the city of Benghazi during the Italian colonial period, identified a gap in the research and there is therefore an attempt to examine those questions through interpretative analysis of archival data and qualitative analysis of the historical documents and contemporary commentators' sources. The main research questions are:

addition, Reilly recognised that agricultural land was owned by the state up to the Ottoman reforms known as *tanzimat* in 1839, which allowed the sale of agricultural land to citizens.

⁶⁴ For instance, the scholarly publication *Cities of the Islamic World* has 1,494 pages but if one searches the place name index for Benghazi, the city is mentioned only once.

1. Was the continuation of political and social alliances based on kinship (tribal) and religion (the Sanusi Movement) predominant in the second half of the nineteenth-century Cyrenaica an indirect result of Italian colonialism?
2. Was establishing settlement colonies in Cyrenaica and Tripolitania the main goal of colonial Italy, regardless of its stated aim to bring modernity to the Libyans?
3. How did colonial Italy's decision to remove the nomadic and semi-nomadic tribes of Cyrenaica in the late 1920s and early 1930s and hold them in internment camps affect the growth of Benghazi into a major city?
4. Was the development of the Italian colonial farm settlements achieved at the expense of the native population's reduced resources, even though it constituted a net addition to the productive capacity of Cyrenaica?
5. What was the colonial government's perception of the goals of education? And what was the role of the colonial education in perpetuating colonial rule?

This topic was not an easy one as not many researchers followed the same line of inquiry as tried by this researcher. Therefore, the researcher was confronted with more challenges and unanswered questions, as the findings of this study may stimulate further research on the same topic or a related one. Nevertheless, the questions asked in this study have been answered in such a way that helped to shape up conclusions, and may shed some light on the contemporary situation and offer interpretation on current events.

Regardless of criticism in interpreting the colonial period in Libya, it founded, therefore, a general feeling of enmity towards European colonialism so that Libyan scholars concentrated their research on a narrative condemning Italian colonialism through

documents and oral interviews. Therefore, there was an investigative orientation of Libyan historical studies about the colonial period 1911-1942 which overtook the reporting of past events to give a realistic dimension to the historical event that did not limit it to its pure historical framework, but tried to embody its outcome; transforming historical events to applicable demands for compensation from Italy. Libyan scholars have largely adopted this study model within an anti-forgetfulness campaign that made compensation a minimum demand to settle Italian-Libyan disagreements.

An issue all researchers face in writing a methodology for this period is the lack of official colonial reports and the absence of official Libyan archives. Accordingly, researchers went to groups directly affected by colonial injustice to obtain missing information through oral interviews, historical investigations, and private family documents. The important question in this case is whether the colonial legacy in Libya can be studied, even if focused on Italian atrocities during the Libyan insurgency, by relying, at times, on irresponsible points of view that have a great deal of subjectivity, exaggeration, and memory lapses, while not subject to known academic standards. All these issues made the collection of research material, and choosing a methodology to remain impartial, a difficult task.

The materials gathered and employed in this research varied substantially. This researcher, however, relied on primary and secondary Libyan history sources written by both Italian and Libyan scholars. Additionally, the researcher consulted biographies and memoirs of colonial Italian officials. Moreover, this research is enriched by the study of documents in the two Libyan official archives and Benghazi's *shari'a* court records. The thesis is a historical study structured in chronological order and concentrating on

published historian sources and archival work. The nature of this research dictated the choice of methodologies used in answering key questions: qualitative analysis and interpretive archival study. The first methodology of this research was qualitative analysis of historic literature from both the colonial period and the post-colonial period. The researcher relied on the chronological approach in handling materials by looking at Italy's colonial policies in the two distinctive colonial periods: the liberal period 1911-1922, and the fascist period 1922-1942. This division into two periods was supported by a political seismic event –the change at the metropole from a democratic Italy to totalitarian fascist Italy. At the same time, the researcher subjected all data to a critical technique to sift out the facts by comparing dates and data from opposing sources, usually Libyan sources against Italian to highlight similarities as well as differences. The task required an analytical approach that helped enormously in scrutinising narrative, discourse, and content.

Archival work, i.e. collecting data from different archives, was used in this study. Data is only selected from those documents that are original and, as far as possible, reliable. An important part was to verify or dismiss earlier historical accounts by reviewing newly discovered sources that have been recently released, comparing primary with existing secondary sources. Thus, this thesis was archive-based, relying heavily on Mahkamit Shamal Benghazi, Sijil al-Mahkama al-Shar'ia (MSBSM) Benghazi's *shari'a* court records, Dar al-Mahfuzat al-Tarikhiyya (DMT) Tripoli's Libyan archives, and Markaz Dirasat al-Jihad al-Libi (MDJL) Tripoli's Centre for Libyan Studies, all of which threw light on important issues looked at in this study.

Understanding came through the systematic interpretation of existing available documents and by following the chronology of changes that happened throughout the two colonial periods under study. Data collection for this study was centred on Mahkamit Shamal Benghazi (Benghazi's Northern Court), which housed Benghazi's *shari'a* court records during the late Ottoman and colonial periods; the Official Libyan Archives in Tripoli (DMT), which holds both Ottoman and Italian documents; and the al-Jihad Centre for Libyan Studies in Tripoli (MDJL). Markaz Dirasat al-Jihad al-Libi (MDJL) was established in 1977 by a resolution of the General Peoples Committee (the Council of Ministers), with the goal to conduct colonial period studies and collect and house pertinent documents.⁶⁵

Benghazi's *shari'a* court records are stored in two locations: in the court of north Benghazi and in the basement of the court of south Benghazi.⁶⁶ The researcher began studying and classifying the archives of Benghazi's *shari'a* court in 1999, while researching a master's thesis on the social history of Benghazi.⁶⁷ The records were classified by subject and type of cases, in addition to separate indices listing the most prominent cases and information in the record to best utilise the information contained

⁶⁵ Salahuldeen Hassen al-Souri, 'Markaz Jihad al-Libyeen lel- Dirasat al-Tarikhiyya', *A 'emal al-Nadoua al-'Aelmiyya al-Oula*, (Algiers, 2008), pp. 22-30.

⁶⁶ The records cover the period between 1902 and 1952. They are handwritten in grammatically good Arabic in *naskh* script and in poor condition, where some pages are damaged and therefore unreadable. The court cases were not written in individual records, but rather chronologically, in one lined book like a bookkeeper's notebook. The notebooks vary in size between 40 x 13 cm to 43 x 15 cm and they vary in the number of pages – the smaller record contains 125 pages and the larger has 600 pages.

⁶⁷ Aesha M. Muhammad Suliaman, 'al-Awḍā al-Ijtimā'iyya fi madinat Benghazi min khilal sijilat al-Mahkama al-Shari'a 1911-1942' (Social Conditions in Benghazi through the Study of *Shari'a* Court Records 1911-1942), Unpublished MA Thesis, University of Benghazi (2003); Suliaman was the first researcher to study and classify Benghazi's *shari'a* court records.

in the documents. Benghazi's *shari'a* court records could be looked at as one continuous unit which cannot be separated per the chronological order of court cases. In the four remaining Ottoman-period records, which are in a poor condition, there was very little information obtained from them, such as judges' appointments, but they were invaluable, especially in determining whether there were any legal changes between the Ottoman and Italian colonial periods.

In the Italian colonial period 1911-1942, the whole documents were analysed and the information obtained classified per the judge's name, the case's date, the disputants' names, the reasons for the issue, and the witnesses' names, each in a separate notebook. Then the cases were classified per the text; if the case was related to real estate, it was written down in the real estate notebook, whether sale, lease, or through the division of inherited property. The same method of classification was applied to other types of cases such as agricultural land, types of produce, methods of farming and cases about farm animals; special care was taken to note repeated cases for the same family, persons, street or district.

Islamic endowment (*waqf*) cases take a prominent position in the records since the *shari'a* court judge has the prime administrative authority over those religious endowments and, also, because of the large number of endowed properties in the city. The *shari'a* court judge is responsible for appointing managers for the endowed properties, in addition to appointing other staff in mosques, *zawiyas* and *madrasas*. The *shari'a* court judge was the only person authorised to permit renovations, launch dispositions, set alternatives or divide the different endowed properties between the shareholders. Therefore, the *shari'a* court records provide the researchers with a

detailed picture of the development of the endowments' institutions. It is possible for researchers to form an idea about the expansion of the endowments over time and make comparisons between public and private properties. By these comparisons, the researcher can estimate the economic conditions and the documents from the court records that describe beneficiaries' procedures for the endowed properties, and facilitate researchers to derive a better estimate of social and economic development in the city of Benghazi during the Italian colonial period.⁶⁸ Other court documents uncover the administrative confiscation by the Italian colonial government of some endowed properties for public good. It is also possible to determine the general framework of economic life in Benghazi by using the endowment records of real estate and land, i.e. markets, shops, farms, homes and cafes. In addition, the endowment documents reveal some of the spiritual and cultural aspects of the city through lists of mosques and *madrasas* and the list of the names of religious scholars (*fuqahā*), Qur'an readers and muezzins.

Despite the many advantages that characterise Benghazi's *shari'a* court records, they suffer from some technical difficulties. Perhaps the greatest deterrent to a researcher is the gaps in the records because of loss or damage. The absence of indices for the total of the cases presented a special challenge for the researcher since the incidences and events of the cases could not be followed systematically and with precision. The court documents also pose another challenge in that, since the ink used was made of burned wool, some of the text had faded. In addition, there is a problem of sequence since many

⁶⁸ Beneficiaries' procedures such as accommodating between the income of the beneficiary and the method of utilising the property, diversifying income resources and the annual yield resulting from the use of the property.

of the pages were not numbered and the cases were listed by the disputants' names. Moreover, the researcher had to expunge individuals' names out of some of the cases due to custom and the cultural sensitivity of the descendants of those mentioned in the court records, especially in cases dealing with marital and property disputes. Further, a researcher must be careful since some of the cases lack veracity, as it is known some of the cases are the result of disagreements between parties, with one of the parties trying to win through falsification and perjury. Finally, the language used in some of the cases is vague and does not explain in detail the reasons for the judgement.

The numerous resources used in this study include literature about the late Ottoman period in Libya and the rise of the Sanusi movement. At the time of the Italian landings in 1911, Tripolitania and Cyrenaica were nominally a part of the Ottoman Empire. Ottoman rule, however, had never been very effective and, even after the fall of the hereditary Qaramanli in 1835; Istanbul was unable to establish any real authority beyond the city of Tripoli and a few coastal towns. Muhammad Mustafa Bazama's *Tarikh Barqa fil Ahd al-Uthmanial al-Thani (The History of Cyrenaica in the Second Ottoman Era)*, Anthony J. Cachia's *Libya under the Second Ottoman Occupation: 1835-1911*, and Francesco Coro's *Libya Athn'a al-Ahd al-Uthmani al-Thani (Libya during the Second Ottoman Era)* cover this period of the nation's history, while Cyrenaica's and Benghazi's history in the earlier Qaramanli period is considered in Bazama's other works, *Tarikh Barqa fil Ahd al-Qaramanli (The History of Cyrenaica in the Qaramanli Era)* and *Benghazi Aber al-Tarikh (Benghazi through History)*.⁶⁹

⁶⁹ Muhammad Mustafa Bazama, *Tarikh Barqa fil Ahd al-Uthmanial al-Thani (The History of Cyrenaica in the Second Ottoman Era)*, (Beirut, 1994); Anthony J. Cachia, *Libya under the Second Ottoman Occupation: 1835-1911*, (Tripoli, 1945); Francesco Coro, *Libya Athn'a al-Ahd al-Uthmani al-Thani (Libya during the Second Ottoman Era)*,

From the middle of the nineteenth century, however, the real control and administration of the interior was exercised by the growing religious movement of the Sanusiyya. By the time of the Italian occupation, it was the Sanusiyya who had become the effective authority among the nomadic and semi-nomadic tribes of Cyrenaica and Fezzan. It was in the name of the order that organised resistance was mustered in 1912, and it was under the banner of the Sanusi that the long struggle against the Italians continued until 1932. Again, it was under the Sanusi family that the country had been unified and the leader of the Sanusi movement had been chosen as the first ruler of the independent state in 1951. Modern history and evolution of the new state of Libya is, therefore, closely associated with this religious movement. E. E. Evans-Pritchard presents an excellent history of the Sanusi from the founding of the first lodge in Cyrenaica in 1843, through to the defeat of the Italians in 1943.⁷⁰ The long-accepted standard works chronicling the Sanusi movement, by Mohammad Fouad Shukri's *al-Sanusiyya deen wa-doula (al-Sanusiyya: Religion and State)* and Mohamed al-Taib al-Ashehab's *Berga al-Arabia Ames wa al-Youm (Arab Cyrenaica Yesterday and Today)* are useful references on individual members of the Sanusi family, peace negotiations with the British and the Italians during WWI, and on the accounts of actual military engagements from 1911 to 1931.⁷¹

-tr. Khalifa al-Tallisi, (Tripoli, 1984); M. Bazama, *Benghazi 'Aber al-Tarikh (Benghazi through History)*, Benghazi, 1968; M. Bazama, *Tarikh Barqa fil 'Ahd al- Qaramanli (The History of Cyrenaica in the Qaramanli Era)*, (Beirut, 1994).

⁷⁰ E. E. Evans-Pritchard, *al-Sanusioun fi Berga (The Sanusi of Cyrenaica)*, tr. Omar al-Dirawi Buhajela, (Beirut, 1969).

⁷¹ Mohammad Fouad Shukri, *al-Sanusiyya deen wa-doula (al-Sanusiyya: Religion and State)*, (Cairo, 1948); Mohamed al-Taib al-Ashehab, *Berga al-Arabia Ames wa al-Youm (Arab Cyrenaica Yesterday and Today)*, (Cairo, 1947).

The diplomatic history of Italy's invasion of Libya in 1911 and the subsequent one-year war with the Ottomans through to the Treaty of Lausanne is written by Abdumensif Hafed al-Bori in *al-Ghazew al-Italai li Libya: Dirassa fi al-Elaqat al-Dewliya (The Italian Invasion of Libya: A Study in International Relations)*, and Italy's prime minister at the time, Giovanni Giolitti, in his memoirs, *Modhkirat Giolitti (Memorie della Mia Vita)*.⁷² The accounts of military engagements are in texts by Khalifa al-Tallisi, *M'ujam Ma'arek al-Jihad fi Libya 1911-1931 (Dictionary of Resistance Battles in Libya 1911-1931)*; Francesco Malgeri, *al-Herb al-Libiya (The Libyan War)*; and Pallo Maltese, *Libya: Arḍ al-Mi'ad (Libya: the Promised Land)*.⁷³

Italian accounts of the military engagements and punitive actions against Cyrenaica's population from 1923 to 1931 are contained in the memoirs of the Italian general and governor, Rodolfo Graziani, *Barqa al-Hadia' (Cirenaica Pacificata)*, and the Sanusi historians Shukri and al-Ashehab.⁷⁴ Colonial history during the fascist period is by Angelo Del Boca, *Gli Italiani in Libia*, and Cyrenaica's colonial governor, Attilio Teruzzi, *Berga al-Khedr'a (Green Cyrenaica)*.⁷⁵

⁷² Abdumensif Hafed al-Bori, *al-Ghazew al-Italai li Libya: Dirassa fi al-Elaqat al-Dewliya (The Italian Invasion of Libya: A Study in International Relations)*, (Cairo, 1983); Giovanni Giolitti, *Modhkirat Giolitti*, tr. Khalifa al-Tallisi, (Tripoli, 1986); His first term as prime minister of Italy was in 1892 and his last term was in 1920-1921.

⁷³ Khalifa al-Tallisi, *M'ujam Ma'arek al-Jihad fi Libya 1911-1931 (Dictionary of Resistance Battles in Libya 1911-1931)*, (Beirut, 1973); Francesco Malgeri, *al-Herb al-Libiya (The Libyan War)*, tr. Wahbi al-Bori, (Tripoli, 1978); Pallo Maltese, *Libya: Arḍ al-Mi'ad (Libya: The Promised Land)*, tr. Abdurahman al-Aejjalli, (Tripoli, 1992).

⁷⁴ Rodolfo Graziani, *Barqa al-Hadia' (Cirenaica Pacificata)*, tr. Ibrahim Salem Ben 'amer, (Misurata, 1998); see footnote no. 67.

⁷⁵ Angelo Del Boca, *Gli Italiani in Libia*, (Roma, 1986); Attilio Teruzzi, *Berga al-Khedr'a (Green Cyrenaica)*, tr. Khalifa al-Tallisi, (Tripoli, 1991).

Among the studies on the sociological aspects of Arab Libya are two works by Colonel Enrico de Agostini, *Sukkan Libya (Tarabulus al-Gharb) (La popolazione della Tripolitania)*, and *Sukkan Libya (Barqa) (La popolazione della Cirenaica)*.⁷⁶ These volumes are the first Italian attempt at a census of the native population and contain detailed figures on the tribes and their location. Although the data is somewhat speculative, de Agostini's work has remained a classic and has been heavily drawn upon by subsequent writers. On the social history of colonial Benghazi, Wahbi Ahmed al-Bori's *Benghazi fi fatret al-Ihtilal al-Itali (Benghazi during the Period of Italian Occupation)*, and *Mojtam'a Madinat Benghazi fi al-Nisf al-Awal min al-Qarn al-Eshrin* (Benghazi's Society in First Half of the Twentieth Century) contain very useful information about Benghazi, since it was written by an eyewitness; the writer was the head of the Royal Protocol in independent Libya and later Minister of Justice.⁷⁷ Chia-Lin Pan's 'The Population of Libya' in *Population Studies* described the demographic setting in which Italy's colonisation project was carried out, and tried to understand possible implications for the future economic and demographic development of Libya.⁷⁸

Leonard Appleton's study, *Siyasat al-T'alim al-Italiyya Iza' al-Arab al-Libyeen 1911-1922 (The Italian Education Policy towards Libyan Arabs, 1911-1922)* relied heavily on the Italian authorities' archives as a primary source of data and, although a large part of his data was precise and accurate, there were inaccurate analyses of data and superficial

⁷⁶ Enrico de Agostini, *Sukkan Libya (Barqa) (The Inhabitants of Libya (Cyrenaica))*, tr. Ibrahim Al Mehdawi, (Benghazi, 1988); Enrico de Agostini, *Sukkan Libya (Tarabulus al-Gharb)*, tr. Khalifa al-Tallisi, (Tripoli, 1978).

⁷⁷ Wahbi Ahmed al-Bori, *Benghazi fi fatret al-Ihtilal al-Itali (Benghazi during the Period of Italian Occupation)*, (Tripoli, 2008); _____, *Mojtam'a Madinat Benghazi fi al-Nisf al-Awal min al-Qarn al-Eshrin* (Benghazi's Society in First Half of the Twentieth Century), Majlis al-Thaqafa al-'Aem, (Sirte, 1983).

⁷⁸ Chia-Lin Pan, 'The Population of Libya', *Population Studies*, Vol. 3, No. 1, June 1949.

interpretation.⁷⁹ The work by Roland De Marco, *Talyanett al-Afariqa: Ta 'alem al-Hokuma al-Mahaliya fi al-Must 'amarat al-Italiya 1890-1937*, about education in the Italian colonies, was a valuable source on education during the early 1930s.⁸⁰

Thirty-one issues of Benghazi's newspaper, *Berid Barca*, covered local news during the period from 1925 to 1935, including items such as prices of goods, commercial activities, development projects inside the city and the Italian political arrangements for the State of Cyrenaica, e.g. the method of appointing judges and clerks in Benghazi's *shari'a* court and compensation for land confiscated by the Italian authorities. This newspaper also published commercial advertisements and obituaries. In addition, *Berid Barca* contained the names of the influential families, schools' headmasters and districts' imams in Benghazi. The newspaper reported on Libyan and Italian legal issues such as the happenings in the Italian government, Italian parliamentary news, and border agreements with Egypt and Sudan. The *Regno D'Italia Gazzetta Ufficiale* (Italian Government Official Gazette), *Governo Della Cirenaica Bollettino Ufficiale* (Cyrenaica Government Official Gazette), *Governo della Tripolitania Bollettino Ufficiale* (Tripolitania Government Official Gazette), and *Governo della Libia Bollettino Ufficiale*, (Italian Colonial Government in Libya Official Gazette) published laws, decrees and regulations issued by the Italian government and the colonial Italian government in Libya.

⁷⁹ Leonard Appleton, *Siyasat al-Ta 'alem al-Itali nahu al-Libieen al-Arab 1911-1922* (The Italian Education Policy towards Libyan Arabs), tr. Abdulqader al-Muhishi, (Tripoli, 1999).

⁸⁰ Roland De Marco, *Talyanett al-Afariqa: Ta 'alem al-Hokuma al-Mahaliya fi al-Must 'amarat al-Italiya 1890-1937* (The Italianisation of Africans: Local Government Education in the Italian Colonies), tr. Abdulqader al-Muhishi, (Tripoli, 1988).

The archives used in this study are: Benghazi's *shari'a* court records (Mahkamit Shamal Benghazi), Sijil al-Mahkama al-Shar'aia (MSBSM), Tripoli's Libyan archives (Dar al-Mahfuzat al-Tarikhiyya [DMT]), Tripoli's Centre for Libyan Studies (Markaz Dirasat al-Jihad al-Libi [MDJL]), Rome's Ministero dell'Africa Italiana, Archivio Segreto (MAI-AS).

There were challenges in this study which the researcher addresses elsewhere, and the work yielded results that provided answers to key research questions which contribute to the overall body of knowledge on the Italian occupation of Libya. One of those results was that the re-establishment of the tribal alliance in the inland areas, led by the Sanusi religious movement which had effective control until 1932, was an unintended consequence of Italian colonisation. This religious-led tribal alliance had a major role in creating an independent Libyan state in the years following WWII. Thus, the nomadic and semi-nomadic tribes of Cyrenaica had a role as principal contributors to social transformation, and not as rebellious and powerless tribes. The time Italy had complete control of the inland areas from 1932 until 1942 was too short to affect that social dynamic; therefore, the continuation of political and social alliances based on kinship (tribal) and religion (the Sanusi movement) was an indirect result of Italian colonialism. Another finding was that colonial Italy's decision to remove the nomadic and semi-nomadic tribes of Cyrenaica in the late 1920s and early 1930s and hold them in internment camps affected the growth of Benghazi into a major city, since the colonial government would not allow internees to return to their former areas after their release in 1933. Accordingly, a large number settled in Benghazi, causing a significant increase in the city's population.

This study begins with a review of the political conditions in Libya during the period 1911-1942 and a discussion of changes in political structure after the Italian colonisation, how these changes were affected by internal and international conditions, and how the population was impacted by the political conditions. The second chapter explores urban development and the urban growth of colonial Benghazi, and their impact on dividing the city into districts. In addition, it details changes in those districts that transitioned the city gradually to what it is now. The third chapter is divided into three sections: the first section assesses social conditions during the last decades of the Ottoman rule. In the second section, the social impact of Italian colonisation on Cyrenaica's population in the pre-fascist period 1911-1922 is considered, and the third section presents an analysis of the social impact of Italian colonisation on Cyrenaica's population in the fascist period 1922-1942. The focus of the fourth chapter is on the impact of Italian colonisation on Benghazi's economy and, after a brief section about Benghazi's economy in the late Ottoman period, the chapter goes on to discuss the impact of Italian colonisation on Benghazi's economy in both the pre-fascist period (1911-1922), and the fascist period (1922-1942). The fifth chapter seeks to explain Italian colonial educational policies and the extent to which they were implemented. The chapter is divided into three parts: education in Benghazi during the Ottoman period; Italian educational policy in Benghazi in the pre-fascist period 1911-1922; and the impact of Italian colonisation on Benghazi's cultural life in the fascist period 1922-1942.

Finally, the subject of this research, which is an inquiry into Italian colonial policies in Libya, falls into the field of the European colonisation of North Africa and the urban history of post-Ottoman cities. It is hoped this research will add to the literature in those fields.

Chapter 1

Political conditions in Libya during the Italian colonisation

This chapter, which is divided into three sections, reviews the political conditions in Libya during the period 1911-1942 and discusses the changes in political structure after the Italian colonisation, how these changes were affected by internal and international conditions, and how the population was impacted by the political conditions.

In the first section, the political conditions during the second half of the nineteenth century are reviewed. This preview aims to introduce the transitional political period from the late Ottoman period to the Italian colonial period, a period differing completely from the Ottoman regime. An understanding of the political changes that occurred in the country can be reached through this contrast. In the second section, the political situations in Libya during the first colonial period 1911-1922 is discussed, including the changes which took place during those years and how much internal events contributed to those changes. The final section analyses the political changes that occurred in Libya during the second colonial period 1922-1942 and the causes and objectives of those political changes.

Political conditions in Libya during the late nineteenth century

Libya, similar to other Ottoman provinces, did not undergo any administrative development until the rule of Abdul Hamid II (1876-1909), when great efforts were made to improve and develop the administrative organs in the Ottoman Empire.¹ The

¹ The main reason behind the Ottoman reforms was pressure and encouragement from European superpowers in the early nineteenth century to improve all administrative and judicial systems in the Ottoman Empire to conform to the new concepts and systems of Western countries. Although some of the European countries' aim was to protect their-

main aim of the reforms was to support the direct influence of the central government all over the Ottoman Empire, including Tripolitania and Cyrenaica; limit the influence of governors; and allow tribal shaykhs and notables to help, even symbolically, the appointed governors in managing the local affairs.² Due to the political instability in Libya, however, these reforms did not manifest until the late nineteenth century. Nine Ottoman *wali* (governors) ruled *Tarabulus al-Gharb* (Tripolitania) province in succession from 1882 to 1911.³ Political instability not only affected the political conditions in Libya, but also badly affected its economic and social conditions.⁴

The administrative reforms had a direct impact on the reconstruction of Libya's administration. Since 1864, the Ottoman Authority enacted administrative reform in Tripolitania and Cyrenaica, with a name change of the province of Tripoli from *Eyalet* to *Wilayat* and new councils were established to manage the municipality and judiciary

-citizens, Britain wanted a counterbalance to Russian power by having a strong Ottoman state. The Russian navy sought to impose control over the Bosphorus Strait so it could move freely to the Mediterranean Sea, and thus compete with Britain for superiority in the East. Consequently, the Ottoman Empire adopted a set of reforms released in two edicts issued by the Sultan. The edict of *Gülhane Hatt Şerif* was issued in November 1839 at the behest of Mustafa Reşid, the Minister of Foreign Affairs at the time. It promised that the reforms would include improvements in taxation, administrative, and conscription systems. It also guaranteed safety and protection to all Ottoman residents and their properties. In February 1856, and after the Crimean War, a second reform edict called the *Hatt Hümayûnu* was issued to affirm the proclamation of *Gülhane Hatt Şerif*. It promised equality for all sects and ethnicities in the Ottoman Empire, especially in respect of jobs and conscription. It also called for the need to improve economic conditions, to regulate the penal laws and establish the mixed tribunal; for more details, see George Young, *Corps de Ottoman*, (Oxford, 1905), Vol. I, p. 36.

² Roderic H. Davison, *Reform in the Ottoman Empire 1856-1876*, (New Jersey, 1963), p. 46.

³ Abdumensif Hafeed al-Bori, *al-Ghazew al-Italai li Libya: Dirassa fi al-Elaqat al-Dewliya (The Italian Invasion of Libya: A Study in International Relations)*, (Cairo, 1983), p. 93; The Ottoman province of *Traboulus al-Gharb* (Tripolitania) included the geographic area between Egypt and Tunisia including Cyrenaica, which the Ottomans called the province of Benghazi.

⁴ Mahmoud Naji, *Tarikh Traboulus al-Gharb* (History of Tripolitania), tr. Abdulsalam Adham and Mohammed al-Astta, (Tripoli, 1970), p. 178; the Nafusa Mountain revolt in Tripolitania (1835-1858) was led by Ghuma al-Mahmudi, who challenged the Ottoman Empire expansion in those areas.

affairs.⁵ In 1843, the Ottomans established the province of Cyrenaica with Benghazi as its capital, both which were directly managed by Istanbul. Cyrenaica's military, post, customs, and judiciary affairs remained under the administration of Tripoli until 1879, when it became directly under the management of the central government in Istanbul.⁶ It had *qaimaqams* (districts) such as Derna, al-Marj, Jaleo, Shahat, Tobruk and Jaghbub. *Mudirias* (sub districts) such as Sulouq, Qaminis, Ajdabia, Toukra, Bersis, Jardas, and Sulonta were under the *qaimaqams*.⁷ The main *liwas* were divided into smaller and smaller units, and thus each *liwa* had many *qaza*.⁸

Ottoman direct rule of Cyrenaica was mainly due to the rise of the al-Sanusiyya religious movement, a fraternity that in a few years brought about sufficient unity among the tribes of Cyrenaica to make them a credible force.⁹ It established a primitive administrative system through *zawayas* (centres), each under a shaykh who was versed in the tenets of Islam and the movement. In addition to giving religious instructions, the shaykh also settled the disputes of tribes and individuals with a success that the

⁵ DMT (Libyan Historical Archives), wathiqā no. 278, malef 251-300, *manshour bi khosous taghier isem eyaletTarabouls illa wilaya* (a document regarding the name change of eyalet Tripoli to wilayat Tripoli), 2 October 1865, Tripoli; many amendments to the administrative structure were implemented and the province was divided into multiple main administrative areas called *liwa*; Cyrenaica is the eastern Libyan region from the Gulf of Sidra to the Egyptian border, including the oases of Jaleo, Ujilla, Jaghboub, and Kufra; see Enrico Agostini, *Sukkan Libya (Barqa)*, p. 12; the administrative border for Tripolitania reached from Sirte to the Tunisian border, and its southern border ended at Ghadmes.

⁶ Ettore Rossi, *Libya min al-Fateh al-Arabi hata 1911 (Libya from the Arab Conquest until 1911)*, tr. Khalifa al-Telissi, (Beirut, 1969), pp. 209-211.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ M. A. Ubicini, *Letters on Turkey*, tr. Lady Easthope, (New York, 1973), p. 45; Anthony J. Cachia, *Libya under the Second Ottoman Occupation 1835-1911*, (Tripoli, 1945), pp. 76-78.

⁹ Mohammad Fouad Shukri, *al-Sanusiyya deen wa-doula (al-Sanusiyya: Religion and State)*, (Cairo, 1948), p. 9. Mohammad Ali al-Sanusi (1787-1859), the founder of this movement, was a native of Algeria who settled in Cyrenaica in about 1851.

Ottoman Turks could not achieve. Moreover, he collected customary dues for the support of his *zawia* (centre) and remitted the balance to the head of the movement. It was not long, therefore, before al-Sanusi had created a modest state within a state; indeed, he had selected Cyrenaica for his activities because there the Ottoman Empire was at its weakest. The al-Sanusi system of administration was loose, relying mainly on the effective application of the nomads' customary law, coupled with Islamic *shari'a* law in matters of personal status.¹⁰

The noteworthy phenomenon that accompanied these key administrative changes in Libya was the establishment of municipal, judiciary and administrative councils. The Ottoman law of provincial administration in 1864 ushered in a series of administrative reorganisation and reform in the provinces of Tripoli and Cyrenaica during the tenure of Governor Mahmud Nadhim Pasha.¹¹ Criminal and civil courts were established, separating for the first time the duties of judges and administrators. Under the new administrative system, there were four districts in Tripolitania: Tripoli, Khoms, Yaffran, Murzug while Cyrenaica remained a province ruled directly from Istanbul. Further adjustments in the administrative system continued; by 1884, there were ten municipalities, each with *ra'is al-baladiyya* (mayor) and an advisory municipal council charged with overseeing public works. In Cyrenaica, the growing importance of village

¹⁰ Mohammad Fouad Shukri, *al-Sanusiyya deen wa-doula*, p. 29; the first Sanusi *zawia* was established in al-Bayda 200 km east of Benghazi in 1842. Strict in matters of religion, the founder and his followers discouraged local additions to orthodox Islam, forbidding the worship of saints and preaching a return to observance of the fundamentals of orthodoxy. The order grew quickly in Cyrenaica and the Sahara, promoting sedentarisation, trade, and education.

¹¹ Tahir Ahmad al-Zawi, *Wulat Tarabulus al-Gharb min Bidayat al-Fath al-Arabi ila Nihayat al-Had al-Turki (The Governors of Tripoli from the Beginning of the Arab Conquest to the End of the Turkish Era)*, (Beirut, 1970), p. 258. Mahmud Nadhim Pasha was governor of Tripoli from 1860 to 1867 and later became the Grand Wazir in Istanbul.

and urban settlements was evident in the changing names of the administrative units. At the outset of the administrative reorganisation, the *qaza* (sub-districts governed by the *qaimaqams*) were known by the names of the tribes; the easternmost *qaza* for example, was called 'Ibaydat. By the end of the century, however, this sub-district, like the others, had come to be known by the name of the town within its confines, Derna.¹²

The Main Administrative council was established in Tripoli and was called *Idare Meclise*. Other councils of the same kind were established in all provincial level; *liwa* and *qaza*.¹³ Each council was made up of senior officials, judges, religious figures, and elected local members: the chief judge of the *shari'a* court, the Secretary of the *vilayet*, Director of *defter-i hakanî müdürü* (real estate records), *muhasebeci* (Chief financial officer), the secretary of the council, mufti and the elected members.¹⁴ The *wali* (governor) or his deputy chaired the main council's meetings.¹⁵ The council of the *liwa*, which was governed by the *Mutasariff* (administrative officer) or his deputy and usually was composed of the *shari'a* court judge or the mufti of the *liwa*, the director of real estate records, chief financial officer, secretary of the council and the elected members.¹⁶

¹² Roderic Davison, *Reform in the Ottoman Empire, 1856-1876*, p. 160.

¹³ DMT, wathika no. 319, malef no. 301-350, *taqrier min majlis idaret liwa Fezzan illa al-Wali fi Trabouls* (Report of the Administrative Council of liwa Fezzan to the Governor at Tripoli), 14 March 1873; wathika no. 199, malef no. 186-250, *khitab min majlis idaret qaza Festao illa Mutassaref liwa al-Jabel* (Letter from the administrative council of liwa Festao to the administrative officer of liwa al-Jabel), 24 June 1899; wathika no. 851, malef no. 851-900, *taqrier min majlis idaret al-wilayat illa nizaert al-maliya bi Istanbul* (Report of the Administrative Council of the Province to Financial Control in Istanbul), 14 March 1901.

¹⁴ DMT, wathika no. 803, malef no. 801-850, *qarar majlis idaret al-wilayat bi fateh frou 'e lil-masrif al-zira 'ai fi ba 'ad al-manateq al-dakhliya* (the province administrative council decision to open agricultural bank's branches in the interior areas), 22 August 1907.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ DMT, wathika no. 874, malef no. 852-900, *aridha min majlis idaret liwa Benghazi illa al-wali fi Tarabouls* (A letter from the administrative council of Benghazi's liwa to the Governor in Tripoli), 6 February 1874.

Similarly, the judicial councils consisted of the *shari'a* court judge (or the mufti), chief financial officer, the secretary, judicial officials and elected members.¹⁷ The *qaimaqam* (deputy administrative officer) or his assistant chaired their meetings.¹⁸ The administrative councils' function was studying and handling all management and economic issues such as taxes, finance, public buildings, education, municipalities, the census, and arbitration in civil and personnel disputes, and so on.¹⁹ Another step taken by the Ottomans was involving the tribal leaders in the new administrative system; some tribal shaykhs were trained, qualified and then appointed in high-level positions in the *qaza* and *nahiya* (village clusters). For example, Abubakr Hadouth al-Bar'asi was appointed *mudir* (director) of Sulonta in 1871; Ali pasha al-'Ubaidi was appointed *mutasariff* in Benghazi and then as *qaimaqam* of al-Merj.²⁰ Some of the Ottoman reforms reached Benghazi relatively late. It was only in 1902, for instance, when

¹⁷ DMT, malef mukhtalif al-mawade'a (dossier of different subjects), *taqerir mali min majlis qudat al-Zawia illa maqar al-wilayat* (Report of the Judicial Council of al-Zawia to the Provincial Headquarters), 30 November 1870; judges in Benghazi were Turks and appointed directly from Istanbul. The native citizens of the Benghazi were deprived from adequate education that would qualify them for the position of a judge. Judges at the time needed to study in a primary school, go to a high-level school and get twelve licences through twelve grades of studying. Judges had to study the Qur'an, Hadith, Jurisprudence, Arabic Language, History, Geography, Mathematics and Ottoman Law. A person who did not study all the required subjects might be appointed a schoolteacher, a small-town mufti or a judge's assistant; but not a judge. The judiciary, represented by judges, was perceived as the foremost authority, respected by the ruler and the ruled and could not be violated by anyone. The last Ottoman judge in Benghazi was Mohamed Moneeb; for more see, Udai Mu'aqel, *al-Qadha fi bilad al-Sham fi nihayat al-usur al-wasiyyat* (Judiciary in the Levant during the end of the Middle Ages), (Damascus, 2008), p. 25; SMSMSB1902-1910, no. 5, p. 22.

¹⁸ DMT, malef mukhtalif al-mawade'a (dossier of different subjects), *taqerir mali min majlis qudat al-Zawia illa maqar al-wilayat*.

¹⁹ DMT, wathiqat no. 822-851 or see *fahres Abdulsalam Adhim*, wathiqat no. 45-50-60-100-124 (Abdulsalam Adhim's index contains some names of the Ottoman government officials and some senior figures of the country copied from the documents).

²⁰ DMT, *fahres Abdulsalam Adhim*.

residents of Benghazi participated in forming the administrative council in the city.²¹ In 1908, Ahmed Sa'ed al-Jehani, one of Benghazi's notables, was appointed mayor of Benghazi, a position that used to be entrusted only to a Turkish Ottoman official.²²

The *shari'a* courts in the provinces of the Ottoman Empire have undergone radical changes over 450 years. Decreased jurisdiction, influence and social significance of the *shari'a* courts occurred as the Ottoman Empire introduced modern reforms. The *shari'a* court records, as a product of these institutions, reflect these changes in the types and range of information that they contain. From the sixteenth to the eighteenth century, the *shari'a* court was the sole legal arbiter, and a primary instrument of social control. Situated at the apex of a complex of local religious, legal, educational and charitable institutions, it was distinct from and, in varying degrees, independent, of the political and military apparatus that represented direct Ottoman rule. The extent of the *shari'a* courts' power during this period, as reflected in the *shari'a* court records, included: adjudication of criminal and civil cases with the power to sentence to death; personal status matters such as marriage, divorce, inheritance and custody of children; registration of lands sale and real estate; supervision of the minting of coins and of currency exchange; supervision of weights and measures; and supervision of the Islamic endowments (*waqf*) and other Muslim institutions such as orphanages, mosques, and Sufi lodges (*zawaya*) with the power to appoint teachers and religious functionaries

²¹ SMSMSB, no. 6, 1902, p. 4; Mohamed Effendi Ben Haji Abdullah Ben Shatwan, board member of Benghazi County; Farag Effendi Ben Haji Mohamed Effendi Abu Dejaja, editing clerk of Benghazi County; Ahmed Effendi Ben Saed Jehani, accountant in the city's Department of Education. See also SMSMSBno. 84, 1902-1910, p. 27, Meftah Effendi Ben Haji Mohammad Ben Haji Zaid al-Mahdi, member of the Municipal Council; see also SMSMSBno. 108, 1902-1910, p. 27, Mustafa Effendi Ben Haji Mohamed Ben Mohamed al-Muhichi, member of the city administration.

²² Bazama, *Tarikh Barqa fil 'Ahd al-Uthmanial-Thani*, p. 348.

(such as imams, muezzins, and Qur'an readers), as well as various other employees.²³ The nineteenth century was a transitional period during which the *shari'a* courts lost much of their jurisdiction and influence. Thus, the type of cases recorded was mostly narrowed to those concerning personal status.

In the nineteenth century, the Ottoman State started political and administrative reforms. These processes took the form of Successive Ottoman reforms that paved the way for the establishment of a modern bureaucratic and secular legal system at the expense of the *shari'a* courts and other traditional institutions. Eventually, the *shari'a* courts were reorganised in 1866.²⁴ By 1877, they were no longer allowed to accept criminal cases or a wide range of civil cases. The publication of the *majallatt al-ahkam al-adliya* (Journal of Legal Rules) in 1876 ushered in a new era.²⁵ This work codified the *shari'a* rules of civil law and procedures to be used in a new court system called the regularised (*nizamīya*) civil courts. The *shari'a* courts were also streamlined and were not even to maintain a semblance of independent authority.

The judicial system in Benghazi in the late nineteenth century consisted of two courts: civil court and *shari'a* court. The civil court was named *majlis al-huqouq wa-l-jinayat* (the Council of Rights and Criminal Cases) and it handled all criminal cases, commercial cases, state cases, and the affairs of European residents.²⁶ The *shari'a* court

²³ Beshara B. Doumani, "Palestinian Islamic Court Records", *MESA Bulletin*, 19, 1985, pp. 156, 157.

²⁴ Hanioglu, *A Brief History of the Late Ottoman Empire*, p. 74; the penal code in the new civil courts was based on the 1810 French penal code.

²⁵ Hanioglu, *A Brief History of the Late Ottoman Empire*, p. 74.

²⁶ Amar Jahider, *Afaq wa wathāq fi tarikh Libya al-hadith (Vistas and Documents in Libya's Modern History)*, Tripoli, 1991, pp. 188, 189.

(*al-mahkama al-sharʿiyya*) had jurisdiction over personal status law, family law, inheritance and sale contracts of land and real estate; the *shariʿa* court judges were appointed for a one-year term renewed annually.²⁷ Judges for both branches of the court were directly appointed from Istanbul and were Turkish Ottomans.²⁸

The administrative and judicial Ottoman reforms were not very effective in Cyrenaica as they were not extensive enough to overhaul the outdated system and because of the delay in implementing them. The judicial reforms were an important step but as legal rules usually are a product of gradual societal developments and take a long time to show any effectiveness, the results were inconclusive. While the Ottomans made some efforts to improve communication services such as the post and telegraph lines, other important services like healthcare and education continued to be ignored by the Ottoman administrators in Cyrenaica.

The first colonial (liberal) period, 1911-1922

The major European states resorted to establishing colonies in the nineteenth century for three main reasons: the need for raw materials, establishing new markets, and to invest their capital. The quest for controlling new colonies reached its zenith in the last decades of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century. As major European powers, Britain, France, and Germany were establishing colonies in Africa, Italy looked, first, to East Africa to establish its own colonies.²⁹ After the military setback

²⁷ ʿAmar Jahider, *Afaq wa wathāq fī tarikh Libya al-hadith*, p. 189.

²⁸ SMSMSB, no. 5, 1902-1910, p. 22.

²⁹ France established its control over Tunisia as a protectorate in 1881 and the United Kingdom established control over the Suez Canal and Egypt in 1882; France and the UK in 1899, reached an agreement to delineate their sphere-

it suffered at the battle of Aduwa, Ethiopia in 1896, however, Libya became the focus of the attention of the Italian nationalists seeking an outlet for the country's outpouring of emigration and for her colonising energies as a new power in the Mediterranean.³⁰ Italy had spent many years preparing to invade Libya by reaching agreements with the major European powers to acknowledge Italy's interests in Libya.³¹ The diplomatic issue of Italy's claim to Tripoli first arose at the Congress of Berlin in 1878, but Prime Minister Benedetto Cairoli's government declined to press the issue for fear of becoming embroiled with France in North Africa.³² Thereafter, the securing of Libya became a continuous objective of Italian foreign policy. From 1887 onwards, the negotiations for renewal of the Triple Alliance included guarantees for the support of Italy against France in Tripoli, while the first Mediterranean Agreement of the same year enlisted British backing for Italy against any French challenge to the status quo, particularly in Tripolitania and Cyrenaica.³³ Italian Foreign Minister Visconti-Venosta and his French counterpart Barrere reached agreements in 1900 and 1902 that established the relationship between France's free hand in Morocco and Italy's compensation in Libya.³⁴ Upon Tsar Nicholas II's visit to Racconigi in 1909, Russia acknowledged Italian interests

-of influence in Africa; see Abdumensif Hafed al-Bori, *al-Ghazew al-Italai li Libya: Dirassa fi al-Elaqat al-Dewliya* (*The Italian Invasion of Libya: A Study in International Relations*), (Cairo, 1983), p. 7.

³⁰ David G. Herrmann, 'The Paralysis of Italian Strategy in the Italian-Turkish War, 1911-1921', *The English Historical Review*, Vol. 104, Apr 1989, p. 333.

³¹ Ibid.; Giovanni Giolitti, *Modhkirat Giolitti*, tr. Khalifa al-Tallisi, (Tripoli, 1986), p. 48; Hanioglu, *A Brief History of the Late Ottoman Empire*, p. 168.

³² Abdumensif Hafed al-Bori, *al-Ghazew al-Italai li Libya: Dirassa fi al-Elaqat al-Dewliya*, p. 123.

³³ Abdumensif Hafed al-Bori, *al-Ghazew al-Italai li Libya: Dirassa fi al-Elaqat al-Dewliya*, p. 122; the Triple Alliance was signed between Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Italy in 1882 and renewed in 1887.

³⁴ Ibid.

in Tripolitania and Cyrenaica in return for diplomatic support in the opening of the Ottoman Bosphorus to Russian warships.³⁵ During 1911, Italian Foreign Minister Antonio di San Giuliano discreetly sought the powers' confirmation that they would not oppose an Italian move on Tripoli.³⁶ Thus, Italian diplomacy was successful in obtaining support for its interests in Tripolitania and Cyrenaica through a series of complex agreements and concessions with the major European powers.

The Italian government delivered a warning letter to Istanbul on 29 September 1911 demanding the Ottoman army's withdrawal from Tripolitania and Cyrenaica.³⁷ Italy claimed that its aim was to end the state of chaos in the two provinces, a state that could potentially affect Italy due to the short distance between the borders.³⁸ In addition, it claimed that the region had the right to enjoy the same development achieved in other areas of Mediterranean Africa.³⁹ According to articles four, five, and nine of the warning letter, Italy had to declare war because the Ottoman government not only ignored its demands, but also adhered to hostile attitudes toward all economic interventions.⁴⁰

³⁵ al-Bori, *al-Ghazew al-Italai li Libya: Dirassa fi al-Elaqat al-Dewliya*, p. 122; Giovanni Giolitti, *Modhkirat Giolitti*, p. 22.

³⁶ Giolitti's government started a major preparatory diplomatic campaign with the major European powers before commencing military operations in Libya, despite its prior agreements, as it seemed that those agreements were relevant to the possibility of peaceful penetration and a recognition of Italian interests more than their relevance to military intervention; see Giolitti, *Modhkirat Giolitti*, pp. 22-24.

³⁷ al-Bori, *al-Ghazew al-Italai li Libya*, p. 282.

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ al-Bori, *al-Ghazew al-Italai li Libya*, p. 284.

⁴⁰ Mohamed Abdulkarim al-Wafi, *al-Tariq illa Lausanne (The Road to Lausanne)*, (Tripoli, 1977), pp. 97-99.

On 4 October 1911, the Italian Navy led by Admiral Cagni commenced hostilities by bombarding Tripoli and landing troops; on the 13th the Italians occupied Derna, on the 18th Khoms was attacked and occupied, and on the 20th Italian troops landed in Benghazi.⁴¹ The total invasion force was 36,000.⁴² The Italian Foreign Minister, Antonio di San Giuliano, expected a quick solution in Libya since he hoped that the indigenous population would welcome the Italians as liberators from the Ottoman domination.⁴³ The Ottoman garrisons' resistance could not last for a long time against the Italian battleships' bombardment because of their insufficient short-range cannons. In Benghazi, the Ottoman garrison withdrew to nearby Benina, about fifteen kilometres to the southeast, where they joined forces with tribal volunteers led by Sanusi Zawaya shaykhs.⁴⁴ Ahmed al-Issawi, the representative of the Sanusi *zawia* in Benghazi, sent to all the tribal shaykhs near Benghazi asking for volunteer recruits and, as a result, the Italian forces could not advance inland.⁴⁵ The resistance increased around the towns including Benghazi, as many Ottoman Turkish officers arrived to organise the irregular volunteers led by the *zawaya* shaykhs.⁴⁶ Aziz al-Masri took over the operation command in Benghazi, Anwar Pasha commanding the Derna garrison with Mustapha

⁴¹ Giovanni Giolitti, *Modhkirat Giolitti*, tr. Khalifa al-Tallisi, (Tripoli, 1986), pp. 81-83.

⁴² Ibid, p. 71.

⁴³ Herrmann, *The English Historical Review*, p. 334.

⁴⁴ Khalifa al-Tallisi, *M'ujam Ma 'arek al-Jihad fi Libya 1911-1931 (Dictionary of Resistance Battles in Libya 1911-1931)*, (Beirut, 1973), p. 230.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Anwar Pasha, *Mudakrat Anwar Pasha*, tr. Abdulmola al-Harir, Libyans Jihad Centre, (Tripoli, 1979), p. 23; Anwar Pasha chose around 365 Libyans to be trained in Istanbul as officers and administrators with salaries.

Kemal as second in command, and in around Tobruk the forces were commanded by Adham Pasha al-Halbi.⁴⁷

Thirty-five days after the declaration of war, the Italian government issued a Royal decree dated 5 November 1911 announcing the annexation of Tripolitania and Cyrenaica to Italy.⁴⁸ It also stated that an administrative law would be issued, and until then the country would be managed by royal decrees; a Ministry of Colonies was established to administer the two provinces on 20 November 1911 with Pietro Bertolini as its first minister.⁴⁹

The Italian military plan in Cyrenaica was to advance from Benghazi in the west and Derna in the east, but the Italian army did not venture out of the city of Benghazi until 28 November 1911. Outside the city, and as a response to the tribal shaykhs and the Sanusi movement shaykhs, volunteers came from the city and the countryside and gathered in Benina.⁵⁰ There were minor battles just outside the city on 27 November

⁴⁷ Anwar Pasha, *Mudakrat Anwar Pasha*, p. 22; Mustapha Kemal Atatürk the Republic of Turkey founder and first president.

⁴⁸ Ministry of Colonies, *Andhimat Libya* (Libya's Regulations), *Majallet wizaret al-Must'amarat* (Journal of the Ministry of Colonies), (Rome, 1914), p. 38; Royal Decree No. 1247; although France, England and Russia adhered to their promise on Libya, Italy appeared to suspect that they might put pressure on it to end the war and maintain a nominal sovereignty for the Ottoman Sultan. This proposal was issued by the Government of Austria at the request of the Ottoman government, but Italy feared that if the Libyan people continued to consider the Sultan as their king, it would affect its control on Libya and impede its actions. For more details on the nominal sovereignty of the Sultan and the Islamic view of it, see Alfonso Nallino, *Appunti Sulla Questione Del Califfato in genere e sul presunto Califfato Ottomano*, Raccolta di Scritti editi e inedita, vol III, Roma Istituto per Oriente, 1941, pp. 234-259.

⁴⁹ Alessandro Ausiello, *La politica italiana in Libia*, (Roma, 1939), p. 131.

⁵⁰ Mohamed Lutfi al-Maseri, *Tarikh Harb Trabulus al-Ghareb* (*The History of Tripoli's War*), tr. Moassat Amir Farouq, (Cairo, 1946), p. 34.

and 15 December 1911 where the Libyans captured quantities of armaments.⁵¹ On 12 February 1912, the battle of al-Howari took place.⁵² The Italian forces commanded by Generals Ottavio Briccola and Giovanni Battista Ameglio were composed of seven battalions: five artilleries and three cavalry units, with the rest of the units being infantry with total force strength of 4,825 men.⁵³ They faced a Libyan and Ottoman force estimated at five to six thousand. The Libyan and Ottoman troops sustained heavy casualties, totalling 1,000 killed and injured.⁵⁴ The total Italian casualties were 37 killed and 140 injured according to General Briccola's report.⁵⁵ The battle of Swani Osman took place on 3 April 1912, just east of Benghazi.⁵⁶ In this battle, the Libyan and Ottoman casualties were 200 killed by cannon fire while Italian casualties were one killed and two injured.⁵⁷ After this battle, the Sansui leader, Ahmed al-Sharif, ordered the cessation of fighting around Benghazi.⁵⁸ In September 1912, General Carlo Caneva, the overall commander of military operations across Libya, was replaced by General

⁵¹ Regno D'Italia, *Gazzetta Ufficiale*, 7 December 1911, p. 7846; on 27 November 1911, the Italian casualties included three officers among the dead and 63 soldiers killed or injured; Regno D'Italia, *Gazzetta Ufficiale*, 16 December 1911, p. 8089; on 15 December 1911, with 13 Italian and Libyan casualties: three killed, seven injured.

⁵² Ibid., 13 February 1912, p. 2037.

⁵³ Regno D'Italia, *Gazzetta Ufficiale*, 13 February 1912, p. 2037.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ Ibid., 3 April 1912, pp. 2036-2039.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ Ibid., p. 2036.

⁵⁸ Mohamed al-Taib al-Ashehab, *Berga al-Arabia Ames wa al-Youm (Arab Cyrenaica Yesterday and Today)*, (Cairo, 1947), p. 267; Ahmed Sudqi al-Dajani, *al-Haraka al-Sanusiyya: Nash'atuha wa Tatouraha fi al-Qern al-Tas'a Ashur (The Sanusi Movement: Its Emergence and Development in the Nineteenth Century)*, (Cairo, 1967); Ahmed al-Sharif (1873-1933) was the leader of the Sanusi movement from 1902 to 1916; he succeeded his uncle Mohamed al-Mahdi, who was the leader of the movement between 1859 and 1902.

Ragni in Tripolitania and General Briccola in Cyrenaica, with the task of making further advances in the two provinces; however, the Ottomans and the Italians started peace negotiations before the two generals could implement their plans.⁵⁹

The Treaty of Lausanne between Italy and the Ottoman Empire signed on 13 October 1912 stipulated the withdrawal of the Ottoman forces from Libya but was ambiguous as to the issue of sovereignty.⁶⁰ The Italians, who were equally anxious to facilitate a settlement, therefore entered into a secret agreement with Sultan Mehmed V that permitted him to issue a face-saving declaration prior to the signing of the Treaty of Lausanne on 13 October, 1912.⁶¹ The operative clause in this declaration, from the Libyan point of view, read: "in order to restore your country to peace and prosperity, availing myself of my sovereign rights, I concede to you full and complete autonomy".⁶² The Sultan assigned a viceroy to oversee the Ottoman Empire's interests in the two provinces.⁶³ According to the agreement, the Sultan had the right to assign the Chief

⁵⁹ al-Maseri, *Tarikh Harb Trabulus al-Ghareb*, p. 34; fighting around Benghazi did not resume until August 1912 when General Emeglio commanded a force to capture the town of Sulouq southwest of Benghazi, where the battle of Housh al-Akeb was fought just north of Sulouq; several Libyans were killed, among them notable Abu Zaid al-Kiza, whilst injured notables included Younis bin Mustafa and Abdulhamid al-Abar; see al-Ashehab, *Berga al-Arabia Ames wa al-Youm*, p. 266.

⁶⁰ DMT, malef: *Wathaeq al-Harb al-Italiyya al-Turkiyya, 19 Oct. 1912*; the complete text of the Treaty of Lausanne in Arabic and Italian; see Abdumensef Hafez al-Bori, *al-Ghazu al-Itali lel-Libya: Dirasa fi al-'Elaqat al-Dawliyya (The Italian Invasion of Libya: A Study in International Relations)*, al-Dar al-Arabiyya lel-Kitab, (Tunis, 1983), p. 440.

⁶¹ Giolitti, *Modhkirat Giolitti*, p.156; Mehmed V, Sultan (1909-1918); for a complete text of the Italian-Ottoman secret agreement see Abdumensef Hafez al-Bori, *al-Ghazu al-Itali lel-Libya: Dirasa fi al-'Elaqat al-Dawliyya (The Italian Invasion of Libya: A Study in International Relations)*, p. 433.

⁶² Ibid., Shukri, *al-Sanusiyya deen wa-doula*, pp. 143.

⁶³ al-Bori, *al-Ghazu al-Itali lel-Libya: Dirasa fi al-'Elaqat al-Dawliyya (The Italian Invasion of Libya: A Study in International Relations)*, p. 436; the Sultan appointed Shamesuldin Bek as Viceroy; Mohamed Saleh al-Jaberi, *Yomiat al-Jiad al-Libi fi al-Sahafa al-Tunisiyya (The Libyan Jihad Dailies in the Tunisian Press)*, Vol. I, (Tunis, 1983), p. 521.

Judge of Tripoli and retain entire religious supervision.⁶⁴ The Italians saw the Treaty as a success because it forced the Ottomans to withdraw their forces from Tripolitania and Cyrenaica and stopped the Ottomans from supplying the Libyans with weapons. The Ottomans also saw the treaty as a success because Italy agreed to withdraw its troops from the Dodecanese Islands in the Aegean Sea and it confirmed the Sultan's authority as Caliph in Tripolitania and Cyrenaica; the Italians considered the title of caliph to be a nominal religious title, overlooking its political implication. However, the Treaty of Lausanne in October 1912 itself confirmed the Italian declaration of sovereignty of the previous February. Naturally, the Libyans felt free to accept the autonomy granted them by the Sultan while continuing to resist the imposition of Italian sovereignty.

The effects of the Treaty of Lausanne on Tripolitania and Cyrenaica varied. In Tripolitania, the armed resistance faced several problems after the withdrawal of the Ottoman troops which led to its dissolution in the end. The armed resistance leadership in Tripolitania was divided because the tribal shaykhs and notables could not agree on a unified leadership and the Italians exploited their differences so each tribe essentially acted independently of other tribes.⁶⁵ The resistance faced problems with financing its operations and obtaining weapons and supplies since its main source of financing was a tax on agriculture produce and livestock.⁶⁶ Furthermore, Shamsuldin Bek, the Sultan's

⁶⁴ al-Bori, *al-Ghazu al-Itali lel-Libya: Dirasa fi al-'Elaqat al-Dawliyya*, p. 433; the second article of the agreement stated that Italy must agree in advance those appointments; DMT, malef: *Wathaeq al-Harb al-Italiyya al-Turkiyya, 19 Oct. 1912*; the complete text of the Treaty of Lausanne in Arabic and Italian.

⁶⁵ DMT, Rapheal Rapex mentions that in 12 April 1913 about 150 shaykhs from inland areas arrived in Tripoli to submit to the Italian Governor, pp. 9-10.

⁶⁶ Tahir Ahmed al-Zawi, *Jihad al-Abtal fi Tarabulus al-Gharb*, (Tripoli, 1973), p. 168.

Viceroy in Tripolitania, had a negative attitude towards the armed resistance; he called for ending the armed resistance and accepting Italian control.⁶⁷

In Cyrenaica, as the Ottoman troops and officers leading the Libyan volunteers left, the Sanusi leadership under Ahmed al-Sharif was in command.⁶⁸ However, the resistance force could not mount a direct assault on the superior and modern Italian army, so they resorted to guerrilla tactics – surprise attacks and attacking the Italian supply line. The Italians expanded their control eastward one hundred kilometres to the town of al-Merj and to the southwest, taking control of the towns of Sulouq, Qeminis, and Ajdabia, 150 kilometres southwest of Benghazi.⁶⁹ This Italian advance was a direct result of the Treaty since the absence of the leadership of the Ottoman officers and their troops allowed the Italian army to operate further from their Benghazi base.

The Italian government issued a decree on 9 January 1913 reorganising the administration of Libya's two provinces of Tripolitania and Cyrenaica into two different entities,⁷⁰ dividing each, in turn, into areas of local rule and areas under military rule.⁷¹ Each state was ruled by a military governor in charge of naval and land forces, assisted by a civil and political and civil affairs secretary, a director of the political and military

⁶⁷ Khalil al-Saheli, "Wamaḍat min al-Watheq al-'Uthmaniyya" *Majallet al-Shaid*, MDJL, (*Jihad Centre for Historical Studies*), (Tripoli, 1989), p. 424; Mothakert Wizaret al-Kharijiyya No. 1452, 23 December 1912; this piece of advice came as a result of the decision which the Ottoman Council of Ministers had taken during one of its sessions; the Sultan's Viceroy advised Suliman al-Baruni, one of the leaders of the resistance in Tripolitania, to end the fighting and accept Italian control over the province.

⁶⁸ Shukri, *al-Sanusiyya deen wa-doula*, p. 99.

⁶⁹ al-Tallisi, *M'ujam Ma'arek al-Jihad fi Libya 1911-1931*, p. 33.

⁷⁰ Ausiello, *La Politica Italiana in Libia*, p. 135; decree no. 39.

⁷¹ Ibid.

office, and a commander in chief of the armed forces.⁷² Each province could issue its own local regulations subject to a review by the Ministry of Colonies in Rome.⁷³ The ministry was divided into four departments: the Department of Political Affairs and Soldiers' Colonial Services; Department of Economic, Financial and Workers Affairs; Department of Civic Affairs and Public Works; and Department of Accountancy.⁷⁴ In order to solve administrative obstacles, a new department, the High Administrative Committee for Tripolitania and Cyrenaica, was added to the Ministry of Colonies by decree on 11 January 1914.⁷⁵

In the same year, a royal decree organised the administrative sub-divisions in each state into provinces, municipalities, and agricultural and urban regions.⁷⁶ A ministerial decree assigned the provinces' administrators and identified their headquarters and borders, in accordance with the suggestion of the governor.⁷⁷ The administrator worked with the help of an advisory council consisting of the administrator, who headed the council, and a number of local notables; the number of council members depended on the number of the municipalities and agricultural and urban regions in the province.⁷⁸ The council included a number of Italian citizens and Libyan subjects who were

⁷² Ausiello, *La Politica Italiana in Libia*, p. 135; decree no. 39.

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ Ibid., p. 131.

⁷⁵ Ibid., p. 38.

⁷⁶ Ausiello, *La Politica Italiana in Libia*, p. 38.

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ Ministry of Colonies, *Andhimat Libya (Libya's Regulations)*, *Majallet wizaret al-Must'amarat*, p. 38.

assigned by the governor to a three-year term.⁷⁹ The province was divided into municipalities headed by a commissioner; usually one of the local notables or sheiks.⁸⁰ On exceptional occasions, a member of the Italian civilian military staff was appointed a town commissioner by a governor's decree and continued his work under the supervision of the province's administrator.⁸¹ Commissioners who were Libyan were monitored when necessary by the Italian Security Chief.⁸² As for urban regions, they were under the supervision of the municipality's commissioner or by an administration belonging to the municipality.⁸³ The administration consisted of the mayor, a committee and a council of local notables.⁸⁴ The mayors were appointed by the governor and, in the municipalities where the government was headquartered, the council members were also appointed by the governor.⁸⁵ In the other municipalities, the council members were appointed by the provinces' administrators.⁸⁶ As for the agricultural regions, they were under the supervision of a regional magistrate.⁸⁷

As World War One (WWI) started in August 1914, the changes in alliances among the European powers had a great impact on Libya in general, and Cyrenaica. The Ottoman

⁷⁹ Ministry of Colonies, *Andhimat Libya* (Libya's Regulations), *Majallet wizaret al-Must'amarat*, p. 38.

⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² Ibid.

⁸³ Ibid.

⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁷ Ibid.

Empire joined Germany and Austria-Hungary in the alliance known as the Central Powers while Italy joined the Allies – including the United Kingdom and France – on 29 April 1915. The Ottomans had retreated from Libya in accordance with the Lausanne Treaty but, because of this realignment, they returned to Libya again. Their plan was to make use of the Libyan resistance in Cyrenaica to attack British troops in areas of Egypt's western desert; a war with the British in Egypt would have cost the British so much money and men at a time when they needed all their resources for the war in Europe.⁸⁸ Italy, on the other hand, looked to achieve some gains through this new alliance, whether in Europe or in Libya, where it controlled only some of the coastal cities and towns.⁸⁹

The British found themselves obliged to enforce a blockade of supplies from Egypt to the Libyan resistance on behalf of their ally, Italy.⁹⁰ Before the start of WWI, the British policy regarding supplies from the Egyptian border to the Libyan resistance was ambivalent. On one hand, supplies were getting through and when Italy requested to post an Italian observer at the al-Salloum border checkpoint, the British refused because the presence of such an observer would mean that the British in Egypt were siding with the Italians.⁹¹ On the other hand, the British prevented volunteers coming to the

⁸⁸ Mekki Shebika, *al-Arab wa al-Siyassa al-Britania fi al-Hareb al-'Alamiyya al-Ula (The Arabs and the British Policy in WWI)*, (Beirut, 1970), pp. 11-12.

⁸⁹ Pallo Maltese, *Libya: Ard al-Mi'ad (Libya: The Promised Land)*, tr. Abdurahman al-Aejjalli, (Tripoli, 1979), pp. 500-501.

⁹⁰ Henry Anis Michael, *al-'Eilaqat al-Inqliziyya al-Libiyya (English-Libyan Relations)*, tr. Dar al-Matba'a al-Thaqafiyya, (Cairo, 1970), p. 54.

⁹¹ Henry Anis Michael, *al-'Eilaqat al-Inqliziyya al-Libiyya*, p. 54; DMT, *Wathaeq Wizaret al-Must'amart*, Serra Telegraph no. 130 from the Italian diplomatic mission in Cairo to the Ministry of Colonies, p. 657.

resistance from Egypt.⁹² Before Italy joined the Alliance, the Sanusi leader, Ahmed al-Sharif, was not hostile towards the British in Egypt; in an interview with a British official in November 1914, al-Sharif gave assurances that there was no doubt that the resistance forces near the Egyptian border had no intention to stir up disturbances and that they were strictly directed at the Italians.⁹³ Ahmed al-Sharif was greatly opposed by his cousin, Idris al-Sanusi, whose view in this regard was that he would disagree with Ahmed if he accepted the Ottoman and German plans because it would result in the closing of borders and cutting off aid.⁹⁴

The situation for Ahmed al-Sharif could have become more dangerous once Italy had become an ally to the British on 23 May 1915. Italy was able, after several failed attempts, to post an observer to monitor the al-Salloum border checkpoint.⁹⁵ This alliance could have mounted a joint attack against the resistance camp at Mesaed, just across from the Egyptian border, although Britain thought that such attempt would be bad for British interests in Egypt.⁹⁶ Ahmed al-Sharif and his followers were in a critical situation. They mainly depended on the Ottoman supplies delivered by German submarines and this was one of the reasons that the Libyan resistance sided with the Central Powers in November 1914. Also al-Sharif could not disobey the Sultan's orders,

⁹² Michael, *al-'Eilaqat al-Inqliziyya al-Libiyya*, p. 54.

⁹³ Evans-Pritchard, *al-Sanusioun fi Berga (The Sanusi of Cyrenaica)*, p. 211.

⁹⁴ Ibid.; King Idris al-Sanusi (1889-1983) was King of Libya from 1951 to 1969.

⁹⁵ DMT, *Wathaeq Wizaret al-Must'amart*, Talks between British Ambassador in Rome, Renel Rudd, and Anzia, the General Director of Political Affairs at the Ministry of Colonies, 29 May 1915, pp. 658-659.

⁹⁶ DMT, *Wathaeq Wizaret al-Must'amart*, Serra Telegraph no. 130 from the Italian diplomatic mission in Cairo to the Ministry of Colonies, p. 657.

since in July 1915 he had appointed him a governor over Tripolitania and Cyrenaica; according to the Sultan's decree, attacking the British in Egypt would reduce the pressure on the Ottomans in Palestine, allowing them to cross the Suez Canal.⁹⁷ The campaign, which was short, started in December 1915 when a force of three thousand fighters invaded Egypt, but failed to provoke an uprising among the Sanusi followers in Egypt.⁹⁸ This force was repeatedly defeated in that month and again in January and February 1916.⁹⁹ Ahmed al-Sharif's failed action against the British in Egypt caused the decline of the Sanusi Movement's political influence in the Egyptian western desert.¹⁰⁰

As a result of WWI the Libyan resistance's military operations against the Italians became less frequent than before because Ottoman officers and military units were no longer in the field, as the defeat of the Central Powers forced the Ottomans to relinquish Libya and the Dodecanese Islands.¹⁰¹ Italy also cancelled the privileges the Sultan had in Libya afforded to him by the Treaty of Lausanne in 1912.¹⁰² In addition, Ahmed al-Sharif was no longer the military and political leader of the Sanusi Movement, and the leadership in Cyrenaica was transferred to Idris al-Sanusi; however, he remained a

⁹⁷ Shukri, *al-Sanusiyya deen wa-doula*, pp. 149, 151.

⁹⁸ The Foreign Office, Historical Section, *Italian Libya*, H. M. Stationery Office, (London, 1920), p. 26.

⁹⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁰ Shukri, *al-Sanusiyya deen wa-doula*, p. 43.

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

¹⁰² Ibid.

religious leader of the Sanusi movement, which followed the method of reconciliation and negotiations with the Italians.¹⁰³

In July 1916, the British and Italian governments came to an agreement in regard to the Sanusi Movement.¹⁰⁴ They committed themselves to make no terms with the Movement without a mutual understanding, to recognise Idris al-Sanusi as the religious head of the Movement, and to allow military operations in each other's territories.¹⁰⁵ In March 1917 France was included as a third party to the agreement.¹⁰⁶ In August and September, in accordance with the terms of the agreement, negotiations were opened with al-Sanusi at al-Zuetina; the British and Italian envoys were instructed to offer as conditions that he should be recognised as the spiritual, but not the temporal, chief of Cyrenaica, and that he should make peace with either both the British and the Italians, or neither.¹⁰⁷ These negotiations failed, but the armistice between the Libyan resistance and the Italians continued until negotiations were resumed in January 1917 at 'Akrema. Two separate agreements were reached in the following April.¹⁰⁸ In the British agreement, the resistance, besides an arrangement about prisoners of war, agreed to prevent any armed presence from remaining in the oases of Siwa and Jaghbub, and to remove from

¹⁰³ Shukri, *al-Sanusiyya deen wa-doula*, p. 43; Idris Al-Sanusi (1889-1983) was the King of Libya from 1951 to 1969.

¹⁰⁴ The Foreign Office, Historical Section, *Italian Libya*, p. 27.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

¹⁰⁷ The Foreign Office, Historical Section, *Italian Libya*, p. 27.

¹⁰⁸ Rodolfo Graziani, *Barqa al-Hadia' (Cirenaica Pacificata)*, tr. Ibrahim Salem Ben 'amer, al-Dar al-Jamahiriya lel-Ṭeb'a wa al-Nasher, (Misurata, 1998), pp. 25-26.

Cyrenaica all persons who might endanger good relations with the British government (Ottoman officers were meant by this clause).¹⁰⁹ In return, the British government agreed to open a trade route between Egypt and Cyrenaica.¹¹⁰ The agreement with Italy was in the form of two temporary arrangements only, as the persistent assertion of Italian sovereignty over Cyrenaica and the deep-felt hostility of Idris al-Sanusi stood in the way of any more satisfactory agreement. One of those arrangements provided for the cessation of hostilities; freedom of trade between the Italian controlled zone (Benghazi, Derna, and Tobruk) and the areas controlled by the resistance; the Sanusi's *zawiya* to retain their tax-exempt status; and the removal of Ottoman officers, soldiers, and agents from areas controlled by the resistance, the Italians giving them safe conduct to their own country.¹¹¹

Idris al-Sanusi's relationship with the British was good from the start, as he opposed any attack on British interests in Egypt. The British sympathised with the Sanusi Movement's cause and considered their participation in the war with Italy against the Libyans incidental as they did not expect any political gains from it. To them, it was a case of being embroiled into unnecessary military action while short in men and supplies; the British therefore wanted to end all hostilities with the Libyan resistance. All the supplies to the Libyan resistance came through al-Salloum harbour and, if the British continued their blockade of the harbour, the Libyan resistance would have suffered from shortages of food, weapons and other goods. The British negotiators knew

¹⁰⁹ The Foreign Office, Historical Section, *Italian Libya*, pp. 28-29.

¹¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹¹ The Foreign Office, Historical Section, *Italian Libya*, p. 29.

that if al-Sanusi failed to get the blockade lifted, the resistance would be inclined to back their old leader – hardliner Ahmed al-Sharif – who was still in the Egyptian western desert oasis of al-Dakhila, and who would continue the fight against the British, especially with the presence of many Ottoman officers who were urging the resistance to take such action.¹¹² In addition, the British looked at their alliance with Italy, at least in matters concerning Cyrenaica, as being of a temporary nature and dictated by the outbreak of WWI. Accordingly, their commitment to their ally regarding Cyrenaica was also temporary. This commitment would allow the Italians to conciliate the local population through trade and good administration; thus, Italy would eventually break up the Cyrenaican cohesion that resulted from years of war with the Italians. The British thought if the Italians failed to pacify Cyrenaica, it was their own responsibility; after all, they defeated Ahmed al-Sharif without Italy's help.

The relationship between the Italians and the Libyan resistance, as they entered negotiations, was full of suspicion. The Italians saw any ceasefire as a temporary measure with the goal of providing supplies to the resistance to resume hostilities at a later time, and they expressed, at the start of the negotiations, the necessity of releasing all prisoners of war held by the resistance.¹¹³ While the Italians' goal was conquering all of Cyrenaica, they realised that, after spending about eighty million British pounds in 1916, they were still in defensive positions in the coastal towns.¹¹⁴ However, if Idris al-

¹¹² Mohammad Fouad Shukri, *Milad al-Dawla al-Libyya al-Haditha (The Birth of the Modern Libyan State)*, Mektab al-'Itimad, (Cairo, 1957), vol. II, p. 576.

¹¹³ The Foreign Office, Historical Section, *Italian Libya*, p. 29; Since those prisoners were held by Ahmed al-Sharif, Idris al-Sanusi needed to send correspondence by camel caravan which would take a great deal of time.

¹¹⁴ Habib Wada'ea al-Hesnawi, *Omar al-Mukhtar 1923-1931*, ed. 'Aqil al-Barbar, MDJL, (Tripoli, 1983), p. 46.

Sanusi recognised Italian sovereignty, the people of Cyrenaica would lose confidence in his leadership and desert him, and if this happened, any chance of peace would be lost.

In Tripolitania, the defeat of the Ottomans made it necessary for the leaders of the resistance to create a new organisation, and they declared a republic.¹¹⁵ However, disputes among the tribal leaders and Tripoli notables made the election of a president impossible, and control passed to a 24-member central committee chosen from Tripolitania's notables.¹¹⁶ The committee started negotiations with the Italians to reach an acceptable peace agreement.¹¹⁷ The result of those negotiations was the Swani Benyadem Agreement, which was signed in the city of Tripoli on 10 October 1919, with parties agreeing to implement the basic law of Tripolitania issued three months earlier on 1 June 1919.¹¹⁸ It stated that Tripolitania's governor had to be appointed by the king of Italy, and he would manage the affairs of the province with the help of an elected parliament, where each member represented 20,000 residents.¹¹⁹ The parliament's authority was limited to regulating taxes and issuing legislation to regulate public services which were completed according to Tripolitania's budget.¹²⁰

¹¹⁵ Shukri, *al-Sanusiyya deen wa-doula*, p. 235; the defeat of Central Powers and the signing of the armistice in November 1918.

¹¹⁶ Ibid, pp. 236-237.

¹¹⁷ Angelo del Boca, *Gli italiani in Libia*, p. 360.

¹¹⁸ Ibid; Jameel Aref, *Safahat min al-Mudhakrat al-Siriyya li Amin al-Jame'a al-Arabia Abdulrahman 'al-Ar* (Pages from the Secret Diary of Abdulrahman 'Azzam: The Secretary General of the Arab League", vol. I, al-Maktab al-Miseri al-Hadith, (Cairo, 1977), p. 244; this Agreement is also known as the Khellat al-Zaytoon Agreement.

¹¹⁹ Ibid.

¹²⁰ Angelo del Boca, *Gli italiani in Libia*, p. 360.

Cyrenaica's basic law was issued on 31 October 1919 and contained 42 articles; the two basic laws for Tripolitania and Cyrenaica differed only slightly.¹²¹ In addition to the articles concerned with the government's organisation, both laws contained rights of freedom of worship (religion), the right to private property, freedom of the press, and freedom of association.¹²² The law also contained articles granting Italian citizenship to the inhabitants of Tripolitania and Cyrenaica; on paper they placed the Libyan population on a par with the metropolitan population.¹²³ Though the colonies of Tripolitania and Cyrenaica were not labelled national provinces, the legislation pointed in that direction. Libya's administrative structure remained in the form that was stated in Royal Decree No. 39 of 9 January 1913 and the decree issued on 11 January 1914.¹²⁴

As a result of the agreements of 'Akrema in 1917 and al-Rejma on 25 October 1920, there was a period of peace in Cyrenaica.¹²⁵ Idris al-Sanusi became the Amir of Cyrenaica and had the autonomy to administer all areas in Cyrenaica not under Italian control.¹²⁶ The first article of the agreement of al-Rejema states that Cyrenaicans have the right of representation in a parliament according to the articles of the basic law.¹²⁷

¹²¹ Angelo del Boca, *Gli italiani in Libia*, p. 360; the Basic Law of Tripolitania was issued in accordance with Royal Decree No. 931.

¹²² Shukri, *al-Sanusiyya deen wa-doula*, p. 210.

¹²³ *Ibid.*, p. 211.

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*; see footnotes 55 and 60 in this chapter.

¹²⁵ Graziani, *Barqa al-Hadia'*, p. 26.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*; the second article in the agreement of al-Rejema specified the monthly salaries of the Amir, his heir, and every member of al-Sanusi's family at 64,000 francs, 15,000 francs, and 10,000 francs respectively; the Sanusi's men under arms monthly expenses of 2.6 million francs were also to be paid by the Italian government; see Graziani, *Barqa al-Hadia'*, p. 28.

¹²⁷ Angelo del Boca, *Gli italiani in Libia*, p. 23.

Members of the parliament had to represent the nomadic Bedouins as well as urban residents, and Italians if their residency in the country exceeded five years on the condition that their number did not exceed one sixth of the whole members; however, those whose residency was more than three years had the right to vote.¹²⁸ Italian members of parliament might also be appointed by the governor and one seat was reserved for the Jewish population of Benghazi.¹²⁹ Hence, the people of Cyrenaica chose their representatives in the parliament, which was the first elected parliament in the region, and Benghazi was represented by six members.¹³⁰ Article no. 21 of the basic law provided for the establishment of a government council headed by the governor or his representative, composed of two members appointed by the governor, and eight non-parliament members elected by the parliament.¹³¹ Its authority included advising the governor when appointing *mutasariffs*, *qaimaqam* and *mudirs*, and examining the appeals of administrative and judicial decisions of the tribal sheikhs; the first council was established on 27 April 1920.¹³²

The Italians made a policy decision to superimpose their judicial institutions on the existing Ottoman institutions in Libya. Such a policy allowed for the continuation of the

¹²⁸ Wahbi Ahmed al-Bori, *Tarikh Benghazi Athna al-Ihtilal al-Itali (The History of Benghazi during the Italian Occupation)*, p. 23.

¹²⁹ Ibid.

¹³⁰ al-Bori, *Tarikh Benghazi Athna al-Ihtilal al-Itali* p. 23; Benghazi was represented in the parliament by members Saleh al-Mehdawi, Mahmoud Bin Shatwan, Mohamed Abdulla Eminena, Mohamed al-Kilhia, Mohamed Taher al-Muhayishi, Hussien Besikri.

¹³¹ Ibid.

¹³² Ibid; the government council's members from Benghazi were: Mohammed Bu Withen, Hamed Eminena, Ahmed al-Banana, Sheikh Mohammed Abdullah Dullaf, and Sheikh Hussein Bu Mmghalia.

shari'a courts. Therefore, the reorganisation of the judicial system in Benghazi after the Italian occupation was undertaken by substituting the Ottoman civil court by the Italian civil court, which was not a drastic change since the Ottoman civil court penal code was based on a similar penal code to Italian jurisprudence – the French penal code of 1810. The *shari'a* courts in Libya were left with the same jurisdictions but were restructured by the establishment of a supreme *shari'a* court to serve as an appellant court. The supreme *shari'a* court was composed of six judges: four from the *maliki* Islamic jurisprudence and one judge each for the *hanfi* and *abaḍi* jurisprudence, in consideration for the different schools of jurisprudence prevailing in the country at that time.¹³³ The Benghazi's *shari'a* court judges during the Ottoman rule were Turkish nationals and appointed directly from Istanbul, but the rest of the courts' staff including the judges' assistants, clerks, process servers, deputies and court agents, were Libyans. Benghazi's last *shari'a* court chief judge during the final years of the Ottoman period was Mohamed Munib Effendi, who was mentioned in the court records of 1903 as the last non-Libyan *shari'a* court chief judge.¹³⁴ In the period between 1911 and 1919 the Libyan judge, Mohamed Ben 'Amer, was Benghazi's *shari'a* court chief judge.¹³⁵ Mohamed Ben Masoud became the Chief Judge of Benghazi after Judge Mohamed Ben 'Amer in 1919 until 1 October 1932. The *shari'a* court's judges in Tubrok, Derna, al-Marj,

¹³³ Governo della Libia, *Bollettino Ufficiale*, Tripoli., 16 July 1922.

¹³⁴ SMSMSB, no. 5, 1902-1910, p. 4; although his name was mentioned eight years before the end of Ottoman rule, there is a reference in the court records dated 1919 confirming that he was the last Ottoman judge; see SMSMSB, 1911-1919, p. 11.

¹³⁵ SMSMSB, no. 8, 1914-1918, p. 4.

and deputy judges in Qeminus, al-Abyar and Tokra were subordinate to the *shari'a* court of the Chief Judge of Benghazi.¹³⁶

The Italian leaders realised the role played by religion in Islamic societies and the strength of religious feelings held by individuals in those societies. Thus, the Italian leaders were convinced, at the outset, that impingement upon those feelings will stir an emotional reaction against Italy and inflame enmity of the Muslims, regardless of their political stand. The Italians decided to take advantage of this phenomenon and try to deploy it to achieve their objectives. Italy announced its sympathetic religious policy from the beginning of the occupation in the publication issued by General Caneva on 9 October 1911 after taking control of Tripoli.¹³⁷ This policy was emphasised on different occasions in the following years and was decisively implemented in practice. The Italian government was trying hard to make Libyan citizens understand that its intentions were not to impose Italian Western culture on them, and generate in them a full conviction of Italy's depth of understanding and appreciation of the seriousness of Islamic civilisation, and Moslem traditions.

At the beginning of the occupation, the Italian government paid special attention to the *shari'a* courts for its role in the organisation of social relations, as well as for the sanctity of courts and the reverence enjoyed by its judges among the public. Italy also saw the possibility of politically exploiting these institutions in an attempt to gain the approval

¹³⁶ SMSMSB, 1918-1922, p. 10.

¹³⁷ Salahuldeen Hassen al-Souri, 'al-Istia 'mar al-Itali wa Mouhawalt ihtiwa al-Muasasa al-Diniyya' (The Italian Colonialism and the Attempt to Contain the Religious Institution), Abhath Motamer al-Tarikh houl al-Istia'mar fi al-A'lem al-Arabi fi al-Qernin 19-20, (research presented in the Conference about Colonialism in the Arab World during the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries), *al-merkez al-qoumi lil-bohouth*, 3 November 1983, (Tunis, 1983).

of the Libyan public by respecting the independence of *shari'a* courts and their appreciation for its staff. Thus, the Italian government began reorganising *shari'a* courts' regulatory framework. The eighth article of the Italian royal decree titled Judicial Arrangement, which was issued on 20 March 1913, stipulated that the jurisdiction of the *shari'a* court could not be interfered with by any department.¹³⁸ In addition, Italian parliamentary ordinance dated on 23 December 1918 stipulated the formation of a *shari'a* judicial council.¹³⁹ Nevertheless, despite this law, a *shari'a* court judge could be dismissed by the chief judge of the Italian civil and criminal court in Libya if he was found to have exceeded the court's jurisdiction.¹⁴⁰

Summary

The years of WWI shaped the military and political changes in both Tripolitania and Cyrenaica. In Tripolitania, the military and political situation at the time of the signing of the Armistice on November 1918 was in a stalemate, leading the armed resistance to seek negotiations with the Italian government; those talks produced the Tripolitania basic law of the Swani Benyadem Agreement in 1919. As for Cyrenaica, the change in the leadership of the Sanusi-led resistance movement was a direct result of the resistance

¹³⁸ SMSMSB, 1918-1922, p. 10; The Italian Chief Judge of Benghazi's civil and criminal court informed the Chief Judge of Benghazi's *shari'a* court, Judge Mohamed Ben Masoud, that he violated the judicial rules in a case of a woman who was suing her trustee since the trustee became a defendant, thus the case was within the jurisdiction of the civil and criminal court. Apparently, there was a legal flaw in this case since it required that the trust be abolished before the case could go forward in the *shari'a* court. This, perhaps, was due to the status of Judge Mohamed Ben Masoud, or that those who brought such cases were not convinced with nor had confidence in the civil and criminal court decisions, as it was headed by an Italian judge. If the disputants did not accept the *shari'a*-court judge's decision, they could appeal by having a copy of the verdict and referring it to the Attorney General. If the decision were in accordance with *shari'a* law, it would be approved by the judge and sent back to the Attorney General to be executed; Alessandro Lessona, *L'Africa settentrionale nella politica mediterranea*, (Roma, 1942), p. 78.

¹³⁹ Ibid.

¹⁴⁰ F. Lobello, 'Il Primo Decennio della Colonizzazione in Cirenaica', *Rivista Coloniale*, April 1925.

involvement in WWI in joining the Central Powers and attacking the British forces in the Egyptian western desert. The new Sanusi leader, Idris al-Sanusi, was more willing to enter an arrangement with the Italians than his predecessor, Ahmed al-Sharif. The agreements of 'Akrema in 1917 and al-Rejema in 1920 between the Libyan resistance in Cyrenaica and Italy paved the way to joint rule in Cyrenaica, based on a constitution like that reached in Tripolitania. Within the resistance movement, there were those who looked at these agreements only as temporary arrangements, specifically, the followers of Ahmed al-Sharif. In Italy, political changes leading to the rise of fascism ended the joint rule agreement in Cyrenaica and began a new period of military confrontation, as will be discussed in the next section.

The second colonial (fascist) period, 1922-1942

Political developments occurred in Italy in 1922 when the fascist movement led by Benito Mussolini marched on the Italian capital, Rome, and forced the Government to resign; he was named the head of government by King Victor Emmanuel III.¹⁴¹ Despite their small number, the fascists used media publicity to expel the opposition from the parliament and change the political regime of the state into a one-party regime.¹⁴² This change considerably affected the Italian colonies including Libya and especially

¹⁴¹ Rodolfo Graziani, *Barqa al-Hadia' (Cirenaica Pacificata)*, p. 31.

¹⁴² Robert O. Paxton, "The Five Stages of Fascism", *The Journal of Modern History*, University of Chicago, (Chicago, 1998), p. 17.

Cyrenaica; peaceful coexistence between Italy and the Sanusi-ruled areas in Cyrenaica turned into instability and eventually war.¹⁴³

In fact, Rome and Benghazi both suspected each other, as the Italian authorities thought that the Sanusi prince was conspiring with Tripolitania's leaders after they intercepted letters sent from Idris al-Sanusi to one of Tripolitania's leaders.¹⁴⁴ The Italian leaders in Libya – particularly Tripolitania's Governor Giuseppe Volpi – thought that Idris al-Sanusi was an effective movement leader who could incite war.¹⁴⁵ In truth, Idris al-Sanusi accepted Tripolitania's leaders' offer to become the Prince of Tripolitania and Cyrenaica (i.e. Libya's ruler) and was aware that such a step would strain the relationship with the Italians.¹⁴⁶ Italian suspicions of al-Sanusi became an excuse to end joint rule in Cyrenaica in March 1923, when they arrested the Sanusi mediator, Omar Mansour al-Kikhia, in Rome.¹⁴⁷ The Italians were convinced that disarmament according to the al-Rejema agreement was no more than a distant thought, and the mixed military camps (Libyan-Italian) were only a temporary step, but the Libyans had made them permanent. At the time, the Italians had occupied the coastal line only to a depth of no more than 50-60 kilometres, and Italian politicians such as Alessandro Lessona considered that the concessions made by the previous government represented

¹⁴³ MDJL, *Wathaeq Italiyya*, Khanna 29-122, malef 264, telegraph 539 marked secret, Tripoli.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid; Giuseppe Volpi Governor of Tripolitania (1921-1925); Volpi attacked and occupied Misurata in 1922.

¹⁴⁶ Shukri, *al-Sanusiyya deen wa-doula*, p. 261.

¹⁴⁷ MDJL, *Wathaeq Italiyya, Majmou'aet al-Shou'aon al-Siyasiyya 1923-1945* (Italian Documents, Political Affairs Collection), telegraph 664 on August 1933, Tripoli; Omar Mansour al-Kikhia was sentenced on 18 February 1924 to 12 years in prison as understood from this telegraph from the Italian Foreign Ministry in 1933.

a complete concession of Italian sovereignty and an admission of the Libyans' right to independence.¹⁴⁸ Some of the tribal leaders and sheikhs were dissatisfied with the compromise which they considered as giving the Italians sovereignty over the country, and they tried to obstruct the implementation of the agreements, especially with regard to disarmament; about one hundred of them met in Ajdabia in 1921 and issued a statement stating that, with or without the basic law, the Italian presence was allowed only in the coastal areas, sending a copy of their statement to the government.¹⁴⁹

When the Fascist Party gained control in Italy, the relationship between Italy and the Sanusi-led resistance movement was disrupted, and their peaceful coexistence became unstable. As the basic law of 1919 was cancelled, there was disruption in the political and administrative life in Cyrenaica, which meant returning to the earlier pre-agreement laws. After seven years of peace, war started again. Prince Idris al-Sanusi departed to Egypt, and his brother and heir, Mohamed al-Rida, was left in charge in Cyrenaica.¹⁵⁰ The fascist analysis of Italian policy in Libya from 1911 to 1922 concluded that, despite superiority in troop numbers and weapons, it failed in achieving total control over the colony because it followed a hesitant and lenient policy geared towards making agreements with the Libyans. Therefore, the new fascist policy intended to use direct military action against combatants and their civilian support base. Mussolini expressed this on the eve of appointing General Luigi Bongiovanni as Cyrenaica's governor,

¹⁴⁸ Alessandro Lessona, *L'Africa settentrionale nella politica mediterranea*, (Roma, 1942), p. 78.

¹⁴⁹ F. Lobello, "Il Primo Decennio della Colonizzazione in Cirenaica", *Rivista Coloniale*, April 1925.

¹⁵⁰ MDJL, *al-Mahfuzat al-Tarikhiyya li wizarat Afriqiyya al-Italiyya*, Majmou'et Microfilm (Historical Documents of the Ministry of Colonies, Microfilm Collection), Khanna 122, Malef 263, Tripoli.

replacing Eduardo Baccardi, by telling the new governor to strike hard without wasting time.¹⁵¹

Governor Bongiovanni addressed the Cyrenaican parliament on March 1923, detailing the reasons as to why all autonomous areas had to be under Italian government control and that war could be avoided only if Italian sovereignty was acknowledged.¹⁵² Military operations commenced in Tripolitania concurrent with those in Cyrenaica, where Tripolitania's Governor Volpi issued an ultimatum to the resistance: either to surrender with no preconditions or face war. At the same time, a royal decree was issued rescinding all honorary decoration granted to some Tripolitanian notables.¹⁵³ The Italians commenced the attacks on the resistance camps in all areas of Cyrenaica as Governor Bongiovanni gathered Benghazi notables on 1 May 1923 and read a statement of the government's decision to cancel all the agreements between Italy and Cyrenaica.¹⁵⁴ He did not mention what law would replace the old one; therefore, the assumption was that Italy would go back to direct central rule of Cyrenaica. Before the Italians moved to occupy Ajdabia, there were efforts to stop such a move by Tripoli notable, Shaykh Khalid al-Ferti sent letters to the Foreign Ministries of the United States, France and England asking for humanitarian intervention to stop the new war;

¹⁵¹ Khalifa al-Tallisi, *Dirassat fi Tarikh al-Ist'amar al-Itali le Libya 1922-1931* (Studies in the History of Italian Colonisation of Libya 1922-1931), al-Dar al-Arabiya lel-Kitab, (Tunis, 1978), p. 176; Eduardo Baccardi was Cyrenaica's governor from October 1922 to December 1922; General Luigi Bongiovanni was governor 1923-1924.

¹⁵² Angelo del Boca, *Gli italiani in Libia*, p. 59; MDJL, *Taqrir 'an al-'Amaliat al-'Askeriyya, March 1923, Qiadat al-Urkan, Quwat Berga* (Military Operations Report, March 1923, General Command, Cyrenaican Forces), uncategorised document, Tripoli.

¹⁵³ al-Tallisi, *Dirassat fi Tarikh al-Ist'amar al-Itali le Libya 1922-1931*, pp. 270-296; for appendix of Italian decrees.

¹⁵⁴ Angelo Del Boca, *Gli italiani in Libia*, p. 62.

however, those countries did not respond to that plea.¹⁵⁵ The reasons for the refusal of those countries to intervene were, perhaps, a calculation to keep Italy too busy in Libya to demand more colonies in Africa, and any perceived victory for the Libyan resistance would directly affect neighbouring countries in North Africa. Ajdabia was occupied on 21 April 1923 and the Italian flag was hoisted atop Amir Idris al-Sanusi's house, as Omar al-Mukhtar became the military commander of the Cyrenaican resistance.¹⁵⁶

Bongiovanni decided to take advantage of the state of shock of the Libyan resistance forces resulting from occupying their capital Ajdabia, by advancing to the town of al-Breqa, 200 kilometres to the west of Benghazi, to be used as a base for further operations on the eastern coast of the Gulf of Sidra. An Eritrean battalion that consisted of 500 men headed to al-Breqa and took control of it. An Italian convoy sent to resupply and reinforce the battalion at al-Breqa was ambushed at Bir Bilal by the Libyan resistance and suffered heavy losses, and a force sent from al-Breqa for assistance was also defeated.¹⁵⁷ Bongiovanni was afraid that the resistance would regain control over Ajdabia; therefore, he ordered reinforcements from garrisons in Qaminis, Sulouq and Mesus.¹⁵⁸ He ordered the Air Force to start bombarding the areas in which the battles

¹⁵⁵ Ibid.

¹⁵⁶ Rodolfo Graziani, *Barqa al-Hadia*, p. 34; Omar al-Mukhtar (1862-1931).

¹⁵⁷ Ministero degli Affari Esteri, *L'Italia in Africa Vol. Operazioni dell'esercito-Avvenimenti Militari nel Nord Africa 1911-1943*, (Roma, 1964), p. 192; 40 Italian soldiers, 32 colonial Eritrean soldiers, the leader of the convoy and four officers were killed; the injured numbered 25; material losses were six armoured vehicles, 17 light trucks, 18 machine guns, eighty rifles, and one piece of artillery; the resistance force was led by Qajja Abdullah and Saleh Latyosh.

¹⁵⁸ MDJL, *Taqrir al-Qiada al-'Askeriyya Berga 'an Sir al-'Amaliat al-Herbiyya* (Cyrenaican Military Command Report about the Course of Military Operations), Mahfuzat Wizaret al-Khrijjiyya al-Italiyya (Italian Foreign Ministry Document) no. 122/30, Malef 271, Tripoli.

took place and, for three months, there were raids daily on the nomadic encampments in the area between al-Breqa and Bir Bilal. On one such aerial raid on 23 July 1923, Caproni and S. F. planes raided a group of 250 tents and multiple herds of livestock using machine guns and poison gas.¹⁵⁹ This was one of the earliest cases of the use of chemical weapons on a civilian population after the use of mustard gas during WWI.

General Bongiovanni was dismissed and replaced by General Ernesto Mombelli in the middle of 1924, which was an indication of Mussolini's initial failure in implementing his new militaristic policy.¹⁶⁰ The new governor spent a year in preparing his forces for a decisive battle against the Libyan resistance; however, despite the hard fighting and huge losses on both sides, there was no decisive result.¹⁶¹ The resistance attacked an Italian convoy between the towns of Susa and Shahat (250 kilometres east of Benghazi) on 30 June 1925, causing heavy losses.¹⁶² The nature of the geography and the fighting methods of surprise attacks in small numbers used by the Libyan resistance were increasingly the cause behind the ending of Italian generals' careers. General Mombelli was replaced by an old comrade in Mussolini's fascist movement, General Attilio

¹⁵⁹ MDJL, *Taqrir al-Qiada al-'Askeriyya Berga 'an Sir al-'Amaliat al-Herbiyya*; the type of the chemical weapon compound used was either mustard gas or phosgene since the Italian Air Force had two types of chemical-warfare compounds: C 500-T mustard gas and 41 kg phosgene bombs used in the Ethiopian war; see Giorgio Rochat, 'Italian Air Force in the Ethiopian War' in *Italian Colonialism*, R. Ben-Ghiat and M. Fuller, eds, (New York, 2005), p. 41; on 28 April 1936 Mussolini wrote to Graziani reconfirming his authorisation to use gas in Ethiopia with no reservation, see Alberto Sbacchi, 'Poison Gas Atrocities in the Italo-Ethiopian War', in *Italian Colonialism*, ed. R. Ben-Ghiat and M. Fuller, (New York, 2005), p. 50.

¹⁶⁰ A. Gaibi, *storia delle colonie italiane*, (Torino, 1934), p. 378; General Ernesto Mombelli, Cyrenaica's Governor (1924-1926).

¹⁶¹ Attilio Teruzzi, *Berga al-Khedr'a (Green Cyrenaica)*, tr. Khalifa al-Tallisi, (Tripoli, 1991), p. 29.

¹⁶² Thirty Italian soldiers and several colonial troops were killed.

Teruzzi.¹⁶³ His task was not only to defeat the Libyan resistance but also to purge Benghazi of Italian opposition to fascism. Among Benghazi's four thousand Italian residents, there were senior staff and businessmen whose intellectual and ideological make-up prevented them from supporting fascist ideas.¹⁶⁴ General Teruzzi accused this group of opposing the militaristic policy of the Fascist Party in Libya on the ground that oppressing the Libyan population would bring no benefits to Italy; he removed some of them from sensitive positions and had some of them sent back to Italy.¹⁶⁵ Some of those businessmen opposed to the Fascist Party cooperated with the Libyan resistance and imported weapons, ammunitions, and supplies in the name of the Italian army to be covertly handed to the resistance.¹⁶⁶

As the war in Cyrenaica continued, policy makers were debating in Italy whether to start negotiations with the Libyan resistance. In August 1925, the Ministry of Colonies was of the opinion that defeating the resistance would require facing a long period of guerrilla warfare, which would be exhausting to the military and would also require large number of troops to be based in Cyrenaica.¹⁶⁷ In addition, such a war would make it difficult to implement any administrative or economic system and prevent colonial development, even on a small scale.¹⁶⁸ The battle of al-Rehiba in March 1927 caused great

¹⁶³ Teruzzi, *Berga al-Khedr 'a*, p. 24; General Attilio Teruzzi was Cyrenaica's governor (1926-1928).

¹⁶⁴ Teruzzi, *Berga al-Khedr 'a*, p. 24

¹⁶⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶⁶ Rodolfo Graziani, *Barqa al-Hadia'*, p. 225.

¹⁶⁷ Angelo del Boca, *Gli italiani in Libia*, p. 73.

¹⁶⁸ Ibid.

apprehension among the Italian command and a great fervour among the Libyan resistance; General Teruzzi stated that there was total paralysis to conduct a quick response due to degradation of the Italian military.¹⁶⁹

The new fascist basic law for Tripolitania and Cyrenaica, replacing the basic law of 1919, was issued on 26 June 1927 and, to the Libyans, this law constituted a step backward, since it limited the participation of the Libyans in government and reduced rights granted to them under the former law.¹⁷⁰ It abolished the Italian citizenship afforded to all Libyan males; the new law instead redefined the category of *cittadini italiani libici* (Italian Libyan citizens) as a privilege requiring the approval of Italian authorities on individual basis.¹⁷¹ It deprived them of the right of freedom of speech, freedom of the press, freedom of association, and the right to practise professions in Italy.¹⁷² The law also deprived Libyans of the right to file grievances with the Italian parliament and the right of association and forming political and social organisations.¹⁷³ In addition, the law excluded Libyans from joining the Government's Council.¹⁷⁴ Libyans were only left

¹⁶⁹ Teruzzi, *Berga al-Khedr 'a*, p. 97; in the battle of al-Rehiba Italian Army casualties were 306 dead and an unspecified number of colonial troops were killed; Angelo del Boca, *Gli italiani in Libia*, p. 110.

¹⁷⁰ Angelo del Boca, *Gli italiani in Libia*, p. 123; Law no. 1013.

¹⁷¹ Applying for Italian Libyan citizenship, however, entailed the renunciation of Muslim customary laws. In fact, Italian colonial law demanded that Libyan citizens stop abiding by the Muslim personal statutes which, based on the precepts of Islam, pertained to the family, personal property, and religious practice (*statuto personale, diritto di famiglia e successorio*). Applying for citizenship thus meant relinquishing (*abiurare*) one's religious laws and by extension one's culture and community. Apparently, during the eleven years in which this legislation was in force, only three or four Libyans asked to become citizens; see Roberta Pergher, *Borderlines in the Borderlands: Defining Differences through History, Race, and Citizenship in Fascist Italy*, European University Institute, (San Domenico di Fiesole, 2009), p. 17.

¹⁷² Angelo del Boca, *Gli italiani in Libia*, p. 123.

¹⁷³ Ibid.

¹⁷⁴ Ibid.

with the rights of property, personal freedom, religion and customs. The new law cancelled the old system of electing municipalities; under the new law, the chief of the municipality and its council members were appointed by the colonial government and not elected.¹⁷⁵ The Italian legislators under the fascist regime wanted to deprive the Libyans of any political or traditional organisation uniting them; for instance, the title of tribal shaykh was cancelled, as were the titles of the towns' notables.¹⁷⁶ The fascist basic law did not overlook the *shari'a* court which enjoyed independence with regard to personal status and inheritance law, as all its rulings became, under the new basic law, subject to approval by the Italian courts.¹⁷⁷

The promulgation of the fascist basic law after three months of the major battle of al-Rehiba denoted that it was issued, at that time, as a colonial reaction in retaliation for the military setback. The Minister of Colonies, Luigi Federzoni, stated at the Italian parliament on 20 May 1928 that fascist Italy, as it crushed the Libyan rebels without mercy, was now imposing on the Libyans obedience and order under a system based on the total authority of the state. Some Italian intellectuals who were sympathetic to the Fascist Party regarded the basic law of 1927 as an important step because the relationships between the Italians and the locals needed to be realistic to guarantee their

¹⁷⁵ Ibid; Although municipalities maintained their status, they became part of the central government, subject to its decisions, and their budgets and jurisdictions in imposing taxes and duties had to be approved by the government. - The position of chief of the municipality was replaced in 1929 with a mayor, or *Podesta*, as was the case in the Italian municipalities.

¹⁷⁶ Angelo del Boca, *Gli italiani in Libia*, p. 123.

¹⁷⁷ Ibid.

submission, as the new law, which depended on force, had to replace freedoms that caused chaos and disputes.¹⁷⁸

After the al-Rahiba battle, the Italian politicians had to review their policies regarding the Libyan resistance, with attempts at negotiation and a call for a ceasefire. Should the negotiations fail, Italy would at least gain some time to reorganise and prepare its forces. In December 1928, both Governors of Tripolitania and Cyrenaica, Emilio De Bono and Attilio Teruzzi, were dismissed and Field Marshal Pietro Badoglio became the Governor of both states in January 1929, with Colonel Domenico Siciliani as Deputy Governor in Cyrenaica.¹⁷⁹ Marshal Badoglio issued two statements on 24 January: one directed at the Italian settlers in Tripolitania, and the other at Libyans.¹⁸⁰ He told the Italian settlers that agricultural colonialization in Tripolitania was a reality and would be also a reality in Cyrenaica; addressing the Libyans, he said that they all know that the Italian government was good and fair to its subjects who obeyed its laws and followed its orders, while it was severe and without mercy with those who thought they were able to revolt against the invincible Italian force.¹⁸¹ As the inhabitants of Tripoli heard the governor's threats, the feeling was that the country was on the verge of harsher and more dangerous changes than the changes following the fascist coup . However, the

¹⁷⁸ Alessandro Ausiello, *La politica Italiana in Libia*, (Roma, 1939), p. 223; compare the opinion of Italian scholars, during the fascist period, on the 1927 basic law to the opinion of Italian scholars in the 1980s, who considered that the law of 1927 took away from the Libyans all their rights, leaving them with only paying taxes and working in vocational jobs; see Angelo del Boca, *Gli italiani in Libia*, p. 123.

¹⁷⁹ Giorgio Rochat, *Pietro Badoglio*, (Torino, 1974), p. 590; Field Marshal Pietro Badoglio, Governor of Tripolitania and Cyrenaica (1929-1934); Colonel Domenico Siciliani, Deputy Governor in Cyrenaica (1929-1934).

¹⁸⁰ Angelo del Boca, *Gli italiani in Libia*, p. 123.

¹⁸¹ Ibid.

steps taken by Marshal Badoglio contradicted his statement since he ordered his Deputy in Cyrenaica, Siciliani, to withdraw outpost garrisons, implement a defensive plan, and start negotiations with the insurgents to reach a peaceful settlement, providing that it did not clash with Italy's interests.¹⁸² Marshal Badoglio described the situation in Cyrenaica as being different from Tripolitania as the resistance leader Omar al-Mukhtar was very active and able to attack the Italians in any place and at any time because the Italian forces were uncoordinated, with low morale, and unable to mount counterattacks.¹⁸³ The governor characterised the civilian population of Cyrenaica as pretending to be Italian subjects while supporting the insurgency.¹⁸⁴

In light of this reality, Marshal Badoglio pursued two tracks: he delegated Deputy Governor Siciliani to contact Omar al-Mukhtar and was devising a plan to remove the nomadic and semi-nomadic population of Cyrenaica (who did not reside in the coastal towns) to internment camps in the desert.¹⁸⁵ There were eight negotiation meetings between Omar al-Mukhtar and Italian officials in 1929.¹⁸⁶ Six of those meetings were preliminary negotiations with the Derna Administrative Official *mutasarriff* on 20 March at Ali al-ʿUbaidi's house, on 27 March at Saniat al-Qiqeb, on 6 April at Qalʿet al-Bakour, on 20 April at Wadi al-Qusour, on 27 May at Saniat al-Qiqeb, and on 30 May at

¹⁸² Giorgio Rochat, *Pietro Badoglio*, p.592.

¹⁸³ Angelo del Boca, *Gli italiani in Libia*, p. 153.

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁵ Giorgio Rochat, "La Repressione della Resistenza Araba in Cirenaica 1930-193", *II Movimento della Liberazione in Italia Genn*, March 1973, p. 18; from all the correspondence, it looked like that the internment of Cyrenaican population in camps was Marshal Badoglio's idea.

¹⁸⁶ Angelo del Boca, *Gli italiani in Libia*, p. 155.

Qandoula.¹⁸⁷ The penultimate meeting was with Cyrenaica's Deputy Governor Siciliani on 13 June at Qal'et al-Bakour and the final meeting with the Governor Marshal Badoglio on 19 June at Sidi Erhouma near al-Merj.¹⁸⁸ At the outset of those negotiations, a ceasefire was agreed but a tentative agreement between the two parties needed the final approval of Mussolini. Instead, Governor Marshal Badoglio, in a puzzling decision, telegraphed Rome announcing the surrender of Omar al-Mukhtar and all his forces without conditions; perhaps this action was a delaying procedure on the part of Marshal Badoglio.¹⁸⁹ The tentative agreement included a return to the 1919 basic law and joint rule, with the disarmament of some of the resistance force with the remaining force charged with security in areas under resistance control. Since the fascist regime was hesitant to go back to the basic law of 1919 and joint rule, the Italians delayed the approval of the final agreement.¹⁹⁰ Omar al-Mukhtar sent a letter to Deputy Governor Siciliani informing him the ceasefire would not be renewed after 24 October and issued a statement on 20 October that included the dialogue with Governor Badoglio at the Sidi Erhouma meeting.¹⁹¹

The news of the resumption of hostilities was a shock in Rome since it affected the credibility of Governor Badoglio. The Minister of Colonies, Emilio De Bono, sent instructions on 10 November 1930 with the agreement of the Prime Minister to sever all

¹⁸⁷ Shukri, *al-Sanusiyya deen wa-doula*, p. 297; Angelo del Boca, *Gli italiani in Libia*, p. 155.

¹⁸⁸ Shukri, *al-Sanusiyya deen wa-doula*, p. 303.

¹⁸⁹ Giorgio Rochat, "La Repressione della Resistenza Araba in Cirenaica 1930-193", p.18.

¹⁹⁰ Shukri, *al-Sanusiyya deen wa-doula*, p. 298.

¹⁹¹ Ibid., pp. 301, 303.

negotiations with the insurgents, restart military action, and stop all statements about any surrender if it was not a reality.¹⁹² In addition, the Minister accused the Deputy Governor Siciliani of failure and called for his dismissal.¹⁹³ General Rodolfo Graziani replaced Siciliani as Deputy Governor of Cyrenaica in 1930 and introduced harsh punitive measures against anyone suspected of supporting the resistance, including summary justice administered by the itinerant court, *Tribunali volanti*, which travelled by plane.¹⁹⁴ In July 1930, Governor Badoglio stressed the necessity of removing the nomadic and semi-nomadic population of Cyrenaica to internment camps in the desert as the only recourse to eliminate the insurgency by depriving it from its support base. Between eighty to one hundred thousand people and their livestock were removed from their areas in a forced march to several camps in the desert, surrounded by barbed wire and guarded by colonial troops, who were mainly Eritreans commanded by Italian officers.¹⁹⁵

¹⁹² Angelo del Boca, *Gli italiani in Libia*, p. 161.

¹⁹³ Ibid.

¹⁹⁴ Shukri, *al-Sanusiyya deen wa-doula*, p. 339; Angelo del Boca, *Gli italiani in Libia*, p. 215; about 250 people were executed through this special court, in addition to those killed without trial and prisoners who were killed after capture; Italian sources put the number at one thousand, among them Mohamed al-Hadad and his son, who were accused of supporting the resistance and executed in al-Berka, Benghazi in front of crowds.

¹⁹⁵ Rodolfo Graziani, *Barqa al-Hadia*, pp. 130-131; Nicola Labanca, "Italian Colonial Internment", in *Italian Colonialism*, p. 32. The major concentration camps were: al-Breqa, Slouq, al-Magrun, al-Agaila, Ajdabia, and al-Abiar. There were other smaller camps in Derna, al-Merj (Barce), Driana, Sidi Khalifa, Coefia, and al-Guarsha. - Conditions in these camps were terrible. Estimates of the human death toll vary between 40,000 and 65,000 and, through the extinction of 80 to 90 per cent of sheep, goats, horses and camels, many families were left without their means of livelihood.

Governor Badoglio ordered an attack on the oasis of al-Kufra 900 kilometres south of Benghazi; the oasis was occupied on 19 January 1931.¹⁹⁶ The general admitted that his forces committed atrocities during the al-Kufra operation, such as executing two hundred women and children and twelve captured Libyan fighters.¹⁹⁷ In April 1931, the Italian government started erecting a 280-kilometre barbed wire fence (*reticolato confinario*) along the Libyan Egyptian border to stop the flow of supplies to the Libyan resistance.¹⁹⁸ Omar al-Mukhtar was captured in Slonta on 11 September 1931, and was tried and executed on 16 September at the Slouq internment camp in front of thousands of Libyan detainees.¹⁹⁹

Italo Balbo became the governor of Libya in 1934 as Libya became a united colony under one governor with four regional provinces: Tripoli, Misurata, Benghazi, and Derna.

Governor Balbo encouraged the Libyans to become colonial troops and, in August 1935, nine thousand Libyan troops set sail to Somalia to fight in the Ethiopian war.²⁰⁰

Mussolini visited Libya on 10 March 1937 to inaugurate the coastal road from the Tunisian to the Egyptian borders where he was welcomed by a cheering Libyan crowd brought there at the orders of Governor Balbo.²⁰¹ Governor Balbo had a clear vision of

¹⁹⁶ Rodolfo Graziani, *Barqa al-Hadia*, pp. 195-196; the Libyan resistance suffered heavy losses of over 200 fighters killed.

¹⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 195.

¹⁹⁸ Graziani, *Barqa al-Hadia*, pp. 215-216; the 1.6-metre-high fence was ten-metres wide and extended for a distance of 270 km from al-Saloum on the coast to the oasis of al-Jaghoub; 2,500 Libyans worked on the fence, most of them recruited from the internment camps. The border fence was guarded by about 1,200 soldiers and arial surveillance by nine planes.

¹⁹⁹ Rodolfo Graziani, *Barqa al-Hadia*, pp. 244, 264; *Berid Barca*, 18 September 1931.

²⁰⁰ Wahbi Ahmed al-Bori, *Tarikh Benghazi Athna al-Ihtilal al-Itali* p. 233.

²⁰¹ *Libya al-Mosoura*, August 1937.

Italian colonial agricultural settlements and started an intensive programme of mass colonisation. The year 1938 saw the arrival of twenty thousand Italian settlers and, in a six-month period, about ten thousand Italian workers and twenty-three thousand Libyan labourers, built hundreds of rural homes, roads, and wells.²⁰²

Governor Balbo also maintained that Italian-Libyan cooperation was a necessity and the Libyans could not remain in the position of the colonised; therefore, a political and moral action was the solution, changing Libyans' social conditions by allowing them more participation in the social and economic life of Italian Libya.²⁰³ He rationalised the exclusion of the Libyans from public jobs and administrative positions was due to the lack of qualified candidates.²⁰⁴ On one hand, Governor Balbo was a Fascist Party star and advocate for intensive colonisation of Libya, while on the other hand he wanted to improve Libyans' social and political conditions. Therefore, Libyans had different opinions regarding his policies and the prevailing opinion was that he was not sincere in his desire to help them since he did not bring about any real improvement in education or employment, or address grievances about land ownership. On 1 September 1939, law no. 70 was issued, annexing Libya to be an Italian province and part of the Italian Kingdom, with a new citizenship called special Italian citizenship as a second degree Italian citizen.²⁰⁵ The fifth article of the law specified the required qualification to obtain special Italian citizenship: besides reaching 18 years, the applicant must have served in

²⁰² Aldo Moranti, *Libya settlement Plan*, 1938, p. 955.

²⁰³ Italo Balbo, "La politica sociale fascista verso gli arabi", *Atticonvegino volta*, Roma, October 1938, p. 375.

²⁰⁴ Ibid.

²⁰⁵ Alessandro Ausiello, *La politica Italiana in Libia*, p. 279.

the Italian military, must read and write Italian, and be a member of Arab branch of the Fascist Party's youth organisation, *Gioventu Araba del Littorio* (GAL).²⁰⁶ Such qualifying conditions would bar the great majority of Libyans from ever obtaining special Italian citizenship; in fact, by October 1940, no more than 2,500 Libyans had applied for special citizenship, and many of those applied only because they believed that "special citizenship" had become requirement to retain their jobs.²⁰⁷

The Italian government granted the *shari'a* court judges special distinctions as official state staff, with excellent salaries and honourable titles such as those bestowed on the elites or persons who perform special services to the state. The *shari'a* court judges were also independent and not subject to arbitrary dismissal.²⁰⁸ The staff of the *shari'a* courts were arranged in a pyramid-type structure. At the apex of the pyramid was the chief judge of the supreme *shari'a* court, then its members; in the next tier were the judges of the various *shari'a* courts in the two Libyan provinces of Tripolitania and Cyrenaica who, in turn, were divided into three tiers by seniority; the vice judges were ranked in the lower tier.²⁰⁹ In the same table, the various *muftis* were ranked into two tiers, as were the *shari'a* court clerks.²¹⁰ There was a slight amendment to the above table in the

²⁰⁶ John Wright, *Tarikh Libya mund aqdam al-'Usour (The History of Libya since Ancient Times)*, tr. Abdulhafiz al-Maiyar, Dar al-Ferjani, (Tripoli, 1972), p. 168.

²⁰⁷ Roberta Pergher, *Borderlines in the Borderlands: Defining Differences through History, Race, and Citizenship in Fascist Italy*, p. 19; this form of citizenship no longer demanded that one give up the Muslim personal statutes.

²⁰⁸ Governo della Libia, *Bollettino Ufficiale*, Trip., IX, 14, 16 May 1922.

²⁰⁹ Governo della Libia, *Bollettino Ufficiale*, Trip., XIII, 1 November 1926.

²¹⁰ Governo della Libia, *Bollettino Ufficiale*, Trip., XIII, 1 November 1926.

state decree of 24 February 1939, which established one *mufti* for the whole state, placed at the top of the *shari'a* court pyramid.²¹¹

Shari'a court judges were given other duties, such as membership in religious councils, for example, the endowment council.²¹² During official occasions, the *shari'a* court judges took centre stage and, usually, gave the first speech during political celebrations, as happened on Mussolini's visit to Libya in 1937 and the visit of Italy's King Victor Emmanuel III in the following year: both were received with a welcoming speech by a *shari'a* court judge in the cities and towns visited.²¹³

Such good relations between the *shari'a* court judges and the Libyan religious clergy on one side and the Italian colonial authorities on the other side were useful to enact some religious and social reforms. For example, a meeting between the governor of Libya, Marshal Italo Balbo, and some *shari'a* court judges in September 1935 saw some social issues discussed, and the decision was taken to set the marriage age of girls at fifteen years and to determine the dates of the religious celebrations marking *eid al-molid*, the birth of prophet Mohammad, at the Sufi lodges.²¹⁴

In 1939, Italy signed a treaty with Nazi Germany to form what would be later called the Axis to exact concessions from France and the United Kingdom regarding more Italian

²¹¹ Governo della Libia, *Bollettino Ufficiale*, XIII, n. 38, 10 October 1939, p. 1376; this was a consultative and honorary position held by the veteran judge Shaykh Mohammad Abu al-Assá d al-Alim, who continued as a mufti during the British Military Administration and Independent Libya.

²¹² Governo della Libia, *Bollettino Ufficiale*, Trip., V, 1 March 1918.

²¹³ *Majallat Libya al-Mosoura*, 6 March 1937, pp. 18-20; *Majellet Libya al-Mosoura*, 8 May 1938, p. 2; *Libia il Paese ei suoi Abitanti*, p. 30.

²¹⁴ *Majallat Libya al-Mosoura*, October 1935, pp. 4, 6; *Majellet Libya al-Mosoura*, 5 May 1940, p. 9.

African colonies. Meanwhile, Italy was building up its forces in Libya with more than 215,000 soldiers, including 28,500 Libyan colonial soldiers. Italy declared war on the United Kingdom and France in 1940 as Hitler's victories were increasing. The Libyan exiles in Egypt began organising a fighting force, as Prince Idris al-Sanusi signed a pact joining the Allies on 27 August 1940.²¹⁵ The new Libyan force numbered 11,079 soldiers and 96 officers, and their duties during the war included guarding transportation lines, military installations, and playing a supporting role with British military intelligence.²¹⁶ Governor Balbo's plane was shot down by friendly fire over Tobruk in the first weeks of WWII and General Graziani was appointed Libya's Governor in 1940.²¹⁷ The Allied forces entered Benghazi on 20 December 1942, and Tripoli on 23 February 1943. Libya became a territory under British administration until independence on 24 December 1951.²¹⁸

Summary

As the Fascist Party took over Italy, the joint rule agreement between Cyrenaica and Italy which was achieved under the democratic regime became untenable. The fascist regime was convinced that militaristic methods would grant them total control over Cyrenaica in a reasonable short time; however, they underestimated both the strength

²¹⁵ Majid Khedouri, *Libya al-Haditha*, tr. Nicola Ziada, Dar al-Thaqafa, (Beirut, 1966), p. 66.

²¹⁶ MDJL, *al-Wathaeq al-Arabia, Malef no. 175. Qa'ema bi Asma al-Jenoud al-Libyeen fi Jaish al-Tahrir* (Arabic Documents, List of Libyan Soldiers in the Liberation Army), Tripoli; Michel Carver, *M'arik Tobruk (Tobruk's Battles)*, tr. Idaret al-Tawjih al-Ma'enawi, Libyan Army, no date, p. 9.

²¹⁷ Rodolfo Graziani, *Africa settentrionale - 1940*, (Roma, 1966), p. 129.

²¹⁸ Shukri, *al-Sanusiyya deen wa-doula*, p. 369; the administrators of Cyrenaica were: Duncan Cameron Cumming (1943-1945); Peter Bevil Edward Acland (1945-1946); James William Norris Haugh (1946-1948); and Eric Armar Vully de Candole (1948-1949). The Emirate of Cyrenaica was recognised 1 June 1949; Prince Idris al-Sanusi became the Amir (1949-1951); Prince Idris al-Sanusi became the King of Libya (1951-1969).

and the will of the Libyans, and the Cyrenaicans. Two major elements helped the staying power of the Libyan resistance: the religious leaders of the Sanusi movement and the tribal sheiks. The fascist lack of understanding of local Libyan culture and traditions made them alienate powerful tribal leaders and town notables, some of whom were not inclined to support the insurgency. As the notables and tribal sheiks saw their interests threatened, they urged their followers to support the resistance by paying ten per cent of their income. Fascist Italy defeated the Libyan resistance only after ten years of conducting punitive measures against the civilian population of Cyrenaica, such as the mass removal of nomads and semi-nomads from their areas to internment camps in the desert, summary justice with death sentences carried out on the same day of trial, and extra judicial killings of prisoner combatants and civilians. There were also reports of Italian Air force planes attacking nomads' encampments and strafing them with heavy machine guns or bombarding them with poison gas.

After the insurgency abated, the urban Libyan citizens of Tripolitania and Cyrenaica found themselves with a new fascist law that took away almost all their rights, with the result that most could only find work in menial jobs. The nomads and semi-nomads of Cyrenaica – when they were released from internment camps – moved to the coastal towns to look for work because they had lost most of their livestock and were not allowed to go back to their farming lands; they lived in shanty towns at the outskirts of the major coastal areas, such as the al-Berka and Sidi Hussein districts in Benghazi.

Conclusion

Libyan society developed along the same general lines as the provinces of the Ottoman Empire, where the central power was far away and uninterested in providing any

services to its subjects, such as education, health care, or development. Hundreds of years of Ottoman rule led to the political dynamics found in Libya's two provinces, Tripolitania and Cyrenaica, in the early twentieth century. Those dynamics helped shape three types of political leaders: religious shaykhs; tribal shaykhs; and the towns' *'ayan* notables. Ottoman empire policies initially used contracted individuals to collect their taxes and fees from subjects, who were usually tribal shaykhs and the towns' notables; later, they used the same type of political leaders in administrative positions – essentially the Ottoman Empire was outsourcing its tax collection and administrative services in its provinces to reduce expenses, such as those incurred through training administrative staff and paying their salaries. These Ottoman policies helped drive and shape the political dynamics in the provinces of Tripolitania and Cyrenaica in the pre-Italian colonisation period.

The other component – the religious shaykh – was a product of one of the multitudes of Islamic religious movements that had found an area of operation unhindered by the absent and far away Ottoman Porte. One such religious movement was the Sanusi movement, which developed successful methods of creating alliances with tribal shaykhs and town notables. In the mid-nineteenth century, it used those allies to establish trade and learning centres called *zawiyas* in Cyrenaica, Fezzan, northern Chad, the western Egyptian desert, and the Hijaz.

As Italy, a latecomer to the colonial game, became interested in taking control of Tripolitania and Cyrenaica from the Ottomans, it made its calculation using a European socio-political method, i.e. fight the army of another European, although weak, Ottoman power and, after defeating them in a short war, the local population would welcome the

newcomers as liberators. The Ottomans withdrew from Tripolitania and Cyrenaica after signing the Lausanne Treaty but the local stakeholders continued the war. Another unforeseen element caused by international events further complicated the task for Italian policymakers and the Cyrenaican resistance – WWI. As the Ottomans and Italians joined opposing sides in that war, the Ottoman were free from their Lausanne Treaty obligation. The Sanusi led resistance in Cyrenaica and Tripolitania's resistance started to receive weapons and supplies from the Ottomans and their ally Germany. In return, the Central Powers wanted the Sanusi-led resistance to carry out attacks against the British forces in the Egyptian western desert. A party of Sanusi leaders was willing to attack the British since they considered the Egyptian western desert within their sphere of influence.

When the Sanusi-led resistance suffered a setback during their attack on the British forces, the party responsible for that decision was ousted and a more conciliatory leader emerged. The Sanusi-led resistance negotiated with the British and the Italians to reach a series of agreements, paving the way for the settlement of joint rule between the Italians and the Sanusi-led resistance. The political leaders of Cyrenaica reached such an agreement because they saw it as a restoration of rights, since due to this agreement the tribal shaykhs and town notables with the leadership of their religious shaykhs, could be represented in the new parliament and hold administrative positions in the government council.

Italy issued many laws during its colonisation of Libya; however, it took care not to interfere in religious affairs. The people of Cyrenaica were Ottoman subjects in 1911, became Italian subjects after the Treaty of Lausanne in 1912 and, after the basic law of

1919, became Italian citizens, along with Tripolitarians. When the war started again in 1923, and with the fascists cancelling the 1919 law, the people of Tripolitania and Cyrenaica were left as stateless subjects until the fascist law of 1934. At that point, they were given a new Libyan-Italian citizenship, which was amended in 1939 to become special Italian citizenship if they met certain citizenship qualification. Italian citizenship was reserved for the Italian settlers in Libya, whereas the special Italian citizenship was designed with such qualification requirements that only Italian-speaking government employees who served in the Italian army and were members of the fascist youth organisation the *Littorio* would be able to obtain it. By the end of the Italian colonialization of Libya, only a few people applied and received the special Italian citizenship.

The fascist coup d'état ended seven years of peace in Cyrenaica. A new totalitarian regime with a firm belief in the benefits of the use of force to obtain the desired results dismantled the joint rule agreement and instituted military rule in Tripolitania and Cyrenaica. The fascists confiscated property belonging to the Sanusi *zawiya* and arrested their shaykhs, as many Cyrenaican tribal shaykhs and notables found themselves with only one option – supporting the resistance. Ten years of war followed, with the Italian fascist regime using extreme punitive measures against the civilian population of Cyrenaica. Another international event interfered just eight years after the end of the Cyrenaican resistance – WWII. The Libyan exiles in Egypt formed a Sanusi-led military force and joined the Allies. In 1943, Libya became a territory under the control of a British Military Administration, until negotiations at the United Nations after its formation in 1945, permitted Libya to become an independent state in 1951.

Chapter 2

Italian Colonial Impact on Benghazi's Urban Development

In this chapter, there are three sections: the first section presents a background survey of the development of Benghazi as an administrative centre and port during the second Ottoman period, 1835-1911. The second section considers the urban development of Benghazi during the Italian liberal period (1911-1922) and, in the final section, the city's organisational plan during the fascist period (1922-1942) is discussed.

In this chapter, the main research question addresses the effect of colonial Italy's policy of settling tens of thousands of its citizens in Cyrenaica on the urban development of Benghazi. The researcher argues that colonial Italy's policies of establishing Italian farm settlements in Cyrenaica was the main reason for the development of Benghazi as an administrative centre for that project. In addition, the population growth of Benghazi was a consequence of Italy's policy of removing the semi-nomadic and nomadic population of Cyrenaica first into internment camps and, after releasing them in 1933, preventing them from returning to their former lands. Some of this population migrated to Benghazi to work as labourers and servants, causing a significant increase in Benghazi's population, which led to the appearance of the phenomena of shanty towns and substandard housing in the southern districts of Benghazi.

Benghazi's Urban Form in the Second Ottoman Period (1835-1911)

With a peninsula-like morphology, Benghazi lies within the eastern coastal region of Libya, between al-Jabel al-Akhdar Mountain in the east and the Mediterranean Sea in the north and west. Its location in low land means salt lakes are liable to be formed southeast of the city, making Benghazi a complete peninsula. In the nineteenth century, the town was a wide strip from the east and narrowed a little to the west, ending with a head at the sea. South of the town there were two lagoons: Sidi Younis Marsh in the southeast, and al-Sellmani Marsh in the southwest.¹ Both marshes were connected to the sea through the harbour, and separated the town from the rest of the remote areas such as Sidi Hussein and Sidi Daoud, which were connected to the town only through a narrow land bridge during the summer time, when much of the water evaporated.

Benghazi was known as Bernice until the end of the seventeenth century and had been known by this name in European navigators' charts since the thirteenth century.² The new name, "Benghazi", was more in use as it was settled by migration from the western

¹ F. W. and H. W. Beechey, *Proceedings of Expedition to Explore the Northern Coast of Africa from Tripoli Eastward*, (London, 1827), p. 232; see Appendix 1 for a map of Benghazi in 1821.

² Hadi Bulugma, *Dirassat Libiya, (Libyan Studies)*, Benghazi, 1975, pp. 59-60; the first written historical record of Hesperides was by Herodotus during events of 515 BC; see Herodotus (IV. 204). Hesperides was built on the north shore of the al-Sellmani Salt Lake since, at that time, the lake was deep enough to harbour sailing ships; after Hesperides was abandoned around 347 BC, and a new settlement was started nearby, which became Bernice (one of the five cities of the Pentapolis) around 249 BC. See Bulugma, *Dirassat Libiya*, pp. 54-55; Bernice was mentioned by this name by Arab geographers such as Ahmed ibn Abi Yaquoub al-Yaquobi in 894 A.D. in his book *Kitab al-Bildan (The Book of Countries)*, ed. De Goues, (Beirut, no date), vol. VII, p. 344; and by Abu al-Qasem Ibn Houqel in 990 A.D. in his book *Surat al-Ard (Earth's Picture)*, Beirut, (no date), pp. 69-70; and in the thirteenth century by Abu al-Hassen 'Ali Ibn Sa'id, *Bassat al-Ard fi al-Toul wa al-'Ared (The Extensive Earth in Longitudes and Latitudes)*, ed. Zaki Hassen et al., (Cairo, 1953), vol. I, pp. 39, 45.

Libyan cities of Misurata, Tajura and Zeliten.³ They began extracting salt and related materials from the large salt lakes, which was then exported to Europe; from that time, the economic position of its port was evident.⁴ This economic activity was a factor in attracting more people, usually from the same members of the family, which created a flow of a new and cohesive, interrelated population. Residences and shops in Benghazi's old city almost all date from sometime during the Ottoman rule.⁵

As a natural harbour, it began attracting people to settle and, in 1863, the region of Cyrenaica became an Ottoman province named *Mutassarifat Benghazi*, ruled directly from Istanbul, and was no longer subject to the Ottoman governor of Tripolitania. During the term of its first Governor Khalil Pasha (1863-1868), the town was divided into twelve districts administered by district mayors.⁶ The Ottoman census for the year 1863 puts Benghazi's population at 17,140, living in 1,614 one-storey homes.⁷ Benghazi's population in 1911 was estimated at 16,500; almost the same as that of 1863, and the number of Italians was estimated at one hundred.⁸ This was a reflection of the trend towards urbanisation in both Libyan provinces that started as a result of the Ottoman

³ Bazama, *Benghazi 'Aber al-Tarikh (Benghazi through History)*, (Benghazi, 1968), p. 58. Two opinions about the origin and etymology of the name Benghazi: the first it was named in honour of the saint Shaykh Ghazi who was buried there, or that it is the Arabised form of Bernice.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ The Ottoman fort, Qaser al-Turk, dates to the Ottoman Governor of Tripolitania Mohamed al-Sagezlli (1633-1649) who extended Ottoman rule to Cyrenaica in 1638; see M. Bazama, *Tarikh Barqa fil 'Ahd al- Qaramanli*, pp. 250-251.

⁶ Francesco Coro, *Libya Athn 'a al-'Ahd al-' Uthmani al-Thani (Libya during the Second Ottoman Era)*, p. 201: see Appendix no. 2 for a map of Benghazi's districts.

⁷ Bazama, *Tarikh Barqa fil 'Ahd al-Uthmani al-Thani*, p. 193.

⁸ Enrico de Agostini, *Sukkan Libya (Barqa)*, p. 692.

administration reforms in the second half of the nineteenth century, as more semi-nomadic groups settled near the major Ottoman administration centres.

In 1889, Governor Rashid Pasha planned to build a military headquarters in al-Berka district and a six-kilometre cargo railway from the port to Sidi Daoud district to transport building materials and salt; this project was completed in 1902.⁹ In the first decade of the twentieth century, more multi-storey buildings were constructed, such as the three-storey Benghazi municipality building and, in the year before the Italian invasion, the lighthouse was completed. Therefore, the few building projects the Ottomans constructed in Benghazi were of a military or administrative nature and there is no evidence that they constructed any urban or commercial buildings of note in Cyrenaica. As to the town's neighbourhoods, they kept the same style with unpaved streets, with the only paved streets leading from the coastal road to Midan al-Baladiya, the suq and the Turkish palace, where the administrative offices and the prison were located.¹⁰ By 1911, there were ten mosques, seven synagogues, and two churches; one Catholic and the other Greek Orthodox.¹¹ The presence of those places of worship was evidence of the Ottoman's policy of respecting freedom of worship and cultural diversity.

Nineteenth-century Benghazi had an Islamic city plan with narrow alleyways of two types: main alleyways with a width of 2.75 metres, and branch alleyways leading to

⁹ Abdulsttar M. al-Feqei, *Masajed Benghazi al-Qadima* (Benghazi's Ancient Mosques), (Benghazi, 1996), p. 45; Rashid Pasha was governor for two terms: the first (1882-1885) and the second (1889-1893).

¹⁰ Ali Fahmi Khichem, *al-Hajja li thalath Rihelat fi al-Bilad al-Libiya* (*The Requirement of Three Journeys to the Libyan Cities*), (Tripoli, 1974), pp. 127-132.

¹¹ Ibid.

homes, with a width between 1.5 and 2.2 metres.¹² Branch alleyways were built with an incline toward the main alleyways as a rainwater drainage device so that water would run through the main alleyways to penetrating alleys, and then to the main thoroughfare, parallel to the shoreline.¹³ Benghazi's homes were built with limestone and their roofs were constructed with palm trunks or wood; most of the buildings were built with local materials.¹⁴ A typical home was constructed around an inner yard, which is a design solution that acts as a heat regulator that functions on the difference between night temperatures and day temperatures.¹⁵ The local architecture of nineteenth-century Benghazi was the result of interaction with the environment, such as the use of local materials and a method of design to make the homes cooler in the summer heat.

Urban environmental factors affected Benghazi's urban fabric, roads, buildings, and the methods used to overcome climatic conditions. Those factors gave the city a distinctive quality, with the city's homes, markets and houses of worship obtaining an identity that influences the development of human and socio-economic bonds between the city and its inhabitants. The concept of an urban identity is based on architectural expression with a visual presence and elements such as form, material, the building techniques used, decorative elements, and inner spaces. Governor Murad Fouad Bek (1910-1911) was the last Ottoman governor of the province and the city's urban history fell under the

¹² Abdulbaqi Ibrahim, *Tasil al-Qeim al-Hadariyya fi Bina'al-Madina al-Islamiyya al-Mou'asera* (*The Roots of Civilized Values in the Construction of a Contemporary Islamic City*), (Cairo, 1982), p. 155-156.

¹³ Ibrahim, *Tasil al-Qeim al-Hadariyya fi Bina'al-Madina al-Islamiyya al-Mou'asera*, p. 155-156.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Ibrahim, *Tasil al-Qeim al-Hadariyya fi Bina'al-Madina al-Islamiyya al-Mou'asera*, p. 155-156.

influence of planning designs unrelated to the city's cultural heritage – Italian European style.

The second Ottoman period coincided with the urban development of European cities as new industrial revolution applications such as trains, the telegraph, and the use of fossil fuels such as gas, coal, and oil began to spread. In Europe, the theories and ideals of urban planning were embodied in the dismantling of the cities' walls, using their line as a circle road. Cities then expanded outside their walls' perimeter, and linear cities to match the railway system or parks spread. In Libya, the Ottomans' attempt at urban planning was the establishment of municipalities in population centres such as Tripoli, Misurata, and Benghazi during the last quarter of the nineteenth century. This new administrative development was accompanied by the construction of telegraph lines, hospitals, and schools.¹⁶ The municipalities' role in planning was limited to guiding urban development and organising building permits, as there was no urban planning legislation except for delegating the responsibility of overseeing all construction.¹⁷ Cities' maps were not available documents since the Ottomans considered these military secrets.¹⁸

¹⁶ Raouf Mohamed Bin 'amer, *Taṭūr al-Waḍe'a al-Suḥi fī Libya (Health Development in Libya)*, (Benghazi, 1997), pp. 87-88; in Benghazi, there was one Ottoman military hospital and a pharmacy administered by Benghazi's municipality, and in 1902, an Italian medical clinic was established providing medical services both to Italians and Libyans; for Ottoman telegraph lines see Historical Section of the Foreign Office, *Italian Libya*, (London, 1920), p. 42; for schools see Document no. 187, *DMT*, Tripoli, Libya.

¹⁷ Ali al-Miloudi Amoura, *Libya: Taṭūr al-Mudīn wa al-Takḥīṭ al-Ḥaḍari (Libya: Cities' Developments and Urban Planning)*, Dar al-Multaqa lel-Ṭiba'a wa al-Nasher, (Beirut, 1998), p. 317.

¹⁸ Ibid.

Benghazi's Urban Development in the Italian Liberal Period (1911-1922)

At the end of the nineteenth century, Italy had two main economic problems: unemployment among its burgeoning population and shortages of raw materials for its developing industries.¹⁹ For a solution for those problems, Italy looked to establish colonies in Africa. While the mineral resources of Libya remained unexplored, the Italian politicians envisioned to settle between two and three million Italians in Libya.²⁰ As Italy occupied the coastal cities, Italian policy makers realised the importance of building the required infrastructure to support such a large influx of population; hence, the beginning of the development of Benghazi as an administrative centre and a base to establish farm settlements in the fertile regions of Cyrenaica – al-Jabel al-Akhdar. Colonial Benghazi's urban development was achieved through two distinctive development plans: the 1914 development plan during the liberal period and the 1930 organisational plan during the fascist period.

After the fall of Benghazi and Cyrenaica's other urban coastal centres to the Italians following unequal combat, the war in the surrounding areas necessitated the construction of military installations such as the Generale Torelli Military Barracks in Sidi Khrebesh, the Military Autogruppo and other infrastructure of this type. For Benghazi to be an effective armed camp, the Italians built a defensive wall circumvallating the city within seventy days; it reached a height of five metres and a

¹⁹ E. W. Bovill, 'Italy in Africa', *Journal of the Royal African Society*, vol. 32, No. 129, (1933), p. 353.

²⁰ Federico Cresti, 'The Early Years of Agency for the Colonization of Cyrenaica (1932-1935)', in Ruth Ben-Ghiat and Mia Fuller, eds, *Italian Colonialism*, (New York, 2005), p. 73.

width of one metre, and its length was approximately four kilometres.²¹ This wall had five gates for monitoring the movement of people in and out of the city and thirteen windows to use as machine gun positions.²² The wall was completed in such a short time due to the intensity of the resistance in the outskirts of the town and the location of the town between the marshes and the sea. The fact that the military focused its energy well outside the city itself, and that the projects inside the city were mostly non-military, suggest that the Italians viewed Benghazi's urban space as secure. The urbanised residents of the city were presumed to be non-threatening. On the other hand, Italians saw the nomadic and semi-nomadic populations outside the urban areas as embodying the opposition to the occupation, and expected them to attack the city.

One of the implications of the construction of the wall was the breakdown of communication not only between those inside the city and the people outside it, but also between the inhabitants of the city itself, since the city districts of al-Sabery , Sidi Hussein, and Sidi Daoud were outside the wall and a permit was required to enter the walled city.²³ The Italian invasion occurred during the winter, with many residents farming agricultural lands in the city's suburbs, such as al-Zrereia, al-Thameh and al-Sellmani; anyone outside the city prior to the occupation could not enter the city.²⁴

²¹ Bulugma, *Dirassat Libiya*, p. 68; see Appendix no.3 for a map of the defensive wall.

²² Ibid., p. 69.

²³ MSBSMS, no. 34, 1911-1919, p. 30; MSBSMS, no. 115, 1912-1924, p. 136.

²⁴ Ibid.

The first Italian census of 1914 showed that the total population of Benghazi was 28,896, composed of 24,019 Libyans, 1,870 Jews and 3,000 Europeans.²⁵ There were nearly 3,000 homes, 100 streets, 45 alleys, and 492 street gas lamps. An estimated 1,200 businesses, such as shops, cafes, restaurants, and bakeries, were located around the three public squares: Midan al-Baladiya, Midan suq al-Hashish, and Midan al-fundug. The arrival of the first 1,850 Italian civilian settlers, mainly from Sicily and southern Italy, was mentioned in the 1914 census, with 600 of them being women and children and a further 200 government staff and businessmen; the remainder was a mix of craftsmen and workers.²⁶ They rented homes in the districts of al-Draoy, Shabi, Louhichi and Sidi Salem, which caused housing shortages and rental increases in Benghazi.²⁷

On 14 May 1916, the Italian government issued a decree to sequester all real estate properties belonging to non-resident subjects of the Ottoman Empire, in either of the two states of Tripoli or Cyrenaica. On 15 October 1916, another decree was issued to sequester all real estate properties belonging to “insubordinate” Libyans and Libyans who left Libya. By those decrees, the ownership of property belonging to the Ottoman Turks or Libyans who had either left Libya or engaged in the Libyan resistance was transferred to the Italian government.²⁸ On 3 July 1921, Law no. 1207 regarding

²⁵ Wahbi Ahmed al-Bori, *Mojtam 'a Madinat Benghazi fi al-Nisf al-Awal min al-Qarn al-Eshrin (Benghazi's Society in the First Half of the Twentieth Century)*, p. 69.

²⁶ al-Bori, *Mojtam 'a Madinat Benghazi*, pp.140-141.

²⁷ Ibid.; MSBSMS, no. 189, 1915-1918, p. 25; MSBSMS, no. 185, 1911-1919, p. 8.

²⁸ *Governo della Libia Bollettino Ufficiale*, Tripoli, 1916.

organising real estate was issued. Per this law, the Italian government had ownership rights over beaches, running streams, dry riverbeds, caravan trails, market squares, archaeological sites, cemeteries, military lands, marshes, salt works, quarries, minerals, forests, and railways. The fifth chapter of the first article of this law stated that land known as *miri* land (that which was formerly owned by the Ottoman state and utilised by Libyan farmers) was now owned by the Italian state.²⁹ Even donated or granted property administered by the *waqf* (Islamic endowments) was not exempt from the Italian government's real estate policy.³⁰ The real estate laws and decrees essentially meant that most of the land was the property of the Italian state. The Italian Governor of Cyrenaica, Attilio Teruzzi (1926-1928), upon reflecting on the use of the new real estate laws, maintained that, through laws and procedures, the Italian administration could expropriate large areas for "public good" without resorting to slow and lengthy procedures, which guaranteed judicial and procedural integrity.³¹

The 1914 Benghazi Development Plan

The first organising and expansion studies for the city of Benghazi began in 1912 by Italian military officials and engineers, but the comprehensive plan was not approved

²⁹ *Governo della Libia Bollettino Ufficiale*, Tripoli, July 1921, no. 1207; the Ottoman state recognised three primary types of landholding: private property belonging to Muslims (*oşri* land), private property belonging to non-Muslims (*haraci* land), and conquered land under state control (*miri* land); see M. Sukru Hanioglu, *A Brief History of the Late Ottoman Empire*, p. 20.

³⁰ MSBSMS, 1911-1919, p.11; the Islamic endowment institution *waqf* that was funded by citizens' endowments chiefly administered public ownership in Libyan society during the Ottoman and Italian colonial periods. Endowment is what citizens dedicate from their property (movable and immovable) to continue to generate funds for charitable purposes for people, mosques and cemeteries and so on. The Islamic Endowment Institution existed in Libya during the Ottoman period and had evolved over the centuries during the successive Islamic Caliphates periods.

³¹ Attilio Teruzzi, *Berga al-Khedr 'a (Green Cyrenaica)*, p. 288.

until January 1914.³² Its main guideline was to shape the growth of the new town while leaving the original nearly untouched, except for some demolition to enlarge the roads surrounding the old city. This plan considered the increase of the population – i.e. the new Italian colonists – indicating the use of the areas facing Jillyana Beach, named Corso Italia, and this plan did not include the utilisation of salt marshes' land.³³ The plan did not encroach on the vacant areas in the old city in anticipation of a probable of Libyan population increase; however, the plan transgressed on the closed Islamic cemeteries to enlarge the European district of the city.³⁴ The old city appeared in the plan to be encircled by a new city designated to house the Italian settlers.³⁵

The new city's plan began by extending a new Western-style street, starting from Midan al-Baladiya in the centre of the city, and named Via Roma, and adopted the Islamic arch as a symbol of continuity of the Arab districts.³⁶ It led to Midan al-Melh, which the Italians renamed Piazza del Re, which then connected with a grand avenue named Corso Italia, which reached the Sidi Hussein district, where it intersected another avenue, Via

³² Omar Suleiman Saleh, 'Population Movement in Benghazi', MA Thesis University of Benghazi (2000), p. 222; see Appendix no. 4 for the 1914 Benghazi's development plan.

³³ A. Darz, *La Citta' di Bengasi: Urbanistica e Colonizzazione, Storia di un Secolo Di Trasformazioni*, Institute Unversitario di Architettura di Venezia, (Venezia, 1991), p. 78; as part of cultural decolonisation all Italian named streets were renamed after independence with Arabic names; Corso Italia is currently known as Jamal Abdul Nasser Street.

³⁴ MSBSMS, 1926-1929, p. 33.

³⁵ Saleh, 'Population Movement in Benghazi', p. 222.

³⁶ Via Roma was renamed Omar al-Mukhtar Street.

le Regina, that ran parallel to Via Roma; this way the entire old city was indeed encircled by the new Italian city.³⁷

The vacant area between Via le Regina and the Sidi Hussein district was allotted for government-built housing and military installations. Via le Regina led to areas of unspecified designation, but the plan stated that these areas could be used for either a light industrial zone, the expansion of the old city, or another purpose to be determined later. Another area was designated as a park and ended at the intersection of Via le Regina and Via Ospedale, where the Military Hospital and the beginning of al-Sabrey district were located.³⁸ Via Ospedale extended in the direction of the sea to a land strip between the sea and the old city and General Torelli's Camp. Another strip of land between the port and the Sidi Khrebish Cemetery was designated for the city's government administration buildings and a residential area overlooking the sea and including Via Roma. In the Ras Jillyana area, located between the sea and the marsh, one side was designated as residential and the other side as an industrial zone to produce sea salt.³⁹ The train station was in the Sidi Hussein district.⁴⁰

The Italians introduced several unknown materials and techniques to the Libyans, such as the use of marble floors, bricks, and reinforced concrete supports. Limestone blocks (50 x 30 cm) were used in construction using the wall-bearing method and the use of

³⁷ Bulugma, *Dirassat Libiya*, p. 70; Via le Regina was renamed Amer Ibn al-'As Street.

³⁸ Via Ospedale was renamed al-Tariq al-Daeri (Ring Road); the Italian Military Hospital is now named the al-Jumhoriya Hospital.

³⁹ This is currently Abdulmenum Riad Street, where the National Radio station is located.

⁴⁰ Darz, *La Citta' di Bengasi: Urbanistica e Colonizzazione*, pp. 81-83.

cement and whitewash as a finish.⁴¹ The new areas and spaces were designed on the classical Roman method of wide avenues extending in a straight line for a distance and intersecting streets of the same design.⁴² A design that originated from a different planning concept than the local Arab concept, which prefers narrow, winding or circular streets and lanes and its annexes in a design of entanglement; such a local design was an unclear concept to European tastes and appeared to them to be a disorganised and spontaneous design. The planning design for the new city showed the interest of the colonial planners in the grid street system, and to the Libyans it reflected unprecedented aesthetic values, despite some attempts to acknowledge the influence of local architecture style in the modern buildings.

From the outset, the Italians concentrated their attention on the port, since it was the main connection between Italy and Benghazi. There were two proposals to develop the port in the 1914 plan: the first was to develop the inner Ottoman era harbour and to add another dock on the opposite side, starting from Ras Jillyana. The second proposal was to develop the outer port and keep the inner harbour for small craft.⁴³

The 1914 plan paid special attention to communications and utilities; the construction of post and telegraph services buildings was completed before 1918.⁴⁴ In addition, to solve the problem of water shortages, wells were dug in al-Foyhat, twelve kilometres outside the city, where water was found at a depth of eleven metres. This was then pumped

⁴¹ J. Hassan Jouda, *Jighrafiyat Afriqiya al-Eqlimiya (Regional African Geography)*, (Beirut, 1994), p. 23.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Darz, *La Citta' di Bengasi: Urbanistica e Colonizzazione*, p. 84.

⁴⁴ Ibid., p. 84; a telegraph cable was laid undersea between Benghazi and Syracuse.

through a network of underground tunnels to reservoirs in Jillyana, and water lines were extended to all Italian districts in the new city – but the old city was excluded from this service.⁴⁵ The plan did not include a sewage system, instead promulgating a continuation of septic tank use.⁴⁶

In the fall of 1914, the Governor of Benghazi, Giovanni Battista Ameglio,⁴⁷ inaugurated the railway line connecting Benghazi to Benina with a length of nineteen kilometres. The central train station at Sidi Hussein district had a train shed and a maintenance shop, and it was connected to the port by a two-kilometre branch line. In June 1916, another line was inaugurated between Benghazi and al-Rejma village, with a length of thirty kilometres.⁴⁸

In the first period of Italian colonisation, the lack of housing for Italian government staff and Italian construction workers forced the quick construction of homes. Italian planners, however, decided that the design of residential buildings in Benghazi must be in accordance with two principles: first, newcomers must feel that they were in similar circumstances to those in Italy, which could be achieved by designing homes identical to Italian homes. Secondly, it was important to establish a building model for the Libyans to imitate when constructing buildings in the Islamic-Arabic architectural style, with the emphasis that the interior design of the building was European, although, as for the facade, there could be a marriage between elements of Islamic-Arabic and Italian

⁴⁵ Darz, *La Citta' di Bengasi: Urbanistica e Colonizzazione*, p. 85.

⁴⁶ Ibid., p. 86.

⁴⁷ Giovanni Battista Ameglio was Benghazi's governor from 1913 to 1918.

⁴⁸ Ibrahim Ahmed al-Mehdawi, *Hekaya Madinati*, pp. 102-104.

architectural style.⁴⁹ To that end, a School of Arts and Trades was established to train the population (Italian and Libyan) in construction skills.⁵⁰

The 1914 plan allowed the government to establish housing models unknown to the city before the Italian occupation. For the first time, there were apartment buildings with windows and balconies overlooking the street, and villas and duplex housing where the ground floor was a reception room, and living quarters were on the second floor. The Italian colonists' residences in the city were segregated by employment status (staff member, worker, military or civilian) and family status (single or married); for example, housing on the Corso Italia that connected the city to the al-Berka district through Sidi Hussein was designated as a residential area for military officers, while Italian workers resided in the area between Via le Regina and the Sidi Hussein district.

One general design element in the 1914 plan was the adaptation of Islamic-Arabic architectural style to unify the character of the city. This exterior appearance element extended from the oldest parts of the town to the newest. This idea was very well executed; starting from Midan al-Baladiya at the beginning of Via Roma, where the al-‘Ateeq mosque stands, to the al-Shabi mosque, and the street between the two squares, there was a pedestrian walkway with Islamic arches on its side. This design gives strength to Midan al-Baladiya, where there is an emphasis on the architectural appearance of the al-‘Ateeq mosque, highlighting it to become the focal point in the design and dividing the Arab districts from the beginning of the adapted European-style

⁴⁹ Darz, *La Citta' di Bengasi: Urbanistica e Colonizzazione*, pp. 89-91.

⁵⁰ Ibid., pp. 92-94.

with the local architecture in one of the latter's design cornerstones – the Islamic arch. The patterned use of arches on either side of main streets was used in the plan to unify the city's facades, starting in the last part of the old city, Midan al-Baladiya, with an architectural flexibility and harmony between Islamic and European design on opposing sides of the square, even though Libyans were not allowed to reside in the Italian districts. Benghazi's old city could conserve its distinctive identity in this colonial period since there was no major building demolition programme.

The functional importance of the city, generally, had increased at this stage because of the evolution of transportation, improved communications, and services. The construction of roads and railways linked the city with surrounding regions, making it the administrative centre of Cyrenaica. Accompanied by the relative development of postal, telegraph services, and improved water supply, this raised the functional efficiency of the city, giving it a new urban character.

These were the most important details in the 1914 plan for the city of Benghazi, as designed by Italian military engineers, as the period of peace between 1917 and 1923 allowed the Italians to concentrate on reorganising and expanding Benghazi in a south-westerly direction. The plan did not provide any services or utilities to those districts since the Italians classified them as unplanned and unorganised areas. Employment opportunities in construction and providing services to the Italian community in the city significantly increased the population, resulting in sprawling urban slums outside the city and the defensive wall (in the Sidi Daoud and Sidi Hussein districts) to house Libyan labourers and servants in random, sub-standard housing which tended to be of a rural character. Finally, it is noted that the toilets' sanitary conditions in the old city

were at their worst, as there was no sewage system and the simple pit latrines had dirt bottoms that created a bad smell.⁵¹ Health officials attribute the spread of eye diseases such as trachoma, especially among children, to the lack of sanitation.⁵²

Benghazi's Urban Development in the Fascist Period 1922-1942

During the first eight years of the fascist period, the colonial administrators continued with the implementation of the 1914 plan while the planners were putting together a revised plan, with a grander vision to fit the presumed fascist prestige. For the Italian district in the first years of the fascist period, Piazza del Re represented a focal point, with a park at the square's centre, and overlooking the Palazzo del Governatore, the Moorish-style governor's residence, and other remarkable architectural buildings.⁵³ From this square, the main artery of the new city, Corso Italia, which was lined with palm trees, led to the defensive wall gate.⁵⁴ On this avenue stood the main facade of the Palazzo del Governatore and various buildings such as Banco di Italia, the Civil Court, and schools. At the training field and the sports administration building, there was also a fork to Via de Martino, lined with several modern villas.⁵⁵

⁵¹ Dante M. Tuninetti, *Cirenaica d'Oggi*, (Benghazi, 1930), p. 1341.

⁵² *Berid Barca*, 16 March 1934.

⁵³ The governor's palace is currently known as Qaser al-manar and was built on the site of the former Qaser al-Turk (al-Uthmani), the Ottoman governor's palace.

⁵⁴ The defensive wall's gate was located at what is now the intersection of Jamal Abdul Nasser and Algeria Streets.

⁵⁵ The sports administration building is now the location of a government complex; Via de Martino was Renamed Abdulmen'am Riad.

Piazza del Re was connected by the axis of Via Roma and Via Generale Briccola, to Midan al-Baladiya, located within the old city, in which stood the rebuilt and enlarged al-Baladiya Building (municipal offices) where several houses were expropriated to accomplish its enlargement.⁵⁶ Midan Al-Baladiya was the boundary between the old city and the new Italian city. Two streets branched out from this square: Suq al-Dalam and Via Margretta. The first street began with Suq al-Dalam market, which burnt down in 1922 and was restored later. This market ended at another square – Midan al-Hadada. Suq al-Jareed, an extension of the first *suq*, began at Midan al-Hadada and continued until it connected with the Bu Ghoula Street that ended at the hospital.⁵⁷ The second street was Via Margretta, which began at Zawiya al-Rifa'iya, and continued adjacent and parallel to the seashore to the slaughter house and descended after it passed in front of the Sidi Khrebesh lighthouse, to reach Generale Torelli's Military Barracks and intersected with Via Ospedale.⁵⁸ The railway station was located at the defensive wall's gate across from the industrial zone where the railway lines separated into two lines: the first line extended 110 kilometres southeast to al-Merj, which opened in stages between 1914 and 1927; and the other line proceeded southwest fifty-six kilometres to Sulouq, which opened in 1926.⁵⁹

⁵⁶ MJBSMS, 1926-1929, p. 33; *Governo Della Cirenaica Bollettino Ufficiale*, 16 September 1927, p. 313.

⁵⁷ Suq al-Dalam is the oldest of Benghazi's markets, located next to al-'Ateeq mosque and is a typical *suq*, where the marketplace is organised into different trades; near the mosque is the suq of candle merchants, booksellers, and bookbinders; then the *suq* of leather merchants and textiles, after that the carpenters, locksmiths, and the producers of copper utensils; other markets also branch out from this market; see Ali al-Miloudi Amoura, *Libya: Taṭour al-Mudin wa al-Takḥīṭ al-Haḍari (Libya: Cities' Developments and Urban Planning)*, (Beirut, 1998).

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 141-143.

⁵⁹ G. Narducci, *Istitan Berga: Qadimun wa Hadithun (Colonisation of Cyrenaica: Ancient and Modern)*, tr. Ibrahim Ahmed al-Mehdawi, (Sirte, 1996), p.178; railway stations on the Benghazi-al-Merj line included al-Letti (9 km), Benina (19 km), al-Regima (30 km), Qaber al-Qira (41 km), al-Abiar (60 km), Sidi Mahious (76 km), Sidi Jibrin (97

These key features comprised the extent of the implementation of the 1914 plan of Benghazi and its modifications until the late 1920s. Subsequently, reports were prepared to design a new organisational plan for the city of Benghazi.

Benghazi's 1930 Organisational Plan

The administrators and planners conceived Benghazi's 1930 organisational plan between the years 1926 and 1927, which aimed at providing a vision for change in the city itself. They examined the topography of the city early in the fascist period, and explained that there were no green spaces, except in small parts of the al-Sabrey district, parts of the Jillyana peninsula, and the palm trees in the Gar Younes area. The city and its environs are flat, only two metres above sea level, and mostly lacking in vegetation. Between the sea and the al-Sellmani marsh, the city extends roughly in a rectangle from east to north-west and in the form of the peninsula (Khrebesb promontory) west to the south-west. The city is devoid of any hills or high elevation except for Sidi Khrebesb, which represents the highest point in the city. The Palazzo del Governatore and the lighthouse towered over many other important buildings located along the seashore, and the Monument to the Battle Jillyana rises above Jillyana Peninsula.

Fascist texts indicated that the city has two sides – an old Arab city and an Italian district – and that the old city retained its local character with respect to the facades of buildings, which were uniformly covered with a reddish-brown layer of grout.⁶⁰ These

km), and al-Merj (108km); stations on the Benghazi-Sulouq line included al-Berka (2 km), al-Quarsha (10 km), al-Quarsha 2 (14 km), al-Nauaquiya (24 km), al-Nauaquiya 2 (32 km), Qemines-Giardina (40 km), Qeminus-Giardina 2 (45 km), Sulouq (50 km), and Sulouq 2 (56 km); Darz, *La Citta' di Bengasi: Urbanistica e Colonizzazione*, p. 140.

⁶⁰ Darz, *La Citta' di Bengasi: Urbanistica e Colonizzazione*, p. 136-138.

facades were characterised by mostly rectangular shaped wooden doors. The planners report mentioned that the vacant lots between the old buildings in the al-Berka area, the marshes, as well as a few spaces inside the old city, particularly near the seashore, had been built up per the 1914 plan.⁶¹ Therefore, the goal was that the state should design a plan for the city in a systematic manner. This new concept organically adopted and embraced the nested structure of the city between the old (old city), the medium (pre-fascist) and the future (post-fascist).⁶² The basis of the fascist plan was the need to follow the basic outline of a new philosophy and not to provide engineering solutions from a different model. The idea was based on Italian colonial architecture, which focused on practical solutions to the requirements of life, not only by highlighting huge government buildings, but demonstrating respectful architecture for smaller buildings because they were more prevalent in the city.⁶³

Special architectural elements such as arches were displayed when constructing public and administrative buildings, because the Italian fascists were aware that a strong administration was a critical necessity to cement their colonial control on all of Cyrenaica. That control was to be exercised from a central point, Benghazi, which had a concentrated, large population and a transportation network. The largest of the administrative buildings and the most famous in the fascist period was the Palazzo del Governatore, located on the Corso Italia and Piazza 28 October. There was also an

⁶¹ Darz, *La Citta' di Bengasi: Urbanistica e Colonizzazione*, p. 136-138.

⁶² Ibid, p. 144; for maps of the 1930 organisational plan see Appendices no.s 5 and 6.

⁶³ Ibid. pp. 145-148.

emphasis on the broad seaside pier behind the administrative building that was named Via Vittoria, running parallel to Corso Italia, and was decorated with trees and statues.⁶⁴

The fascist government additionally recognised a need for commercial exchange centres in the city. Therefore, the Italians rebuilt the Suq al-Dalam after it burnt down in 1922.

This market represented a meeting place between the city residents and traders from the countryside. The colonial government also built several new markets in the city: a new Sicilian-style vegetable market which assembled scattered shops and gave them a uniform look; a fish market neighbouring the vegetable market; a grain and livestock market; and a special building for the salt trade.⁶⁵ This was in addition to the establishment of cultural and recreational buildings, such as the Bernichi theatre and cinema.⁶⁶

The 1930 plan included some street modifications to the old city to facilitate traffic. This included the modification of al-Melh Street and Midan al-Baladiya. Al-Melh Street, which started at the hospital until it reached Corso Italia, was widened to between seventeen to twenty metres at some sections; subsequently, this street divided the old city into two equal parts to facilitate vehicle traffic.⁶⁷ Midan al-Baladiya was enlarged to reach a width of eleven metres from the right side of Via Briccola that connected the square to the Piazza del Re.

⁶⁴ *Berid Barca*, 9 April 1935; it had two columns with the Venetian lion and the Roman wolf atop them.

⁶⁵ *Berid Barca*, 31 October 1932; the fish market is known now as Suq al-Hout; the grain and livestock market is known now as al-Funqal-Baladi.

⁶⁶ *Benghazi's Department of Archaeology*, 1973 photograph; this is known now as Benghazi Cinema.

⁶⁷ *Berid Barca*, 19 April 1932.

For the Italians, the port was a means of communication with the wider world, so they were keen that it should take an important place in their plans. From its inception, Benghazi had functioned as a harbour; the old name of the city was coupled with the adjective port, Marsa Benghazi.⁶⁸ Expanding the port was not only the result of the increase in size and population but also for to improve its functional value for the entire region.⁶⁹ The organisational plan of 1930 focused on maritime construction and increased the funding allocated for seaports because the government was convinced that it was of great importance to expand the port of Benghazi.⁷⁰ Italian companies such as SICAM Company had previously completed work in the port per the 1914 plan.⁷¹

By 1936, the coastal road, *la strada litoranea*, from the Tunisian border to the Egyptian border was completed; thus, Cyrenaica was connected to Tripolitania by motor transportation.⁷² The coastal road network also connected Benghazi to other Cyrenaican towns, such as Ajdabia, al-Merj, Derna, and Tobruk.

There was confirmation of the value the Italians placed on the relationship between religious buildings and urban life, with the establishment of the first Italian religious building in Benghazi since the occupation; a church was built in the al-Berka area where

⁶⁸ The word *marsa* means harbour in Arabic.

⁶⁹ *Berid Barca*, 9 April 1935.

⁷⁰ Attilio Teruzzi, *Berga al-Khedr 'a (Green Cyrenaica)*, tr. Khalifa al-Tallisi, (Tripoli, 1991), p. 268; in 1927-1928, the port construction budget was 43 million lire.

⁷¹ Darz, *La Citta' di Bengasi: Urbanistica e Colonizzazione*, pp. 149-154.

⁷² *Berid Barca*, 9 April 1935; an estimated thirty thousand workers took part in construction of the coastal road with an estimated cost of 100 million lire.

there were 3,000 housing units.⁷³ A huge cathedral overlooking the sea in the area between Corso Italia and Via de Marino was established and the height of the cross was forty four metres above sea level.⁷⁴ Acknowledging Muslims' needs, the colonial government restored the largest three mosques in the city – the al-‘Ateeg Mosque, Osman Mosque, and al-Hadia Mosque.⁷⁵

With regard to health services, the military hospital represented the greatest health achievement of the city and was enlarged and converted to civilian use to serve the entire region.⁷⁶ The Italians improved the water supply system to the new city by increasing the water reservoir's capacity.⁷⁷ Providing drinking water to homes in the old city continued to be a problem and the Italian government installed faucets in different street locations.⁷⁸ As was with the 1914 plan, the construction of the sewage system was limited to the new Italian city while septic tanks continued to be used in the old city.⁷⁹

These were the most prominent features of the 1914 and 1930 organisational plans for the city of Benghazi. After the Italian forces achieved control over Benghazi, Italian settlers began to arrive. Per the 1914 census, there were 1,850 Italian settlers in

⁷³ Darz, *La Citta' di Bengasi: Urbanistica e Colonizzazione*, p. 155.

⁷⁴ Ibid., p. 156.

⁷⁵ Darz, *La Citta' di Bengasi: Urbanistica e Colonizzazione*, p.158; Osman Mosque was built by Ottoman governor Rashid Pasha and his tomb is at the mosque's cemetery; al-Hadiyya Mosque was built by Ottoman governor Taher Pasha in the al-Berka area.

⁷⁶ Ibid. pp. 152-164.

⁷⁷ MSBSMS, 1932-1935, p. 71; this water reservoir is located at Sidi Khrebesh under the lighthouse.

⁷⁸ *Berid Barca*, 31 March 1934.

⁷⁹ *Berid Barca*, 22 February 1934.

Benghazi, 600 of them women and children. The 1936 Italian government census showed Benghazi's total population at 66,781 people, with 48,488 Libyans, 15,566 Italians, and 3,395 Jews.⁸⁰ By comparing the size of Benghazi's population of 16,500 in 1911 to the size of the population in 1936, there was a fourfold increase in population.⁸¹ This is tangible proof of the development of Benghazi from a port town into a city.

The number of Italian settlers in Libya at its peak during the early 1940s approached 150,000. After the defeat of the Axis forces in North Africa in 1943, practically all Italian nationals were removed from Cyrenaica prior to British occupation though in Tripolitania some 40,000 Italians remained.⁸²

The Italian government was not able to complete the implementation of the 1930 organisational plan as World War II ended the Italians' control of Libya and the war had destroyed a large part of what had been implemented from that plan.⁸³ In 1942, Benghazi suffered severe destruction and devastation during the North Africa battles and the Allies entered the city at the end of that year.

Conclusion

Italy's colonial policy was aimed at transforming Libya into an Italian territory that would accommodate tens of thousands of Italian settlers, chosen mainly from the ranks of unemployed workers to relieve its problem of overpopulation.

⁸⁰ Chia-Lin Pan, "The Population of Libya", *Population Studies*, Vol. 3, No. 1, June 1949, pp.

119, 123; The Italian government used the term 'native' instead of the term 'Libyan'.

⁸¹ Francesco Coro, *Libya Athn'a al-'Ahd al-'Uthmani al-Thani*, p. 114.

⁸² Pan, *Population Studies*, p. 104.

⁸³ See Appendix no. 7 for the map showing the completed sections of Benghazi per the 1914 and the 1930 plans.

The Italian government issued a series of real estate laws and exploited existing Ottoman land law to gain control of large land areas in and around the old city for the building of housing and administrative headquarters. The urban development of Benghazi was driven by Italian colonialism in the period between 1911 and 1942. This urban development was evident by the construction of a colonial, European-style city encircling the old city. In the beginning, the Italian plan completely expressed the distinctive character of urban medieval cities, where the city is surrounded by an impenetrable defensive wall containing guard positions and battlements whose purpose were to confront an attacking force. The Italian military construction of a defensive wall showed their concern with containing or controlling the population of the old city. The human relationship pattern inside the city seemed to reflect the state of acquiescence by the local population and of domination of Italian colonisers. Outside the defensive wall, spaces were allocated to accommodate the prospects of urban growth if the Italian Army could achieve security and order. Disadvantaged Libyans, mainly labourers and servants, settled in shanty towns within the two districts just outside the wall: Sidi Hussein and Sidi Daoud. Inside the wall, the city was divided between the Libyans in the old districts of the city and the Italian in the European district. Thus, movement of the population was restricted within each side of the city, although to varying percentages.

In the old city, growth was unplanned; vacant lots were used randomly for any new construction and the area lacked facilities and services. The role played by the Italians in preventing the growth of the old city cannot be ignored. The colonial planners, on the pretext that the Arab-Muslim mentality is not an urban mentality, placed the old city in a template, forcing it to stay small and isolated area.

The emergence of the Fascist Party as a dominant party and the rise of Benito Mussolini as its leader in October 1922 influenced the Italian colonies considerably. Fascism looked to the Roman Empire for inspiration, which meant the Italian government's outlook became more militaristic. The fascist policies in Libya reflected on their management, and their institutions became more pronounced and bombastic. When these principles were translated into reality, as in the cities and colonies' plans, including the city of Benghazi, it is evident that most of the designs confirmed the power and dictatorship of the state through massive facades of buildings, the high elevations of the facades' arches, and broad avenues that would allow the passage of mighty military parades.

The 1930 plan sought, by emphasising the expanded port and connecting the city with the region through paved roads and railways and building the nearby airport, to make the city a regional trade and transportation centre. The expansion of Benghazi's port was the most important achievement of the fascist period – but at a huge expense. The 1930 plan sought to remake the city of Benghazi a mirror image of an Italian coastal city. The Italian government built services and facilities to serve the Italian settlers' demographic colonialism, neglected the Libyan population, and overlooked the sub-standard housing in the growing slum outside the city. However, the 1914 plan and the 1930 plan still require comprehensive and accurate analytical study that is beyond the scope of this thesis.

Chapter 3

Social impact of the Italian colonisation on Cyrenaica's population

In this chapter, a new look is taken at the effects of Italian colonisation on Cyrenaica's population from 1911-1942 – the social impact of colonisation. Italy's colonial ambitions in Africa, and especially Libya, were built essentially on its presumed need to establish colonies closer to home as a response to the increase in its population, which had already led to considerable Italian migration to the United States and South America. Therefore, Italy's main colonial policy in Libya during the pre-fascist period was centred on achieving the primary goal of establishing colonies; the question of the local population's fate was a secondary issue. Italian policy makers viewed Libya's population as "backward" and in need of modernity.¹ When the Italians were faced by fierce resistance, they reacted by implementing severe punitive measures against the local population. After six years of war, the Italians made a series of peace agreements with the Libyans in Cyrenaica and Tripolitania, culminating in the joint rule agreement in Cyrenaica. This agreement was short-lived, however, as the fascist party take-over in Italy ended the joint rule agreement in Cyrenaica.

During the fascist period, Italian government policy regarding the local population sought to minimise resistance by measures such as removing the population of the Cyrenaican countryside to internment camps in the desert, to gain the double results of

¹ See footnote no. 21 in the introduction.

ending the local population's support of armed resistance and emptying the most fertile Cyrenaican lands to be used later as Italian farm settlements. As Libyan armed resistance ended in the early 1930s, these internment camps were disbanded, but the interned population was not allowed to return to their land since that land had become part of the Italian farm settlements programme. Instead, a new, less fertile area was designated for them to settle. However, most the former internees moved to the coastal towns of Benghazi and Derna to seek employment as servants and labourers.

This chapter examines these issues first by assessing the social conditions in Libya during the last decades of Ottoman rule. In the second section, it considers the social impact of Italian colonisation on Benghazi's population in the pre-fascist period 1911-1922. This section is divided into three parts; the first two parts deal with the impact of security procedures, namely imprisonment in Benghazi and imprisonment in the Italian islands. The third part of this section deals with another aspect of the Italian colonial impact – Benghazi's democratic experience between 1920 and 1922. In the third section of the chapter, the social impact of Italian colonisation on Benghazi's population in the fascist period 1922-1942 is analysed. This section has two parts, both addressing the effects of laws and measures taken by the Italian authorities towards the population: internment camps; and refugees and exiles.

Social conditions in Cyrenaica before the Italian Occupation

In 1911, Benghazi's population was about 16,500, of which 14,500 were Libyan and Libyan Jews; the rest were Tunisians, Maltese, Armenians, and Italians.² There were

² Francesco Coro, *Libya Athn'a al-'Ahd al-'Uthmani al-Thani*, p. 114.

very few Turkish Ottoman residents in Benghazi except for administration staff and garrison troops. The society in the early nineteenth-century Libyan provinces of Tripolitania and Cyrenaica was predominately tribal, with some affiliations to regions or religion.³ Some distinct classes were beginning to exist but class formation was hindered by the nature of the semi-nomadic economy and the absence of central government.⁴ This tribal, semi-nomadic economy was essentially a tributary economy, where land ownership was held in common among the members of the tribe; this process prevented the emergence of private property, an essential component of class formation.⁵ From 1835, when the second Ottoman rule began, new Ottoman policies of administrative reorganisation, the abolition of tax exemption, and direct tax collection generated new revenues that were used to establish new services such as the postal and telegraph service, police, and the courts.⁶ However, many tribes in Tripolitania and Cyrenaica refused to register their lands, making tax collection a difficult task.⁷ The transformation from the pastoral semi-nomadic economy to settled agriculture was a result of the Ottoman reforms, but it was a slow process and in Cyrenaica affected only a small percentage of the population.⁸ Nevertheless, it created changes such as increased urbanisation with the development of Benghazi as a market town and a port. Benghazi's

³ Ali Abdullatif Ahmida, 'State and Class Formation and Collaboration', in Ruth Ben-Ghiat and Mia Fuller, eds, *Italian Colonialism* (New York, 2005), p. 59.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid., p.60.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ A. Ahmida, 'State and Class Formation and Collaboration', p. 61.

population increased from six thousand residents in the first quarter of the nineteenth century, to 17,140 in 1863.⁹ It was classified mainly along the line of types of profession, although there was a clear division per ethnicity and religion, as in the cases of the *Dhimmis*, members of the protected, non-Muslim Jewish and Christian population, and emancipated slaves.¹⁰

In Cyrenaica, from the nineteenth century into the early twentieth century, the chief forces that were shaping socio-economic transformation were the religious Sanusi movement and the Ottoman reforms. The Ottoman reforms created the need for the services of the *‘ayan* (notables) and the tribal shaykhs in the positions of *‘ulema* (religious scholars), judges, mosque imams, and administrative positions in the reformed system.¹¹ The Sanusi movement grew by the early twentieth century into a *de facto* state in Cyrenaica and Fezzan that integrated the tribal system and the merchant

⁹ Bazama, *Tarikh Barqa fil ‘Ahd al- Qaramanli*, p. 150; in the earliest census of Benghazi by the Ottoman Government in the first quarter of the nineteenth century, the town had six thousand residents: four thousand migrated from the coastal town of Misurata; 1,600 from the different tribes of Cyrenaica, and four hundred Christians and Jews. This enumeration did not include the slaves of the Muslim residents; Bazama, *Tarikh Barqa fil ‘Ahd al-Uthmanial-Thani*, p. 193.

¹⁰ MSBSMS, no. 6, 1902, p. 12; MSBSMS no. 86, 1902-1918, p. 10; the judicial sources divide Benghazi’s population into five categories: the notables or *‘ayan*, merchants, skilled tradesmen, freed slaves, and the *Dhimmi* community.

¹¹ MSBSMS, no. 6, 1902, p. 4; Mohamed Effendi Ben Haji Abdullah Ben Shatwan, board member of Benghazi County; Farag Effendi Ben Haji Mohamed Effendi Abu Dejaja, editing Clerk of Benghazi County; Ahmed Effendi Ben Saed Jehani, accountant in the city’s Department of Education; see also MSBSMS, no. 84, 1902-1910, p. 27, Meftah Effendi Ben Haji Mohammad Ben Haji Zaid al-Mahdi, member of the Municipal Council; see also MSBSMS, no. 108, 1902-1910, p. 27; Mustafa Effendi Ben Haji Mohamed Ben Mohamed al-Muhichi, member of the city administration.

class.¹² The Sanusi *zawiya* system created administrative, trade, and educational stations in Cyrenaica.¹³

Local cultural traditions in Benghazi continued during Ottoman rule, as was the case in other Ottoman provinces. Arabic was used as only a few people spoke Ottoman Turkish and there was freedom of travel and commerce between the Ottoman provinces; for instance, a resident of Benghazi could travel and reside in Cairo, Damascus, or Bagdad without travel documents or permits.¹⁴ However, despite those positive factors, the Ottoman state followed a ruinous financial policy in the form of burdensome taxation that offered no tax relief, even in drought years. The double pressure of taxation and drought increased tensions between the Ottomans and the local population, especially in Cyrenaica, that led occasionally to armed conflict subdued by force.¹⁵ Failure or delay in paying taxes by tax collection officials such as tribal chiefs or district directors would cause them to lose their position.¹⁶ To protect the tax revenues, the Ottoman state had tax collectors, whether administrators or *multazim* (commissioners) post a bond upon starting their position.¹⁷ The commissioners, in addition to the initial payment, had to

¹² A. Ahmida, 'State and Class Formation and Collaboration', p. 63.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Abdulaziz al-Shenawi, *al-Doulat al-Uthmania Doulatin Muftira 'aliha* (the Ottoman Stat: a state that was defamed), (Cairo, 1980), p. 863.

¹⁵ DMT, *Mazbadha Muqadama bisem ahali Berqa* (a legal complaint presented in the name of the inhabitants of Cyrenaica), 11 November 1867, Tripoli.

¹⁶ DMT, *Malef Marasem al-Wilat al-Muta aleqa bil Dhra ab* (Governors' Regulation Files Relevant to Taxes), February 1877, Tripoli.

¹⁷ DMT, *Malef al-Dhra ab* (Tax File), *Majmouat al-Berqiyat, Barqia 403 min Nizart al-Malia ila Mutaserfiat Benghazi* (Telegrams Collections, Telegram no. 403 from the Financial Administration to the Province of Benghazi), 2 May 1868.

provide a guarantor.¹⁸ An Ottoman instruction to prevent anyone from travelling for business, tourism, or medical treatment without a proof of tax payment was a cause for complaints.¹⁹

The political conditions in other Ottoman provinces also had an effect on Tripolitania and Cyrenaica, such as the trade embargo against the Austrian empire in 1908 that was an Ottoman reaction against Austria-Hungary for interference in the Balkan Ottoman provinces of Bulgaria and Bosnia-Herzegovina.²⁰ The Ottomans used posters, the telegraph and specially-formed committees in the Ottoman provinces in the Middle East and North Africa to gain support for the trade embargo.²¹ This embargo caused prices of imported commodities such as sugar to rise and constituted a heavy burden on the population of Tripolitania and Cyrenaica, further causing wide discontent and complaints during the five months of the embargo.²²

The Ottoman state was not concerned with the increasing level of discontent prevailing in Tripolitania and Cyrenaica and did not consider it a problem deserving remedy. For the Ottomans, the concept of paying tax traditionally was closely related to *al-bīaa* (homage) and an acknowledgement of the status of a subject. Thus, the Ottoman's

¹⁸ DMT, *Malef al- Dhra`ab* (Tax File), *Majmou'at al-Berqiyat, Barqia 403 min Nizart al-Malia ila Mutaserfiat Benghazi* (Telegrams Collections, Telegram no. 403 from the Financial Administration to the Province of Benghazi), 2 May 1868; Saleh al-Bakoush was one of Benghazi's notables and became a guarantor to a tax commissioner.

¹⁹ DMT, *Malef al- Dhra`ab, a letter to Gharian Judge No. 158*, December 1877, Tripoli.

²⁰ Lord Kinross, *The Ottoman Centuries: The Rise and Fall of the Turkish Empire*, (New York, 1977), p. 576.

²¹ Donald Quataert, *Social Disintegration and Popular Resistance in the Ottoman Empire 1881-1908: Reactions to European Economic Penetration*, (New York, 1983), pp. 124-141.

²² *al-Kashaf*, 20 January 1909.

financial policy of heavy taxation and the absence of any service provided by the state, such as education or financial aid for the poor, produced in Libya a marginal, poverty-stricken social class.

Social impact of the Italian colonisation on Cyrenaica's population in the pre-fascist period, 1911-1922

The Italian government embarked on the invasion of Libya in 1911 with the strategy that the only military resistance encountered would be from the Ottoman garrisons, and anticipated that this would end quickly because of the overwhelming Italian force.²³

Italian policy makers reached such a conclusion based on two assumptions: the attitude of the Libyan population towards the Ottomans, and a reliance on Libyan collaborators. First, the Italian planners assumed that the Libyans would regard the Italians as liberators from Ottoman domination; based on this uncritical preconception, Italy failed to make adequate political preparation among the local population. It seemed that even with the prevalence of illiteracy in Libya, the population was aware that Italy did not bring “civilisation” to its Eritrean colony.²⁴ In addition, the Libyans were aware that other European-dominated North African former Ottoman provinces were suffering, such as Algeria under the more enlightened French rule.²⁵ The Italian planners looked at the Libyan problem from a political and diplomatic perspective, with the military element, despite huge preparation, only constituting a small part. Per the Italian

²³ David G. Herrmann, ‘The Paralysis of Italian Strategy in the Italian-Turkish War, 1911-1912’, p. 334; the Italian government and armed forces planned for a short, decisive war employing a force of 34-39,000 men to overwhelm the Ottoman garrison estimated at seven thousand men in 1911.

²⁴ *al-Manar*, 14 December 1911

²⁵ *Ibid.*

Foreign Minister, Antonio di San Giuliano, the Ottomans would quickly surrender and the Libyan population would join the stronger side.²⁶ The Italians were planning to use the collaborating Libyan notables to promote Italy's interests among the local population and influence them to favour Italy's cause. Some of Tripolitania's notables were certainly disaffected by the new Ottoman policies of reforms, such as the introduction of compulsory conscription and the abolition of tax exemptions. Among the first to be recruited were the mayor of Tripoli Hasuna al-Qaramanli and members of the al-Muntasir notables, who were merchants in Misurata.²⁷ In Cyrenaica, the Italians tried to induce the Sanusi leader, Ahmed al-Sharif, to side with them by sending gifts through a Benghazi merchant.²⁸ That specific attempt did not work but the Italians were eager to establish good relations with the Libyan elites because that would be the task of controlling and ruling Libya easier. Some urban notables in Cyrenaica collaborated with Italy, especially in coastal towns such as Benghazi that did not have a strong Sanusi influence.²⁹ However, years of organising by the *de facto* Sanusi state had created cohesion among the Cyrenaican tribes that fostered resistance. Sanusi forces allied with

²⁶ Herrmann, 'The Paralysis of Italian Strategy in the Italian-Turkish War, 1911-1912', p. 334.

²⁷ Ahmida, 'State and Class Formation and Collaboration', p. 65; Hasuna al-Qaramanli's motive for collaboration with the Italians was his ambition to be the ruler of Tripoli like his grandfather, Ali al-Qaramanli. The al-Muntasir notables were well paid employees of the Tripoli Branch of *Banco di Roma*.

²⁸ *al-Manar*, 14 December 1911; Benghazi merchant Mahmoud Kamal abortively tried to convince the Sanusi leader to accept the gift; for more see, Ahmed Sudqi al-Dajani, *al-Haraka al-Sanusiyya: Nash'atuha wa Tatouraha fi al-Qern al-Tas'a 'Ashur*, p. 67.

²⁹ Ahmida, 'State and Class Formation and Collaboration', p. 67; one striking problem in modern Libyan history studies is the issue of collaboration with the Italians by the Libyan notables whether from the coastal towns, tribal chiefs, administrators, or religious clergy. This subject remains poorly studied and controversial due to the tribal and regional sensitivities.

the Ottoman forces led by Major Anwar Pasha therefore succeeded in preventing the Italians from expanding inland.

On 9 October 1911, after taking control of Tripoli, Italian General Carlo Caneva issued a publication asking the Libyans to surrender and not to resist the Italian forces.³⁰ The major points of General Caneva's statement were that the Italian troops were charged with liberating the Libyans from Ottoman rule: Italy was returning to the Libyans their rights; the Libyans would be ruled by their own chiefs according to *shari'a* law; military service would be voluntary; and any revolt would be dealt with harshly.³¹ This was an attempt to convince the Libyans of the futility of any armed resistance, as the Italians' intentions were good and Libyan interests were in conflict with those of the Ottomans. General Caneva stated that civil and religious affairs directly connected with the Libyan's daily life would be administered by their notables and religious *ulema*. The intent behind reassuring the Libyan notables and religious *ulema* that their interests would be protected was to use them to implement the Italians' policies and to communicate with the general population. However, General Caneva's efforts were undermined by the Tripoli massacre following the Shar'a al-Shat battle on 23 October 1911.³²

³⁰ Salahuldeen Hassen al-Souri, 'al-Istia'mar al-Itali wa Mouhawalt Ihtiwa al-Muasasa al-Diniyya' (The Italian Colonialism and the Attempt to Contain the Religious Institution), *al-merkez al-qoumi lil-bohouth*, (Tunis, 1983).

³¹ Tahir Ahmed al-Zawi, *Jihad al-Abtal fi Tarabulus al-gharb*, pp. 85-87; Pallo Maltese, *Libya: Arḍ al-Mi'ad*, p. 211.

³² Pallo Maltese, *Libya: Arḍ al-Mi'ad*, p. 211; Ottoman-led tribesmen carried out a powerful, though unsuccessful, surprise counterattack against the Italian defences of Tripoli at Shar'a al-Shatt on 23 October 1911. They temporarily broke through the perimeter trench lines, killing nearly 500 Italians in exchange for even heavier losses among their own forces. The Italians retaliated by killing thousands of Tripoli's residents; see also Francesco Malgeri, *al-Harb al-Libya 1911-1912*, pp. 235-246.

After Italy proclaimed sovereignty over Tripolitania and Cyrenaica on 5 November 1911 and had achieved the occupation of most of the Libyan coastal towns, the population were no longer Ottoman subjects; therefore, any armed resistance would be treason punishable under Italian law. The participants of the armed resistance were mainly from the areas surrounding the Italian-occupied towns and tribesmen from the mountains who were also antagonistic towards the Ottoman garrison. The Ottomans did not have any real roots in the country and had not learnt Arabic to communicate with the population, which had led to a misunderstanding that was apparent in the disorder during the Ottoman-led military operation.

The spiritual qualities of the Libyan resistance fighters consisted of the strength of religious piety, an independent disposition, and the outright mixture of martial and religious views. Such martial-religious beliefs included that dying in the battlefield against the Italians is a direct religious privilege to enter heaven. However, joining the Ottomans was not for that reason only, but also to receive wages, weapons, and part of the spoils from the Ottoman leaders. Despite the complaints against the Ottomans, Major Anwar Pasha could influence the tribes of Cyrenaica; he paid the tribal shaykhs 115,000 francs and promised them half a franc a month for every man who joined and each fighter received ten francs a month plus meals.³³

Due to the ferocity of the armed resistance, the Italians took some measures to suppress the support the resistance received among the population in the period between 1911 and 1918. They enforced harsh punishment against resistance fighters and against

³³ Anwar Pasha, *Mudakrat Anwar Pasha*, tr. Abdulmola al-Harir, (Tripoli, 1979).

anyone giving material aid to them; punishments included executions, imprisonment in Libya and Italy, and confiscation of property. Prisons were constructed inside Libya and other prisoners were exiled to the Italian islands for imprisonment and forced labour.

Imprisonment in Benghazi

There were central prisons in the administrative centres of Derna, Benghazi, Misurata, and Tripoli.³⁴ There were also different types of prisons, such as penal prisons, political prisons, and provisional prisons in smaller towns.³⁵ In Benghazi, Shoyleek prison was used for holding prisoners awaiting execution, al-Kabir prison in Sidi Khrebish district, Benina prison, and al-Zitune prison in al-Berka holding sons aged under twenty of political prisoners.³⁶ There was also a prison to hold the relatives of men wanted for resistance activities, inside an Italian military camp that was called al-Rahen (pawn) prison.³⁷ Data on the prisoners in Benghazi's prisons in that period are not available but a partial list of prisoners in 1915, showing the type of punishment and its duration, is a sample of Benghazi's residents who were punished for supporting the armed resistance.³⁸ They were arrested between January and June 1915 due to their resistance to occupation or providing material support to the resistance, especially as they were property holders.³⁹ Prisoner No. 5 in the list, al-Sanusi Ben Jaber al-Magboub, for

³⁴ al-Bori, *Mojtam 'a Madinat Benghazi fi al-Nisf al-Awal min al-Qarn al-Eshrin*, p. 45.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ MSBSMS, no. 125, 1914-1915, p. 4; no. 86, 1902-1915, pp. 56-71; see appendix8 for the list.

³⁹ al-Bori, *Mojtam 'a Madinat Benghazi fi al-Nisf al-Awal min al-Qarn al-Eshrin*, p. 45.

example, maintained good relations with the Italians and the Sanusi movement in the town of Jaghboub, and with Idris al-Sanusi in Cairo.⁴⁰

It was clear that many of Benghazi's merchants and notables had good relations with the Sanusi movement and some of them were exposed to imprisonment, exile, and confiscation of property because of material support for the armed resistance. Ahmed al-Sharif relied on them for financial help by sending coded messages in his letters for fear of mail interception by the Italians, which was a common occurrence.⁴¹ Those letters from al-Sharif to some of Benghazi's merchants asking for financial aid were the main reason for their arrest and imprisonment, as the Italians could decode the letters.

Imprisonment in the Italian islands

The first colonial period related to transporting Libyan prisoners, in some cases with their families, to prisons in the Italian islands or forced labour in Italy.⁴² Those

⁴⁰ Shamsuldeen 'Urabi Binumran, *Al-Watha'q al-Italiya* (The Italian Documents), vol. 1, (Jihad Centre for Historical Studies MDJL), (Tripoli, 1989), pp. 33-41, Doc. No. 11, 14 July 1912, Doc. No. 14, 19 July 1912; There were three letters sent on July 14, 1912 from Prince Idris Al-Sanusi to al-Magboub. After the translation of those letters reached the Council of Ministers in Rome, they described the prisoner as a faithful person to Italy and a member of the national political council. However, the Council of Ministers in Rome also read the second letter from Ahmed al-Sharif, the leader of the Libyan resistance, which stated that, although al-Magboub was accepted by Benghazi leadership, he was a cunning man and could not be trusted.

⁴¹ Ibid., doc. No. 18, 15 August 1912, p. 55; for instance, a letter from Ahmed al-Sharif to Mohamed al-Mazigni included an annexe comprising al-Magboub's claim to 300 Ottoman lire in the possession of al-Mazigni and the price of al-Magboub's camels; Ibid., doc. No. 17, 12 August 1912, p. 53; asking al-Mazigni to send seven more measures of jasmine oil. The Council of Ministers in Rome described al-Mazigni as a rich man and a partisan of the Sanusi movement in Benghazi. Ibid., doc. No. 10, 17 May 1912, p. 30; this document stated, most likely in code, that the answer to this letter would be from al-Kahal and Kashbour, which were unfamiliar names in Libya.

⁴² MDJL, *Al-Watha'q al-Italiya*, telegraph from the Italian Prime Minister Giolitti to General Caneva, No. 106, 24 October 1911, (Tripoli, 1989), p. 32; in this telegraph Italian Prime Minister Giolitti stated that it was possible to imprison a number of 'Arabs', even if they numbered tens of thousands, in the Italian islands of Favignana, Tremiti, Ustica, and Ventotene; Romaine Rainiero, 'al-Jouanb al-Majhula fi al-Muqaouma al-Libya' (The Obscure Parts of the Libyan Resistance), *Majallet al-Bhouth al-Tarikhiya* 2, (Tripoli, 1985), p. 98; in another telegraph to General Caneva, Prime Minister Giolitti stated that the arrested rebels should not be executed but transported to the Adriatic island of Termiti, which could receive four hundred prisoners.

prisoners included anyone who had undertaken political activity instigating armed resistance and their families. Anyone suspected of giving material aid to the resistance, in possession of a weapon, or who had no identification documents, would be tried by a military tribunal.⁴³ The goals of imprisoning Libyans in Italy were to reduce the number of available recruits and to dissuade the general population from participating or helping the armed resistance, since anyone implicated in such activity would be transported with his family to an Italian island prison. This was a major reason why the coastal towns' residents, such as those in Benghazi, avoided involvement in the fighting. Italian Prime Minister Giolitti's objective in ordering imprisonment on the Italian islands was partly political, to cover up executions of Libyan prisoners, and partly for security reasons.⁴⁴ Execution was the punishment for prisoners who were tried and found guilty while detainees were imprisoned either in Libya or on the Italian islands.⁴⁵ Imprisonment on the twenty-six Italian islands was characterised by indefinite detention.⁴⁶ The prisoners were a mixture of rich merchants, grocery shop owners, workers, old men, women, and children.⁴⁷ Their names or places of origin were listed when they arrived in Italy because of the speed of the operation.⁴⁸

⁴³ R. Rainiero, 'al-Jouanb al-Majhula', p. 101.

⁴⁴ Pallo Maltese, *Libya: Ard al-Mi'ad*, pp. 228-229.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ University of Benghazi, *Al-Watha'q al-Italiya, Taqrir R'aes Lejnet 'Asra al-Herb il Wazir al-Dakhilia* (Italian documents, The report of the Director of the Prisoners of War Committee to the Interior Minister), no date, p. 120.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

The first group of 595 Libyan prisoners arrived at Termiti Island on 29 October 1911 aboard the ship *Serbia*.⁴⁹ There were no exact figures pertaining to prisoners from Benghazi since the available figures were general and covered all of Libya. On Termiti Island, the number of Libyan prisoners between 29 October 1911 and 9 January 1912 was 1,367, of whom 198 died in detention.⁵⁰ On Favignana Island, the number was 349 in January 1912.⁵¹ On Gaieta Island, the list of prisoners was more detailed, showing 357 prisoners, of whom twenty-five were women and forty children.⁵² An estimated forty-one prisoners were from Benghazi, including thirty-three members of Mansour al-Kikhia family.⁵³ The total number of prisoners at the end of January 1912 was 3,053.

Other prisoners were used as forced labour in the Italian islands, Italy or Eritrea. The Ministry of Colonies received requests from Italian cities and islands for Libyan prisoners to be used as farm or construction labour, such as a request from Palermo's municipality.⁵⁴ Another communication was with the Italian governor of Eritrea to use Libyan prisoners in railroad construction to compensate for the labour shortage caused

⁴⁹ DMT, *Al-Watha'q al-Italiya, Q'aemat asma al-Munfiteen* (List of names of exiled Libyans), Tripoli, pp. 255-276.

⁵⁰ Ibid., *ihsaiyat áded al-munfiteen fi jazierat Termiti* (statistics of the number of exiles on Termiti Island), 9 January 1912, pp. 58-59.

⁵¹ Ibid., *áded al-munfiteen fi jazierat Favignana*, late 1912, pp. 72-73.

⁵² Ibid., *áded al-munfiteen fi jazierat Gaieta áádhu mudir al-mu átaqil Vaseno* (a list of the number of prisoners on Gaieta Island prepared by the prison's Director Vaseno), 10 June 1912, pp. 87-86.

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ DMT, *Al-Watha'q al-Italiya, Malef al-Munfioun*, Martini's telegraph to the Ministry of Interior No. 968, 4 June 1914, p. 162.

by sending Eritreans as colonial soldiers to Libya.⁵⁵ An estimated 4,600 Libyan prisoners were used in the Italian cities and towns as forced labourers.⁵⁶

Prisoners on the Italian islands lived in bad conditions, resulting in severe health problems that led local Italian residents to consider the Libyan prisoners as a health danger to them. On Ustica Island, the Italian residents stopped buying fish because the transportation ship *San George* was dumping dead prisoners' bodies at sea nearby, causing concern in Palermo since the fish sold there came from Ustica.⁵⁷ Ustica's residents protested for fear of cholera spreading on the island.⁵⁸ The high death rate among the Libyan prisoners on the islands of Ustica and Termiti, for example, was due to the spread of cholera, pneumonia, and fever, so the residents' fears were somewhat well grounded, even though the death rate among the comparatively far healthier residents did not change substantially.⁵⁹ The death rate of Libyan prisoners on these two islands from 23 December 1911 to 6 January 1912 was over 50%.⁶⁰ The highest percentage of deaths on Termiti Island was among the young and elderly prisoners; in the period from 29 October 1911 to 9 January 1912, there were two deaths aged under

⁵⁵ DMT, *Al-Watha'q al-Italiya, Malef al-Munfioun*, Martini's telegraph to the Government of Eritrea No. 2783, 30 May 1914, p.178.

⁵⁶ DMT, *Al-Watha'q al-Italiya, Malef al-Munfioun*, list of places in Italy where Libyan prisoners were distributed for work, pp. 182-183.

⁵⁷ *Giornale Laura*, 8 November 1911.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 10 November 1911.

⁵⁹ MDJL, *Al-Watha'q al-Italiya, Malef al-Munfioun*, Public Health Director's report to the Public Security Department in Rome, 12 January 1912, p. 60.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

ten years old, thirty five deaths aged sixty to seventy years old and seven deaths of people aged seventy to eighty years old.⁶¹

The Libyan prisoners on Ustica Island did not fare any better; from 919 prisoners, ninety seven suffered from cholera and forty two died aboard the ship *Romania*, whilst the rest were given treatment but were deteriorating.⁶² The same reasons were given as cause of deaths of Libyan prisoners on Gaieta Island in the period between December 1911 and June 1912; the number of deaths was forty two men, eight women, and fourteen children.⁶³ The total number of deaths among Libyan prisoners on the Italian islands was 232 on Termiti Island, the majority at the end of 1911, and 118 on Gaieta Island.⁶⁴ On the former, the Libyan prisoners' conditions worsened to a greater degree than on the other islands due to malnutrition and neglect of hygiene.⁶⁵ This was because of corruption on the part of the food contractor, whereby meal quotas allocated to the prisoners were embezzled, and because the camp director refused to provide meals for prisoners who were patients at the infirmary.⁶⁶ Blankets, food, and other supplies were

⁶¹ MDJL, *Al-Watha'q al-Italiya, Malef al-Munfioun*, Security Force Director's report to the Ministry of Interior, Termiti, 13 January 1912, p. 64.

⁶² MDJL, *Al-Watha'q al-Italiya, Malef al-Munfioun*, Dr Pietro Kazoli's report about the medical condition of the Arab exiles on Ustica Island, 10 February 1912, p. 80.

⁶³ Ibid., a list of deaths prepared by the prison's director S. Farina, 10 June 1912, p. 84.

⁶⁴ DMT, *Al-Watha'q al-Italiya, Malef al-Munfioun*, list of Libyan prisoners' deaths at Termiti Island, pp. 281-293; the record contained each prisoner's age, cause and date of death; Ibid., list of Libyan prisoners' deaths at Gaieta Island, pp. 299-206; the record contained each prisoner's full name, mother's name, and grave number; they were all buried in Campo Largo cemetery.

⁶⁵ DMT, *Al-Watha'q al-Italiya, Malef al-Munfioun*, Dr Lafoja's report to the provincial Governor, 30 June 1912, pp. 115-114.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

smuggled across the sea to Italy by the supply contractors.⁶⁷ All of those factors resulted in a doubling of the number of deaths.

Severe and arbitrary measures had an effect in increasing the number of Libyan imprisoned on the Italian islands, especially from Cyrenaica, where Governor Giovanni Ameglio in 1914 requested from the Minister of Colonies deportation of a number of Cyrenaica's residents to the Italian islands because they were accused of treason.⁶⁸ The governor reasoned that exile and imprisonment were dictated by circumstances caused by the current political situation, thereby requiring coercive action to punish the treasonous families to serve as a fierce warning to all other residents.⁶⁹ The Italian government tried to cover the extent of imprisoning Libyans abroad; for instance, Italian Prime Minister Giolitti telegraphed General Caneva that the number of Libyan prisoners in Termiti Island prison was at four hundred, but a study found that the actual number was ten times larger, i.e. four thousand.⁷⁰

The international changes and preparation for WWI prevented the transportation of even more Libyans to the Italian island prisons, as Governor Ameglio had requested. In Tripoli, too, Governor Tasoni issued a decree on 15 May 1915 with a list of prisoners to

⁶⁷ DMT, *Al-Watha'q al-Italiya, Malef al-Munfioun*, Dr Lafoja's report to the provincial Governor, 30 June 1912, pp. 115-114.

⁶⁸ MDJL, *Al-Watha'q al-Italiya, Malef al-Munfioun*, No. 19/6073, November 1914, From the Government of Cyrenaica to the Ministry of Colonies, pp. 156-158; Governor Giovanni Battista Ameglio (1913-1918).

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ Romaine Rainiero, 'al-Jouanb al-Majhula fi al-Muqaouma al-Libya (Obscure Parts of Libyan Resistance)', *Majallet al-Bhouth al-Tarikhiya* 2, (Tripoli, 1985), p. 109.

be transported to the Italian islands following the Battle of al-Qerdabia near Sirte; the list included tribal shaykhs and their families.⁷¹

The Italian security measures to counter the armed resistance in Tripolitania and Cyrenaica from 1911 to 1918 overstepped execution and imprisonment of the accused to a policy of collective punishment for the whole household of those accused of belonging to, or giving material aid to, the armed resistance. Imprisonment in a strange land and the consequent suffering was tragic, especially for women and children; for instance, both parents of twelve-year-old Mohamed Ali and his one-year-old sister died.⁷² Fifty-year-old Mabrouka, who was imprisoned with her daughter Fatema and son-in-law Farej, requested to be returned to Benghazi to re-join her children.⁷³ Another mother, Fatema Sulieman, was widowed and requested to return to her two sons in Benghazi.⁷⁴ This policy continued on an even larger scale in the late 1920s internment camps in Cyrenaica during the fascist period (1922-1942), as this chapter later describes.

Cyrenaica's democratic experience, 1920-1922

As WWI was ending, a series of negotiations and agreements began with the al-Zwitina agreement in 1916 between Prince Idris al-Sanusi, and the British and Italian governments.⁷⁵ After the 'Akerma agreement in 1917, a Cyrenaican government was

⁷¹ MDJL, *Al-Watha'q al-Italiya, Malef al-Munfioun*, Governor Tasoni decree, 12 June 1915, pp. 164-165.

⁷² Ibid., Public Security General Inspector's report to the Minister of Interior about the conditions of Libyan prisoners, 15 June 1912, pp. 88-100.

⁷³ MDJL, *Al-Watha'q al-Italiya, Malef al-Munfioun*, Public Security General Inspector's report to the Minister of Interior about the conditions of Libyan prisoners, 15 June 1912, pp. 88-100.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ Foreign Office, *Italian Libya*, P. 27.

formed in Ajdabia in 1919, followed by the issuance of a constitution similar to the Tripolitanian constitution on 13 October 1919, where Libyans were granted Italian citizenship.⁷⁶ A final peace agreement, the al-Rejema agreement, was signed on 25 October 1920, allowing the establishment of a Cyrenaican parliament of representatives from towns and villages.⁷⁷ It was considered the first parliament in Cyrenaica and the region. Benghazi, during this peace process, saw the beginning of political activity, with the establishment of two political parties: al-Hizb al-Distouri and al-Hizib al-Demoqrati.⁷⁸ In addition, in the mayoral election, Mohamed Taher al-Muhayishi won the race against former Mayor Saleh al-Mehdawi and candidate Hussien Besikri.⁷⁹

All the residents of Cyrenaica had the right to vote in the parliamentary elections, except those with a sentence preventing a person from holding a public position, prison sentence, bankruptcy, or mental illness, or who were a member of the military.⁸⁰ This system gave every tribal shaykh the right to choose two candidates with an upstanding reputation, while in Benghazi, the district's *Mukhtar* or imam was in charge of selecting the right candidates.⁸¹ The elections were held in the beginning of 1921 and campaigning

⁷⁶ E.E. Evans-Pritchard, *al-Sanusioun fi Berga*, p. 52.

⁷⁷ Ibid., p. 156; after this agreement, Prince Idris visited Rome in November with a delegation of Benghazi's notables: Omar al-Kikhia, al-Sharf al-Ghiryani, Ali al-'Abidia, Ahmida al-Mahjoub, Mohamed Said al-Fazzani, Abdulqader Ferkash, Abedulaziz al-Isawi, Hassan al-Sharif, and Ibrahim al-Shalhi.

⁷⁸ Ahmed Rafiq al-Mehdawi, *Diwan Rafiq 1925-1933*, (Benghazi, 1971), pp. 170-172.

⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁰ al-Bori, *Mojtam 'a Madinat Benghazi fi al-Nisf al-Awal min al-Qarn al-Eshrin*, p. 132.

⁸¹ Ibid.

was conducted through handwritten or printed leaflets and posters.⁸² Voting was for three days in urban areas and for ten days in tribal areas.⁸³ Fifty members were elected representing the towns and tribal areas, plus a few Italian and Jewish members.⁸⁴ The parliament's composition included tribal shaykhs, notables from the coastal towns, and former resistance fighters.⁸⁵ The grouping of deputies in the Cyrenaican Parliament, unlike European division into political parties, was determined almost exclusively by tribal ties, which outweigh all political considerations. Thus, the tribal configuration of Cyrenaica was roughly produced in its Parliament: the 'Abeidat on the left, the Hasa, Bra'asa, and others in the centre, the 'Auaqir on the right.⁸⁶ Benghazi Witnessed, during the peaceful period, a recovery directly caused by the accord between the Italians and the Sanusi-led resistance; municipal elections were held and two local political parties were formed.

The period after WWI from 1918 to 1922 was quiet, as the Italians were trying to set an example of building a democratic system of representative government in Cyrenaica.

⁸² Salem al-Kibeti, 'Majlis Nouab Berga fi al-'Ahed al-Itali 1921-1926', *a lecture at University of Benghazi on 30 April 2010*.

⁸³ al-Bori, p. 132.

⁸⁴ Ibid., 133; some of the parliament members were: Saleh al-Mehdawi, Mahmoud Bin Shatwan, Mohamed Abdullha Eminena, Mohamed al-Kilhia, Mohamed Taher al-Muhayishi, Hussien Besikri, Uthman al-Uniezi, Taher al-'Aesbli, Muftah al-Imam, Khunifer al-'Aqab, Bashir al-Hadl, Bubekr Beldan, Taib Bu Mikiael, Mohamed Lias, Ahmed al-Bannai, Sa'ed Bu al-Qadaffi, Awad Bu Ali, Daoud al-Mejsher, and Hussein Shehawi.

⁸⁵ Salem al-Kibeti, 'Majlis Nouab Berga fi al-'Ahed al-Itali 1921-1926', *a lecture at University of Benghazi on 30 April 2010*.

⁸⁶ Carlo Schanzer, 'Italian Colonial Policy in North Africa', *Carlo Foreign Affairs*, 1 Jan. 1923.

Summary

The first pre-fascist period of Italian colonial rule in Cyrenaica, from 1911 to 1922, was full of contradictions. From its outset to the end of 1916, resistance to colonial rule was violent, resulting in the use by the Italians of harsh punitive measures, such as the imprisonment of whole families inside Libya and on the Italian islands. Families that escaped collective imprisonment suffered from poverty because of the imprisonment of the head of the family, who was normally the income provider. After the first cessation of hostilities agreement in 1916 and the subsequent peace agreements, there was a period of non-violence and positive political activity where, per the Cyrenaican basic law of 1919, the residents of the coastal town of Benghazi were considered Italian citizens and, in theory, equal to natural-born Italians. A major result of the peace agreement was that the leaders of Cyrenaica tacitly accepted Italian sovereignty over the coastal towns and the Italians accepted the sovereignty of Prince Idris in the rural areas of Cyrenaica. Thus, the peace agreements ushered in a period from 1917 to 1922 that was exemplified by the freedom of movement and trade between areas held by the Cyrenaican resistance and the coastal towns held by the Italians.

Social impacts on Cyrenaica, 1922-1942

The second period of colonisation from 1922 to 1942 was characterised by a decisive transformation that severed all ties with the past policies of joint rule. Benito Mussolini framed a colonial principle of total control of Libya without any conditions. The Italians undertook several procedures and laws to achieve Mussolini's goals. The first of those laws was a law to curtail the freedom of movement of persons related to resistance fighters, issued by Tripolitania's Governor Giuseppe Volpi in 1923, restricting them to

residing in a certain area.⁸⁷ In addition, the Italians planned the forced removal of anyone who had had relations with resistance fighters. All administrative and leadership jobs in the coastal towns were restricted to Italian nationals and Libyan staff jobs (which were under Italian supervision in areas controlled by the Sanusi government per the peace agreements) were abolished. The appointment of Luigi Bongiovanni as governor of Cyrenaica on 7 January 1923 ushered in a period of war and punitive measures against its rebellious inhabitants that lasted until 1932.⁸⁸ Bongiovanni declared in the opening session of the Cyrenaican parliament in March 1923 that Italy would commence military operations to restore order.⁸⁹ Almost simultaneously, the Italians disbanded the mixed military camps of the Italian army and the Sanusi forces that had been set up pursuant to the peace agreements.⁹⁰ From 22 August to 5 September 1923, Italian planes bombed tribal encampments in the areas south of Benghazi and east of Sirte; 250 tents were bombed with phosgene gas and hit with heavy machine guns.⁹¹ During Governor Attilio Teruzzi's term in Cyrenaica, besides the execution of hundreds of captured resistance fighters in 1926, an estimated 150 persons were sentenced to between five years and life in prison, 42 of whom were imprisoned on Ustica Island, and another 162 were awaiting sentencing. Teruzzi was committed to the instructions of the fascist state's

⁸⁷ Giuseppe Volpi (1921-1925)

⁸⁸ Graziani, *Barqa al-Hadia*, p. 34; Luigi Bongiovanni was Cyrenaica's governor from 1923 to 1924.

⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁹⁰ Graziani, *Barqa al-Hadia*, p. 33; on 6 March 1923, the mixed Italian-Libyan military camps of al-Abiar, Tacnes, Sulenta, and al-Mekhilli (set up as part of al-Rejema Agreement) were disbanded. The Italians estimated the Sanusi forces at 3,000 fighters at the end of 1924.

⁹¹ Angelo del Boca, *Gli italiani in Libia*, p. 125; phosgene, or carbonyl dichloride, was widely used during WWI and responsible for 85% of deaths from chemical weapons; see footnote no. 159 in chapter 1 of this thesis.

absolute authority over the estimated 200,000 inhabitants of Cyrenaica. Italian military attacks were not restricted to targets of the resistance fighters but included anyone suspected of aiding the resistance but military operations became very costly compared to its result.

In 1927, Italian forces entered Jaghboub, the Sanusi movement's religious centre, without a fight and with the cooperation of some Sanusi shaykhs, such as Mohamed Hilal and al-Sharf al-Ghiryani, which was a major blow to the resistance movement's status.⁹² The Italians achieved their goal of stopping the flow of supplies and men to the resistance from the oasis of Siwa by occupying Jaghboub.⁹³ At that time, the Sanusi movement split into two factions: one faction led by Prince Idris's brother, Mohamed al-Redha, favoured reaching a new settlement with the Italians, while the other faction, led by Omar al-Mukhatr as Prince Idris's representative, decided to continue the fight until a return to the former agreement of joint rule.⁹⁴ Because of this division, Prince Idris stripped Mohamed al-Redha and his son al-Hassan of all their official authority and appointed Omar al-Mukhatr as his representative in Cyrenaica.⁹⁵ However, Prince Idris's order from Cairo had a minimum effect since the inhabitants were under enormous military and economic pressure and they also favoured a new peace

⁹² DMT, *Al-Watha'q al-Italiya, Malef al-Jaghboub*, telegraph No. 1406, January 7, 1927, Tripoli.

⁹³ Ibid.

⁹⁴ DMT, *Al-Watha'q al-Italiya*, Khana 150-21, Malef 90, Rissala 217, taqrir min Cieciliani illa Badoglio (Cieciliani's report to Badoglio), 16 August 1929, Tripoli.

⁹⁵ Ibid.

agreement.⁹⁶ Naturally, the Italians tried to exploit the resistance factionalism by offering financial aid to Mohamed al-Redha other than the *'usher* (10% tax) collected from the Cyrenaicans.⁹⁷ As the Italians were planning a campaign against Mohamed al-Redha's headquarter in Jalleo, he sent an envoy to the Italians offering a surrender, with the result that he was imprisoned on Ustica Island on 1928 and released a year later.⁹⁸ The Italians tried to affect the support for the resistance in Benghazi and Cyrenaica with al-Redha's surrender since it implied that the resistance was losing the war.⁹⁹ However, among the inhabitants who sided with the Italians, this event caused fear, worry, and difficulties, since it put them at risk of attacks and looting. Several Libyan colonial paramilitaries were killed on 29 November 1928.¹⁰⁰ Continued fighting between those inhabitants who collaborated with the Italians and the resistance put the former on defensive footing, leading them to request help from the Italian military; peaceful co-existence became impossible.¹⁰¹ The Italian military leaders suspected that the colonial paramilitaries were selling weapons and ammunitions to the Libyan resistance.¹⁰² Because of this mistrust the Italians failed to build relations between themselves and the

⁹⁶ DMT, *Al-Watha'q al-Italiya*, Khana 150-21, Malef 90, Rissala 217, taqir min Cieciliani illa Badoglio (Cieciliani's report to Badoglio), 16 August 1929, Tripoli.

⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁸ Evans-Pritchard, *al-Sanusioun fi Berga*, p. 155; on 27 October 1927, Abdulaziz al-Zintani arrived in Benghazi from Jalleo, offering Mohamed al-Redha's surrender. Al-Redha surrendered on 3 January 1928.

⁹⁹ Attilio Teruzzi, *Berga al-Khedr'a* (Green Cyrenaica), trans. Khalifa al-Tallisi, (Tripoli, 1991), p. 212.

¹⁰⁰ Angelo del Boca, *Gli italiani in Libia*, p. 133; on 29 November 1928, the Sanusi forces attacked Libyan colonial paramilitary troops, killing 33 and wounding 35.

¹⁰¹ Ibid., p. 152.

¹⁰² Graziani, *Barqa al-Hadia'*, P.117.

colonial paramilitary on one side, and the inhabitants on the other side, whereas the Sanusi resistance received aid in the form of men and supplies from the inhabitants. The Italians were hoping that they could attain greater results from the collaborators but they became more of a problem than a solution.

The appointment of Rodolfo Graziani as Vice Governor of Cyrenaica instead of Cieciliani in 1930 had a major effect on relations between the Italians and inhabitants who collaborated with them. Graziani's first step was to demobilize a large number of Libyan colonial paramilitaries and those who remained had their weapons changed to weapons of a different calibre than those used by the resistance's fighters to prevent ammunition being sold to the resistance. Thus, by the end of 1930, the Italian military in Cyrenaica was composed mainly of Italian soldiers and Eritrean colonial troops.¹⁰³

An itinerant military court was re-established on June 1931 with the goal of summarily executing severe punishment against the resistance and their supporters in the field. The court travelled by plane to hold sessions in battlefields. In the first year of Graziani's rule, the itinerant military court was very busy. For instance, in the months of March and April, there were 520 pending cases against 809 defendants and it issued judgement in another 400 cases against 700 defendants, 448 of whom were convicted; 250 received a death sentence, 198 were imprisoned, and another 20 were sentenced *in absentia*.¹⁰⁴ It seemed that Graziani also had an effective network of spies and

¹⁰³ Graziani, *Barqa al-Hadia*, P.117; an estimated 750 Cyrenaican paramilitary were demobilised.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., p. 141; the itinerant court usually issued judgement and executed the sentence in the same day, for instance, the court session in Shahat on 14 June 1930 issued a death sentence on Hamed 'Abedreba al-Dressi for aiding the resistance and the sentence was carried out by firing squad the same day. On 12 June 1930, eight former colonial paramilitaries were executed in al-Merj for aiding the resistance. On 30 June 1930, the court session in Ajdabia issued a death sentence on Ali Saleh Sh'aban; he was hanged the same day. In Benghazi, on 13 August 1930, Ali Mohamed al-Dhab'ah was executed by firing squad in al-Saberi district; on August 31, Hussein Ben Omar al-Amin

informants. The itinerant military court was highly effective since it saved time and expenditure involved in bringing the defendants and witnesses to Benghazi, instead bringing the court to the place of the accused. Its decisions were prompt, clear and audacious.

With the agreement of Libya's Governor Badoglio, Graziani decided to close all the Sanusi *zawaya*, with the exception of Jaghboub's *zawiya*, and expropriate their properties on May 1930.¹⁰⁵ An estimated 31 *zawaya* shaykhs were arrested and imprisoned first in Benina's prison, then on 28 May transported to Ustica Island prison.¹⁰⁶ However, Graziani was wary of the disapproval of Benghazi's residents and asked Mohamed al-Redha to issue a statement supporting the closure of the Sanusi's *zawiyas*.¹⁰⁷ Further, the Italian military operations that continued in the summer and autumn of 1931 resulted in the defeat of the Libyan resistance and the capture and execution of its leader Omar al-Mukhtar, who was hanged on 16 September 1931 in the internment camp of Sulouq, in front of thousands of internees.¹⁰⁸

After the defeat of the Libyan resistance in Cyrenaica, the Italians focused their efforts on farm settlements building to settle the tens of thousands of Italians arriving in Libya.

was executed by firing squad in Midan al-Maqroun; and in 1930, the Italian intelligence discovered that Benghazi's notable Mohamed al-Hadad was aiding the resistance; al-Hadad and his son were executed by hanging in front of a crowd in al-Berka district. For more, see DMT, *Al-Watha'q al-Italiya, Malef Libya*, Khana 51-27, Malef 124, rasael Graziani illa wazir al-Must'amart 2400-1815-1833-3550, Tripoli.

¹⁰⁵ DMT, *Al-Watha'q al-Italiya, Malef Libya*, Khana 150-7, Malef 16, risala no. 10891, 19 August 1930, Tripoli.

¹⁰⁶ DMT, *Al-Watha'q al-Italiya, Malef Libya*, Khana 150-7, Malef 16, risala min Graziani illa Badoglio, 5 June 1930, Tripoli; among those imprisoned in Ustica Island was Prince Idriss's nephew al-Hassen al-Redha.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid., Khana 7-16, Malef 16, risala min Graziani illa Badoglio, 7 June 1930; Mohamed al-Redha stated that the decision to close the *zawiyas* was just and Prince Idris and Ahmed al-Sharif were responsible for this decision.

¹⁰⁸ Graziani, *Barqa al-Hadia*, p. 233;

Italy annexed Libya on January 1939 by royal decree, which gave Libyans special Italian citizenship, instead of the citizenship that was common before this decree.¹⁰⁹ Conditions such as reaching the age of 18, being literate in Italian, and being loyal to Italy had to be met before obtaining the special Italian citizenship.¹¹⁰ A racial law for the protection of the Aryan race was issued in 29 June 1939 and among its articles was the banning of marital and sexual relations between the races, which was punishable by a six-month imprisonment, and 2,000 Italian lire.¹¹¹

After the Italians revoked the Cyrenaican basic law of 1919 and reversed the policies of the liberal period, the new Italian administration was a military administration. Its decisions were final and all the inhabitants were subject to trial by a summary military court with no rights of appeal. The Italians used special cells of informers and spies recruited from internment camps and captured resistance fighters to aid in gathering intelligence on the resistance. Recruiting tactics included a stark choice between remaining imprisoned in the internment camp or cooperation with the Italian military, with such cooperation bringing rewards such as a good salary and bonuses.¹¹² The impact of such policy on the fabric of Cyrenaican society was deep, since traditions valued revenge for real or perceived wrongdoings. A rift between different segments of Libyan society was caused by the Italian policy of using Libyan paramilitary and informants against other Libyans. When the fighting ended in the beginning of the

¹⁰⁹ Alessandro Ausiello, *La politica Italiana in Libia*, p. ٢٧٩; Italian Royal decree no. 70.

¹¹⁰ *Berid Barca*, 22 January 1935.

¹¹¹ *Rivista italiana delle colonie*, febbraio 1939, p. 139.

¹¹² Such informants had a role in pinpointing the location of the resistance leader Omar al-Mukhtar on 11 September 1931; for more see Del Boca, p. 262.

1930s, Italy owed a debt to Libyan collaborators, who were then rewarded by Italian honorary titles and administrative positions in Benghazi's government.¹¹³

Internment camps

The continued armed resistance between 1923 and 1929, without any decisive victory on either side, led the Italians to reconsider their military plans. General Graziani, who replaced Cieciliani as Vice Governor of Cyrenaica, drew up a new plan of forced removal of the Cyrenaican population to internment camps to deprive the armed resistance of their support bases. Another goal of this policy was to empty the fertile mountain areas of its inhabitants to start a settlement building programme for Italian farmers; a royal decree was issued in 1932 authorising the creation of the *Ente per la Colonizzazione della Cireniaca*, or ECC (Agency for the Colonisation of Cyrenaica).¹¹⁴

Removal of the population of the countryside of Cyrenaica – estimated at 100,000 – began after Libya's Governor Pietro Badoglio met with General Graziani on 25 June 1930; this left only the urban population, estimated at 50,000, and the population of residents near urban areas, estimated at between 10,000 and 15,000.¹¹⁵ On 27 June 1930, a few thousand members of the al-'Aouqir tribe, with their livestock of 7,000 sheep and camels, were removed from their land under Italian and Eritrean colonial troops,

¹¹³ *Berid Barca*, 22 January 1935.

¹¹⁴ Federico Cresti, 'The Early Years of Agency for the Colonization of Cyrenaica (1932-1935)' p. 77.

¹¹⁵ DMT, *Al-Watha'q al-Italiya, Malef Libya*, Khana 150-90, Malef 90, telegraph no. 146, telegraph from Graziani to Badoglio, Tripoli. Documents relating to the actual removal of the population are rare perhaps due to atrocities committed during the forced march of thousands of people and their livestock for hundreds of kilometres. The Libyan historian, Youessf al-Barghathi, who wrote about the internment camps, depended on oral history for his narrative; for more see Youessf al-Barghathi, *al-Mu'ataqalat al-Fashistiya fi Libya: Dirassa Tarikhiya*, MDJL, (Tripoli, 1993).

first to Diriana, 50 kilometres east of Benghazi, and then to Sulouq's internment camp, that was surrounded by a double barbed wire fence.¹¹⁶ This was a forced march of approximately 200 kilometres and took twelve days; orders were given to execute anyone unable to continue the march.¹¹⁷ Other removals and forced marches were no different from the removal and forced march of the al-'Aouqir tribe but the worst without a doubt was the suffering of the al-Ubidat tribe and the inhabitants of the eastern part of Cyrenaica, who endured a forced march of over one thousand kilometres to the al-Agaila internment camp.¹¹⁸

The most significant internment camps were al-Brega, al-Magrun, Sulouq, al-Agaila, the Ajdabia, and al-Abiar which held an estimated 78,313 people.¹¹⁹ In addition, there were six other smaller internment camps: Derna, al-Noufilia, Sidi Khalifa; and Benghazi's camps at Swani al-Teria, al-Quarsha and al-Kuifia holding an estimated 1,075 families.¹²⁰ Each camp was administered by an Italian director, and guarded by Italian soldiers and mixed colonial troops from Libya, Eritrea, Ethiopia, and Somalia.¹²¹

¹¹⁶ DMT, *Al-Watha'q al-Italiya, Malef Libya*, Malef 5, taqir 'an al-Mu 'aaskarat, Mutaserfiat Benghazi, 28 June 1932, p. 4, Tripoli.

¹¹⁷ Ibid.

¹¹⁸ Del Boca, p. 235.

¹¹⁹ DMT, *Al-Watha'q al-Italiya, Malef Libya*, Khana 150-22, Malef 98, min Graziani illa Emilio De Bono, 2 May 1931, Tripoli; see appendix 9 for a detailed table.

¹²⁰ Graziani, *I'adat al-Salam illa Berga* (Returning Peace to Cyrenaica), p. 104.

¹²¹ MDJL, *Mous'at Riwaiat al-Jihad* (Encyclopaedia of Libyan Resistance Oral History), Salem Burwag al-Shelwi, muqabala ajraha m'ahu Youessf al-Barghathi, 25 June 1981 (An interview with al-Agaila internment camp survivor, Salem Burwag al-Shelwi, conducted by Libyan historian Youessf al-Barghathi), Tripoli.

Conditions at the camps were very harsh, with daily life consisting of manual labour: loading supplies, cleaning, gathering wood for fires, caring for the sick, and burying the dead.¹²² Saluting the Italian flag and being present at executions were compulsory activities, with punishment by whipping for anyone refusing to salute the Italian flag.¹²³ Food in the camps was scarce and the internees occasionally were given a ration of rice; usually, however, they were given a weekly ration of half a kilogram of low quality barley, and faced malnutrition and death as their livestock died.¹²⁴ Al-Agaila internment camp had the highest rates of death, with an estimated two thirds of the internees dying. During December 1930, there were between 200 and 205 deaths a day.¹²⁵ The total number of deaths at the internment camps was estimated at between 45,000 and 60,000, a figure that does not include those who died during the forced removals and marches.¹²⁶ Livestock losses were huge; 90 to 95% of sheep, goats, and horses, and 80% of cattle and camels died.¹²⁷

After the closure of the internment camps, the internees were not allowed to return to their former land, since that fertile land was designated in the colonial project for

¹²² Abdul 'ali Abu 'Ajilla, *Um al-Khir: Sha 'erat al-Mu 'ataqil* (Um al-Khir: Internment Camp Poet), (Benghazi, no date), p. 73.

¹²³ Ibid.

¹²⁴ MDJL, *Mous 'aet Riwaiat al-Jihad*; Salem Burwag al-Shelwi stated that many at al-Agiala camp were eating grass and searching for grain in animals' manure.

¹²⁵ Mohamed Taeb al-Ashehab, *Berga al-Arabia bayin al-Ames wa al-Youm* (Arab Cyrenaica between Yesterday and Today), (Cairo, 1947), p. 67, 178; in Aulad Durman's family of 24 in al-Agaila camp, only three survived and in the al-Ghemari family of 23, only three survived.

¹²⁶ Nicola Labanca, 'Italian Colonial Internment', ed. R. Ben-Ghiat and M. Fuller, *Italian Colonialism*, New York, 2005, p. 32.

¹²⁷ Ageel Mohamed al-Barbar, *Omar al-Mukhtar: 1862-1931*, (Tripoli, 1983), p. 32.

building Italian farming settlements. The former internees were relocated in the semi-arid southern slopes of al-Jabel al-Akhdar Mountain. Since the former internees could not continue their former pastoral life, they migrated to urban coastal towns, Benghazi where some of them found employment as labourers in construction and other sectors.¹²⁸ They also constituted a source of labour for colonial settlement construction, where ten thousand Libyan labourers were hired in Cyrenaica alone. This internal migration led to the spread of poverty, shantytowns and homelessness. Overcrowding and malnutrition caused the proliferation of diseases such as tuberculosis.¹²⁹ Charitable organisations in Benghazi tried to alleviate this suffering by collecting donations and establishing a soup kitchen.¹³⁰

Refugees and exiles

Mass internment, deportation, and continued military operations led equally high numbers of refugees and exiles to flee Libya, mostly to Egypt and Tunisia. There are no exact Libyan refugee statistics for the period from 1922 to 1942 but estimates vary

¹²⁸ Del Boca, p. 281; al-Ubidat tribe were relocated between Tobruk and Derna, al-Magherba were relocated between al-Agaila and Ajdabia, and al-Abeid south of al-Merj.

¹²⁹ *Berid Barca*, 10 May 1932; a committee was formed to fight tuberculosis, chaired by Benghazi's Mayor Delgoucci, and among its members were Benghazi's Bishop Monsignor Moro and the Fascist Party secretary Tutinti.

¹³⁰ *Berid Barca*, 10 March 1932; *Berid Barca*, 9 April 1932; the donations included, for example: 200 kilograms rice (al-Sharf al-Ghiryani); 50 kilograms of pasta (Ali al-Kibtî); 20 kilograms of pasta and 2 kilograms of canned tomato paste (merchant Mustafa Bu Lifa); 200 kilograms of rice (Ali Ubaida); 100 kilograms of rice (Ibrahim al-Kanoun); 50 kilograms of pasta (Mohamed Embark); and 100 kilograms of rice and 155 kilograms of pasta (Mohamed Gherbal); MSBSMS, 1932-1935, p. 235; 10,000 lire was distributed to 200 families. The prevalence of poverty was so extensive that the imams and mayors granted poor people an official document written in both Arabic and Italian containing the indigent's name, place of birth, age, and residence. There are no exact statistics for the number of destitute people in Benghazi; however, the need for the colonial government to issue pre-printed forms is an indicator that many people were poverty stricken; see Appendix 10 for unpublished documents dated Dec. 27, 1937.

between 140,000 and 250,000, for both Tripolitania and Cyrenaica.¹³¹ A more realistic estimate for refugees from Cyrenaica in Egypt was put forth by the Libyan historian al-Zawi at 14,000.¹³² In the 1930s, the Ministry of Colonies stated that there were stringent conditions to be met for any refugee wanting to return; one condition was to forfeit any claim for expropriated property.¹³³ Nevertheless, an estimated 6,050 refugees returned between 1931 and 1936.

Conclusion

The policy of imprisonment of Libyans on the Italian Islands during the first colonial period continued during the fascist period but with addition of harsher security procedures in Cyrenaica such as the internment of the semi-nomadic and nomadic population of Cyrenaica with disastrous outcome. During the Italian campaign against the resistance in Cyrenaica other punitive measures were carried out against the civilian population such as massacres, summary judgements and deportations. Methods of collective punishment used to suppress anti-colonial armed resistance in Cyrenaica varied in their degree of harshness during the two distinct periods of Italian colonisation of Libya. The Italian authorities tried to cover up the extent of deported prisoners to prisons on the Italian islands.

¹³¹ Hassen Ali Kheshim, *Safahat min Jihadina al-Wattani* (Pages from Our National Struggle), (Tripoli, 1974), p. 127; Mahmoud al-Shenittai, *Qadiat Libya* (Libya's Leaders), (Cairo, 1951), p. 73.

¹³² Tahir Ahmed al-Zawi, *Jihad al-Libiyeen fi Diar al-Hijera* 1924-1952, (Tripoli, 1976), p. 13.

¹³³ DMT, *Al-Watha'q al-Italiya, Malef Libya*, Malef 2, Telegraph no. 1252-479, min al-Moufadiya al-Italia fi Misr illa Wazir al-Must'amarat (from the Italian Mission in Egypt to the Minister of Colonies), 9 August 1936, Tripoli.

In the pre-fascist period, there was a period of peace lasting for six years just as WWI was ending, with the peace settlement allowing for joint Italian-Libyan rule in Cyrenaica. During this time, there was a common awareness among the colonised and the coloniser to resolve the occupation problem and its social repercussions, and such awareness was ruled by certain conditions and stages of occupation and resistance. It was very clear to Italy the importance of reformulating its relations with the various segments of Libyan society based on renouncing confrontation and pursuing positive engagement in different fields, and on many levels, and regarding it as a vital requirement in the short and long term. It was evident to the Libyan side the centrality of investing the current balance of power in deciding between the available choices of separation or engagement that would ultimately affect the nature of relationship between the Italians and the Libyans. However, the democratic experiment of joint rule ended in failure, as the political situation changed in Rome when the fascist party rose to power in 1922.

From 1911 to 1932, military operations caused a decrease in the population of Cyrenaica, but the main cause of that decrease in population was caused by Italian fascist policies after 1923 – mass internment, poverty, famine, and disease. No fewer than 40,000 people died because of execution, famine, or disease; huge damage to the livestock sector in Cyrenaica occurred, since an estimated 95% of sheep and goats and 80% of cattle died due to the policies of the fascist regime. The Italian government's policies of imprisoning people outside the country and in internment camps could be considered a precursor of the later policies of genocide and ethnic- cleansing used by other totalitarian governments.

Chapter 4

The Impact of Italian Colonisation on Benghazi's Economy

In this chapter, there is an explanation of the economic fundamentals upon which the economic life of the city of Benghazi was built from the late Ottoman period to the end of the Italian colonial period. There is a discussion of the economic role of the city in the eastern region of Libya and the impact of Italian colonialism on how and why this economic role changed during the colonial period. During the first half of the twentieth century, Libya was perceived as having no important mineral resources and no manufacturing industries; the nation's wealth was derived almost entirely from agriculture, which was severely limited by the conditions of climate and rainfall and by the general lack of water resources throughout a large part of the country.¹

Italy, a latecomer to colonialism, wanted to "join the club" of European powers by creating African colonies. In Libya, Italy's claim was expounded as both a solution to the poverty problems of southern Italian peasants and a mission to civilise the Libyan population. Essentially, Italian colonial policy was based on a Hegelian natural right of a state to colonise other people, especially a lesser developed one, as a solution for problems in its civil society, such as poverty. In the first period of colonialization under liberal democratic Italy in 1911-1922, due to Libyan armed resistance the Italian government did not have enough time to implement the large-scale settlement policy

¹ Chia-Lin Pan, "The Population of Libya", *Population Studies*, Vol. 3, No. 1 (1949), p. 111.

originally envisioned. In Cyrenaica, the 1917 peace treaty of 'Akrama and the 1920 treaty of al-Rejema ushered in joint rule, preventing the Italians from gaining control over the most fertile land needed to start Italian farm settlements. With the end of democratic rule in Italy and the ascendancy of the fascist party to power in 1922, came the end of the joint rule agreement in Cyrenaica and the resumption of military confrontation. As Libyan armed resistance in Cyrenaica ended in 1932, the Italian government embarked on a colonial farm settlement building programme.

The first part of this chapter concerns Benghazi's economy in the late Ottoman period (the second half of the nineteenth century). It includes a description of the city's major markets, and its types, sizes, and locations, as well as the regulations governing licensing and price control. The role that the city's port played in external trade with other Mediterranean ports, and its economic development is also addressed. The traditional crafts section discusses the types of skilled crafts undertaken during the period.

The second part of this chapter analyses the impact of the Italian colonisation on Benghazi's economy. This part is divided into two sections: the impact of Italian colonisation on Benghazi's economy in the pre-fascist period (1911-1922), and the impact of Italian colonisation on Benghazi's economy in the fascist period (1922-1942). The former is divided into three sections: these address the impact on Benghazi's commerce, agriculture, and real estate respectively. This formula is repeated for the fascist period.

This chapter seeks to answer the main hypothesis that Italy's colonial economic policy was designed to serve the Italian colonist settlers, as there was an absence of an overall comprehensive economic policy to benefit the Libyan population.

Benghazi's economy in the late Ottoman period (1835-1911)

By the mid-1850s, the Ottoman reforms (*tanzimat*) were implemented in the provinces of Tripoli and Cyrenaica.² For the next twenty-five years, administrative and educational reorganisation proceeded as agriculture slowly began to supplant the commerce of the caravan trade. Land reforms and agricultural development undermined the tribal organisation of nomadic pastoralism, encouraging settlement and loosening tribal kinship ties. The activities of the Sanusi religious movement, whose extensive political and commercial organisation also encouraged educational development and sedentarisation, precipitated many of the same changes, as institutional affiliation – whether Ottoman or Sanusi – began to supersede tribal support as the basis of political power and economic wealth.³ The growth of villages around forts and markets established by the Ottoman governors reflected a general trend toward urbanisation in the northern regions of the provinces of Tripoli and Cyrenaica.⁴

Commercial activity was considered the most important economic activity inside Benghazi. There was a period of economic recovery in the second half of the nineteenth

² Hanioglu, *A Brief History of the Late Ottoman Empire*, p. 74.

³ Shukri, *al-Sanusiyya deen wa-doula*, p. 29.

⁴ Agostini, *Sukkan Libya (Barqa)*, pp. 415, 444; Agostini, *Sukkan Libya (Tarablus al-Gharb)*, tr. Khalifa al-Tallisi, Tripoli, 1978, pp. xvii, 2; by the early twentieth century, Tripoli's population was about 30,000 people, Benghazi's 19,000, and almost half the population was considered non-nomadic by the Italian colonial officials.

century due to the relative political stability with significant growth in trade and industry.⁵ During this time, Benghazi's markets were of two types: traditional *suq* and popular open-air markets, or *sh 'abi*. The traditional markets consisted of small shops and large stores located in a covered mall in the middle of the city, such as *suq al-Dalam* and *suq al-Jareed*. These markets extended over seven city districts.⁶ The shops in these markets sold retail and wholesale local and imported merchandise: *suq al-Jareed*, for instance, was famous for shops selling cotton, woollen, and silk fabrics; as well as horse saddles, harnesses and guns.⁷ There were also many shops lining the main streets selling fruits and vegetables and providing services such as barbershops and shoe shops.⁸ Open-air markets, which were held usually weekly in a specific location, local agriculture products and livestock were traded. These markets had an effective role in commercial activities and daily economic life since they were essential places for the sale and exchange of all local products and daily necessities to the public, and were frequented by a large crowd.⁹ The most renowned open-air market was *al-Fonduq al-Baladi*, a spacious building constructed in 1890 as a caravanserai (or *khan*) for housing caravan traders and transportation animals. The main products sold in this market were grain and livestock, and it was open daily. The average number of livestock brought

⁵ Gerhad Rolfs, *Kufra*, Leipzig, F. A. Brokhus, 1881, p. 76; per Gerhad Rolfs, who visited Libya in 1868 and 1878, Tripoli had seen significant growth in trade and industry in the ten years between his first and second visits.

⁶ MSBSMS, no. 68, 1933-1936, p. 25.

⁷ Coro, *Libya Athn 'a al-Ahd al-'Uthmani al-Thani*, p.37; *suq al-Dalam* was destroyed by a fire in 1906 and was rebuilt in 1922 during the colonial period.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Mahmoud Naji, *Tarikh Taraboulus al-Gharab* (The History of Tripolitania), tr. Abedulsalam Adhem & Mohamed al-Ustta, University of Benghazi, (Benghazi, 1970), p. 44.

daily to Benghazi was about 150 sheep and goats, 25 head of cattle, 20 camels, 2 horses and 8 donkeys. Moreover, the amount of grain in the market, especially in the summer, ranged between 1,500 and 1,600 tons.¹⁰

Benghazi relied on merchandise exchanges between the different Libyan regions. During the nineteenth century, materials such as wheat, barley, wood, coal, cattle, horses, and clarified butter were shipped regularly from Benghazi's port to Tripoli.¹¹ In exchange, dates, olive oil, woollen fabrics, dried fruits, mats, and baskets were shipped from Tripoli, in addition to merchandise imported via Tripoli's port, such as clothes, manufactured wooden products, iron, candles, coffee, medicine, glass and silk.¹² For instance, the average value of dates shipped from Tripoli to Benghazi was between 7,000 and 12,000 British pounds yearly.¹³

Jewish merchants had a large role in the commerce of the Ottoman Libyan provinces of Tripoli and Benghazi in the second half of the nineteenth century due to the restructuring of the Ottoman judicial system – a part of the *tanzimat* reforms. Jewish and European merchants could resort to the new court to resolve commercial disputes that provided a guarantee for their enterprises.¹⁴ In 1880, a syndicate of 600 Libyan and

¹⁰ Coro, *Libya Athn'a al-Ahd al-'Uthmani al-Thani*, 82.

¹¹ UK Foreign Office Documents, *Report on Trade and Commerce in Benghazi*, Letter of Cecil Wood to the Marquis of Salisbury, Benghazi, April 16, 1887; Letters of Justin Alvarez to the Marquis of Salisbury, Benghazi, April 16, 1891, 1898, May 21, 1900.

¹² UK Foreign Office Documents, *Report on Trade and Commerce in Benghazi*.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Ettore Rossi, 'La Colonin Italiana a Tripoli', *Rivista delle Colonie Italiane*, Anno 12, vol. 2, (Roma, 1930), p. 376.

Jewish merchants was formed, headed by 13 Jewish merchants.¹⁵ This helped to increase the size of the Jewish investment, which included all economic activities. For instance, Jewish merchants formed companies that monopolised the export of caravan trade merchandise such as gold, ivory, leather, and ostrich feathers to Europe.¹⁶ The Jewish merchants in Ottoman Libyan provinces of Tripoli and Benghazi were able to obtain financing from European financial institutions such as the Prussianburg Chamber of Commerce in Austria and Hamburg's bank in Germany.¹⁷ With the increase in commercial activity, Jewish merchants established hotels to provide service to merchants, and business leaders obtained slaughterhouse concessions, fish duties and metal tax stamps from the provincial government.¹⁸

Merchants from Tunisia were engaged in grain and livestock wholesale and in the caravan trade from Sudan. The Tunisian government had agents in Benghazi such as Ahmed Mohamed al-Mehdawi and Sa'id al-Barez representing the interests of the Tunisian *Bey*.¹⁹

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 1063.

¹⁶ M.al-Hachaici, *Jalà al-Kerb àn Tarabolus al-Gharab* (Clearing the Distress of Tripoli), ed. Ali Mustafa al-Mesrati, Dar Lebanon, (Beirut, 1965), pp. 113-114.

¹⁷ DMT, Documents of the Austrian Consulate in Tripoli, *a letter from Consul Emilio Rossi to Governor Rajeb Pasha, no. 123, May 23, 1907*; Documents of the German Consulate in Tripoli, *correspondence from Hamburg's bank, Jul. 15, 1901*.

¹⁸ DMT, *Mahfuzat Majlis al-Wilaya bi Trabolus* (Tripoli's Province Council Documents) *Jan. 27, 1875*, slaughterhouse concession; *Mahfuzat Majlis al-Wilaya bi Trabolus, Jan. 27, 1890*, fish duties; *Mahfuzat Majlis al-Wilaya bi Trabolus, Jan. 27, 1854*, metal tax stamps.

¹⁹ DMT, *Ahmed Mohamed al-Mehdawi illa Khirulddin 3 Jan. 1875* (Report from Tunisia's Agent in Benghazi to the Governor of Tunisia about the economic conditions in Cyrenaica).

The Italian residents of Benghazi and Tripoli who came mainly from Sicily started arriving in 1860, because of the relative political stability and economic opportunity in both cities.²⁰ After Italy's unity, Italian residents' affairs in the Ottoman provinces of Tripoli and Benghazi were conducted by one consulate headed in 1861 by G. B. Ansaldi.²¹ The Italian consuls had a role in supporting their subjects and established the Italian Chamber of Commerce and Industry to compete with the French and Austrian chambers of commerce.²² By the end of the nineteenth century, the markets of Tripoli and Benghazi were flooded with all types of Italian goods and popular among the Libyans, since they were inexpensive and of good quality compared with goods from other European countries.²³ Among the large Italian companies in Libya were Johnni Peccei Imports and Michelli Bros. Industries.²⁴ There was an increased commercial Italian interest in the two Ottoman provinces of Tripolitania and Cyrenaica during the second half of the nineteenth century.

Among the foreign communities that had a major role in trade in Benghazi was the Maltese community. They were engaged in trade on a large scale as retail and wholesale

²⁰ Mario Pegli, 'le Collettività Italiane in Africa', *Atti del Congresso di Studi Coloniali*, (Roma, 193), pp. 104, 105.

²¹ DMT, *Baladiyat Tarabolus, al-Qesim al-Ajnabi lil-Mahfuzat, 1860-1911* (Municipality of Tripoli, Foreign Section Documents).

²² DMT, Documents of the Austrian Consulate in Tripoli, *a letter from Consul Emilio Rossi to Governor Rajeb Pasha, no. 123, May 23, 190.*

²³ Khalifa Mohamed al-Ahoul, "Watha'eq min al-archeif al-Qunsilli al-Italli bi-Trabolus" (Documents from the Tripoli Italian Consulate Archives), *Majallet al-Watha'eq wa al-Makhtutat*, (Tripoli, 1983), p. 141.

²⁴ Anthony J. Cachia, *Libya under the Second Ottoman Occupation 1835-1911*, p. 95.

merchants in basic goods, with a concentration on European imported goods such as clothes, fabrics, tea, coffee, candles, cutlery, alcoholic beverages, and household goods.²⁵

Foreign communities controlled most of commercial and industrial institutions in addition to the import and export agencies in the second half of nineteenth century Cyrenaica.²⁶ The trade sector represented one the most important fundamental pillars of Benghazi's economy, as it contributed to the income of Benghazi's residents and provided taxes to the Ottoman treasury.

The volume of external trade during this period can be measured by the number of ships docking at Benghazi's port in 1902.²⁷ Although these figures are from the end of the nineteenth century and the early twentieth century, they are an indicator of the volume of trade at Benghazi's port in the second half of the nineteenth century. These tables demonstrate that the number of ships docking at the port in 1902 was 50% greater than in 1901, at 397 ships – 94 steam ships and 304 sailing vessels – with a total cargo of 86,205 tons of imported goods from Britain, Germany, Greece, Tunisia, and Istanbul, an increase of 118% on the previous year. There was a notable increase in the number of steam ships docking in the port in 1902 compared with 1901; at 32 vessels carrying at total of 21,372 tons, Britain had more of these arriving at the port compared to Italy, the Ottomans, or Germany, suggesting that Britain's merchant navy capability stretched ahead of its rivals. The number of Greek ships was 203 ships, just over half of the ships

²⁵ Nachtigal, *Dahara and Sudan*, pp. 13-14, 17.

²⁶ Gabriele Vittorio Raccach, 'L'Origine di Alcuni Cognomi de Ebrei Tripoli', *Israel*, (Firenze, 1938), p. 6.

²⁷ Abedulmolla al-Harir, 'Taqrir Naeb al-Qunsil al-Brittani 1901-1903' (British Deputy Consul Justin Alvarez Report), *Majallet al-Bohuth al-Tarikiyya*, Jan. 1989, pp. 11-12.

docking at the port in 1902, but they brought only 36% of the year's total cargo. There were 32 Italian ships with a cargo of 44,838 tons, 56% of the total cargo. Although there was an increase of the number of Italian ships compared to 1901 but it did not reflect an increase in cargo. As for the other ships docking at the port, there were also 2 German ships with 3,756 tons of cargo and 22 Tunisian ships with a cargo of 2,175 tons.²⁸

The total value of imports at Benghazi's port in the beginning of the twentieth century was 188,174 lire, with demand for cotton fabrics and sugar. There was an increase in the demand for sugar between 1900 and 1902 by 56% because, in addition to local consumption, it was regarded as trading commodity with sub-Saharan countries like Northern Chad. Other goods in demand were tea to the value of 6,090 British pounds, carpets valued at 1,550 lire, and handguns. There was a huge decrease in imported rice between 1901 and 1902 because of the decrease in consumption of rice due to quality of local harvest of wheat and barley.²⁹

The total value of exports in 1902 was 38,555 British pounds, an increase of 3% from the previous year.³⁰ Research for this thesis has revealed that this apparent increase was because the British Deputy Consul's report did not include olive oil valued at 14,620 British pounds exported to Istanbul and Egypt in 1901. Barley was the main exported commodity and in 1902, three-quarters of the barley produced went to Britain for whiskey distillers. The value of wheat exported in 1902 was 4,800 British pounds and there was a decrease in the export of eggs from 1901 by 50%. The main export in

²⁸ al-Harir, 'Taqrir Naeb al-Qunsil al-Brittani 1901-1903', pp. 11-12.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Ibid.

livestock was sheep due to the good conditions of pastures and camels but there was a decrease in cattle exports, possibly, due to the drought of 1892. There was an increase in the export of ivory to 1,320 British pounds and the total value of exported ostrich feathers was 12,300 British pounds, an increase of 123% from 1901.³¹

There were many traditional industries in Benghazi, such as textiles, leather tanning, soap, silversmiths, goldsmiths, and salt manufacturing. Before 1911, the total yearly income of those industries was five million Italian francs.³²

Summary

There were several economic elements helping in the economic growth of the city of Benghazi in the second half of the nineteenth century. First, the fertile countryside in Cyrenaica with its agricultural and livestock products was an important means for local commercial trade. Secondly, Benghazi's port activity in combination with the caravan trade, could bring goods to landlocked central Africa in exchange for African goods to be exported to Europe and the Levant. The connection to global markets had a great effect on Benghazi's economy where resided in Benghazi.

The connection to global markets, relative political and economic stability in the second half of the nineteenth century had a role in attracting foreign communities' merchants engaged in export and import commercial activities to Benghazi, which led to population growth. In addition to the economic effect of those new residents, there was

³¹ al-Harir, 'Taqrir Naeb al-Qunsil al-Brittani 1901-1903', pp. 11-12.

³² Gabriele Vittorio Raccah, *Uppunti Per un Archivio delle Faniglia Ebraiche della (Libia)*, I. S. N. d., (Tripoli, 1914), p. 4.

a social effect on Benghazi's demographics, through the introduction of a diverse group of people from Mediterranean countries, who became an integral part of its society.

Traditional agriculture is widely acclaimed for provided opportunities to the city's residents and the population of the nearby countryside, through improved methods of agriculture, harvest, transport, and storage; even employment opportunities were available for breeders of the horses and mules that were used in the agriculture and transport.

The impact of Italian colonisation on Benghazi's economy in the pre-fascist period (1911-1922)

The thesis now turns to a discussion of the impact of Italian colonisation on Benghazi's economy in the pre-fascist period (1911-1922). The following section looks at the importance of the security arrangements undertaken by the Italian government in Benghazi, in the years immediately following the invasion, to sustain optimal economic conditions.

This section is divided into three parts: the impact of Italian colonialism on commerce; on agriculture; and on real estate. About commerce, the investigation concentrates on the effects of the military and political conditions in Benghazi. The second part explores whether agriculture continued along the same pattern of traditional methods or whether new colonial policy had a role in its development. Finally, the third part touches on the importance of real estate to colonial Italy and the new policy of real estate registration and ownership verification.

The impact of Italian colonisation on Benghazi's commerce in the pre-fascist period (1911-1922)

After Italian forces entered Benghazi, they initiated several security measures to control the city. One such measure was asking all residents to hand over all their firearms, with a death penalty for anyone caught with a gun.³³ Another measure was digging deep trenches and ramparts circumvallating the city, reaching a height of five metres and a width of one metre; its length was approximately four kilometres, all completed within seventy days.³⁴ The Italians needed to secure the city to build a well-defended base for further operations. In addition, they closed all stores in the city, though the Mayor of Benghazi wrote to the Italian commander, Major General Ottavio Briccola, asking that some stores and bakeries be allowed to open.³⁵ General Briccola's instructions to the Italian troops were to be careful and patient and not to venture one step towards the countryside as there was a certainty of overwhelming force and that to stay without movement was better than to be exposed to attack.³⁶

The first few months after the invasion were noticeable for the intensity of the fighting. The Italian security measures were hard on Benghazi's residents: on 27 November 1911, the Italians declared martial law inside the city; all shops had to close after 3:00 p.m.; a curfew was in place after 9:00 p.m.; and it was forbidden to open the windows at night

³³ Bulugma, *Dirassat Libiya*, p. 68.

³⁴ Franscico Malgeri, *al-Herb al-Libiya*, p. 210; for a description of the defensive wall see p. 7 of this thesis.

³⁵ MDJL, *Risala min Ra'es Baladyat Benghazi illa al-Qa'ed al-Aeskeri al-Itali* (Letter from Mayor of Benghazi to the Italian commander), Benghazi; Major General Ottavio Briccola was Benghazi's governor from 1911 to 1913.

³⁶ Malgeri, *al-Herb al-Libiya*, p. 210.

as blackout conditions were in force.³⁷ Indeed, the first year of occupation was trying for the Italians and Benghazi's residents equally; there was a feeling of being under siege, with continuing attacks by resistance forces on the Italian positions and an apparent inability to change the situation.³⁸ In addition, increased tough security measures, surveillance and a ban on people leaving the city without written permission reflected a sense of tension among the residents.³⁹ To gain a firmer foothold, General Briccola asked for an increase in troop numbers, to which the Italian government acceded and thus the number of soldiers in Benghazi rose to 25,000 troops, surpassing the total of the local population of Benghazi.⁴⁰ This effectively turned Benghazi into a large military camp. This condition of paralysis and the stoppage of commercial activity negatively affected the residents inside the city and those residents who were outside the city at the beginning of war.⁴¹

³⁷ Ministero Affari Esteri-l'Italia in Africa, Vol. I, *Operazioni Del L'esercito-Avvenimenti Militari Nel Nord Africa 1911-1943*, (Roma 1964).

³⁸ Ministero Affari Esteri-l'Italia in Africa, *Operazioni Del L'esercito-Avvenimenti Militari Nel Nord Africa*

1911-1943, Vol. I, Roma 1964; a letter by the manager of the Ottoman Bank dated on 6 December 1911 stated: 'We marked this week with general dismay a reminder of the sad days experienced by the country during the invasion and the reason was news that came from inland, which confirmed that some 50,000 to 60,000 Mujahidin, supported by the Turkish regulars decided to attack the city in the holydays. The Italian leadership ordered defensive measures within the city, ordered the closure of all shops at three o'clock in the afternoon, applied a strict curfew after nine o'clock in evening, and banned the opening of windows at night to maintain total darkness. Many families left the city, travelling to Syracuse out of fear. Therefore, Gen. Briccola is not allowing people to leave the city to put an end to the state of panic that prevailed among the population.'

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Maltese, *Libya: Ard al-Mi'ad*, p. 190; naval and land reinforcement from General Command, and moved to Benghazi's shores two battleships – the *Roma* and *Regina Alianna*, with 600 marines aboard.

⁴¹ MSBSMS, no. 34, 1911-1919, p. 30; one of the cases of the *shari'a* court on 2 January 1912 when one of Benghazi's residents was unable to attend court because he was outside the city and could not return; of course, this is only one example but a documented example nonetheless. It indicates the probability that there were many other cases of people needing to re-enter the city but were unable to do so; researchers only know about this example because the subject had a court date but there is no documentation for other people who might have been denied entrance to the city.

Because of the Treaty of Lausanne, signed on 13 October 1912, the Italian military leaders in Benghazi relaxed their security measures.⁴² The Italians allowed unarmed people to move in and out of the city, with the exception of shaykhs known for their opposition to the Italians.⁴³ Another result of the Treaty was a major Italian military operation to occupy Benina and the mountain town of al-Merj 100 kilometres east of Benghazi.⁴⁴ This resulted in easing of the security procedures in entering and exiting Benghazi with the improvement of the security situation inside the city.⁴⁵ With the improving security situation, the first Italian settlers began arriving in Benghazi; in 1913, the number of Italian settlers in Benghazi was about 1,850, including 600 women and children.⁴⁶ Most of them were from Sicily, southern Italy and Tunisia.⁴⁷ They were a mixture of artisans, butchers, shoemakers, barbers, restaurant workers, domestic workers, and porters.⁴⁸ An estimated thirty five percent of those Italian settlers were illiterate and it seems that the Italian government gave financial incentives to those settlers to provide daily services to the relatively large Italian army in Benghazi.⁴⁹

Benghazi's port had recovered some of its commercial activity to serve the needs of the city's residents and the 25,000 soldiers stationed there. To facilitate this, the Italian

⁴² Giolitti, *Modhkirat Giolitti*, p.156.

⁴³ MDJL, *al-Wath'iq al-Italiya*, Wathiqat 122, Tripoli.

⁴⁴ al-Ashehab, *Berga al-Arabia Ames wa al-Youm*, p. 268.

⁴⁵ MSBSMS, no. 6, 1912-1914, p. 21.

⁴⁶ U. Tegani, *Benghazi*, Milano, 1914, p. 128.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

military government employed Libyans at the port as dockworkers unloading and storing goods, in building the defensive wall, and paving roads, while others worked with the military administration and Italian companies and shops that started to spread in the city.⁵⁰ Italian media at the time published photographs of Libyan women working at the wall's construction site.⁵¹ Commercial activity was returning to normal; on 11 December 1912, the livestock market was open.⁵² Moreover, the Italian military government was employing residents.⁵³

Coinciding with those conditions, the start of WWI had a clear effect on the Italian commercial activities; Italy's maritime transport with Libya was exposed to German submarine attacks and thus the number of ships arriving at Benghazi's port was diminished, resulting in shortages of goods including food, which in turn caused an increase in prices.⁵⁴ In addition, 1915 was a drought year.⁵⁵ The Italian administration instituted a food distribution programme of rations, first for city residents, then for the people coming to the city from the surrounding areas.⁵⁶ In addition, goods and food imported by land from Egypt came to a complete stop once the Libyan–Egyptian border

⁵⁰ F. Spada, *Dopola Guerra*, Bologna, 1914, p. 10.

⁵¹ Tegani, *Benghasi*, p. 172; the photographs showed Libyan women (both Arab and African) carrying stone blocks and building materials on top of their heads.

⁵² MSBSMS, no. 5, 1911-1919, p. 115.

⁵³ MSBSMS, no. 5, 1911-1919, p. 41; in this case, dated 30 January 1916, Emraj 'a Ben Ali al-Qemati died at work at Benghazi's port, and since the deceased had dependents who were minors, the Imam and *Mukhtar* of Sidi Hussein district presented to the *shari'a* court a certificate of cognisance for compensation; the number of Libyans working at the military administration was 6,000 see Spada, *Dopola Guerra*, p. 10.

⁵⁴ al-Bori, *Mojtam 'a Madinat Benghazi fi al-Nisf al-Awal min al-Qarn al-Eshrin*, p. 172.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

was closed in 1916 because of the outbreak of hostilities between the Libyan resistance and British forces in Egypt.⁵⁷ The closure of the Egyptian border, coupled with the virtual stoppage of Benghazi's port, led to the near cessation of commercial exchange and economic activity.

The diminished activity at Benghazi's port, the closure of the Libyan-Egyptian border, and the drought of 1915 caused a significant negative impact on the population of the city and the province. Moreover, continued fighting led to the halt of the caravan trade with central Africa, which caused losses to Benghazi's merchants.⁵⁸ The economic recession continued after the end of WWI.⁵⁹ Companies were exposed to loss and bankruptcies because of the persistently weak economy.⁶⁰

⁵⁷ al-Bori, *Mojtam 'a Madinat Benghazi fi al-Nisf al-Awal min al-Qarn al-Eshrin*, p. 172.

⁵⁸ Graziani, *Barqa al-Hadia*, p. 21; MSBSMS, no. 98, 1915-1920, p. 108; Merchant Abdulhadi Mami owned two shops (nos. 19 and 23) in Benesa district, was a partner in a shop (no. 74) with Mr Rajab Al Baja in the same district, and owned two shops in al-Funduq market. An inventory taken at his death in 1915, showed that the income from rentals of three shops was 1,762.45 francs whereas the value of merchandise in two shops was 700.65 francs. The value of what existed while counting the deceased's estate showed that the rentals were higher than the merchandise in his shops; this was probably due a combination of the shortages of goods and the increase in residential and commercial rents caused by the arrival of the first Italian settlers to Benghazi; for more see al-Bori, *Benghazi fi fatret al-Ihtilal al-Itali*, p. 56; the Italian government did not provide housing for the first settlers but gave them financial incentives.

⁵⁹ MSBSMS, no. 96, 1918-1922, p. 69; debts of the deceased merchant, Ahmed Sh'aban al-Moterdi, were determined at 3,873.65 francs on 27 February 1919, the liabilities evident in the counting of the estate: 794.35 francs to Gini Garbot (Italian), 528.80 francs to Gabra and Ferdinand Co. (Italian), 150 francs to Valdini (Italian), and 2,400 francs to the inheritors of Augustio Galia (Maltese) and Shalom (Italian).

⁶⁰ MSBSMS, no. 15, 1920-1937, p. 4; a dissolution settlement ratified on 4 February 1920 between two companies stated a final dissolution in an exchange of 30,000 Italian francs this settlement was between merchant Qasim al-Mabrook al-Jerbi and his deceased partner 'Anan Omar al-Baji, resident of al-'Ageep Street, Sidi Khrebesh district. The first party relinquished, to the second party, all his trading matters and other advances, accounts, and their equivalents, taking place in Benghazi, Jerba, or elsewhere.

Peace achieved through treaties of the 'Akrama and the al-Rejema led to the resumption of economic activities in the city.⁶¹ The residents of the surrounding areas of Benghazi came to the city to shop, which they had not been able to do in years.⁶² Maritime transport from and to the port improved as WWI was ending and there was a resumption of the caravan trade and it was sufficiently safe to travel between Benghazi and other towns and the peace treaty was respected.⁶³

The years following Italy's invasion of Libya negatively affected Benghazi's commerce in various ways. The pre-fascist period in Libya lasted for less than ten years; six of them were years of war. The war prevented the flow of agricultural produce and livestock from the countryside into Benghazi and prevented imported goods from flowing into the countryside. The start of WWI greatly reduced the number of ships arriving at Benghazi's port, causing shortages of all goods. Shortages in the supply of goods – either imported or from the local countryside – caused the prices of goods to rise. The first Italian settlers arriving at Benghazi started to look for residential and commercial properties to rent or buy, resulting in an increase in rents and real estate prices. Benghazi's commerce did not begin to recover until the peace agreements between with the Libyan resistance and the end of WWI.

⁶¹ Shukri, *al-Sanusiyya deen wa-doula*, p. 209; Graziani, *Barqa al-Hadia*, p. 26; Cyrenaica basic law was issued on May 1919 and is like Tripolitania's.

⁶² Maltese, *Libya: Arḍ al-Mi'ad*, p. 182; one article of the basic law provided for the freedom of movement of people and goods between areas controlled by the Italian government and areas controlled by the Sanusi *Amir*.

⁶³ MSBSMS, no. 5, 1911-1919, p. 162; Mohamed Ben Ahmed Bashoun died during service aboard one of the government ships on 10 March 1918; the case stated, 'the deceased has young children so the government has allocated compensation from the work injuries' fund'; MSBSMS, no. 98, 1915-1920, p. 108; case dated 8 January 1922, merchant Mohamed bin Ali al-Jaredi was buying merchandise in Benghazi to take back to his town, he died while in Benghazi. The shari'a court appointed Ali Effendi Abi Qreen and Hajj Bashir from *Beit al-Mal* (the Islamic Treasury) and a court clerk to take charge of the deceased's merchandise for safekeeping.

The impact of Italian colonisation on Benghazi's agriculture in the pre-fascist period (1911-1922)

Benghazi's population owned agricultural land in surrounding areas; therefore, when the Italian commanders barred anyone from leaving or entering the city, agriculture was the economic element most negatively affected. Moreover, when military security procedures were relaxed and the residents could leave the city with a written permit, in the next planting season, a drought reduced the harvest.⁶⁴ In 1911, there were difficulties encountered by Benghazi's residents in reaching agricultural land outside the city.⁶⁵

War caused destruction and damage in the city and to the farms surrounding it, and the Italian government started a damage compensations policy.⁶⁶ That policy was more of a public relations policy to assuage the anger of Benghazi's population and to avoid driving more people to join the resistance. There was little chance of receiving any compensation from the Italian government because of the qualifying rules; one rule was that to receive any compensation an applicant must provide two guarantors who would be required to pay back the amount of compensation if the compensation money was not spent on the restoration of the farm.⁶⁷ The compensation, in such cases, was treated

⁶⁴ See footnote 55 in this chapter.

⁶⁵ MSBSMS, no. 98, 1915-1920, p. 104; Bint Ali al-Qazar resident of Sidi al-Sharif district had a *muzara'ea* contract (planting contract) with 'Ayad al-Shouhidia and she gave to him 1.5 *Sa'è* of barley (178.21 kg) as planting seeds but he moved to Qeminis after the war and did not contact her. (Al-*muzara'ea* is a type of farming contract where a farmer partners with another to farm his land in exchange for part of the harvest (usually half or a third of harvest).

⁶⁶ MSBSMS, 1911-1919, p. 18.

⁶⁷ MSBSMS, 1911-1919, p. 18; Masoud Ben Abdulrahman al-Zahwaqi's inheritors were informed that they must provide two guarantors to sign a bond to receive compensation for their farm in al-Zreri 'aia district, the inheritors assigned Mohamed Rajab al-Zahwaqi to collect the compensation. The government ordered Al Zahwagee's inheritors to bring two guarantors who would pay back the sum offered in case the money was not spent on the restoration of the farm or was misused.

as a loan that had to be paid back. The Italian authority required the guarantors to sign a bond, which made anyone willing to be a guarantor wary of becoming involved to avoid adverse financial consequences.⁶⁸ Another hurdle was the lengthy process; it took years before anyone received payment.⁶⁹ Nevertheless, agricultural activity, at least that which was rain-fed, by Benghazi's residents and those in its surrounding area continued.⁷⁰

At harvest time, the Italian government sought to control the produce. Cyrenaica governor, Giovanni Battista Ameglio, issued a law on 22 April 1918 stating that all the year's wheat harvest must be put under government control, with violators to be punished by imprisonment and fines; because of this law, farmers started hiding their harvest in nearby caves.⁷¹

There were no changes or improvements to the traditional agricultural methods used in Benghazi's area during the period under discussion. Ploughing season began in October and was considered a hard task that required the collaboration of several the city's

⁶⁸ MSBSMS, 1911-1919, p. 18

⁶⁹ MSBSMS, no. 118, 1917, p. 18; the inheritors of al-Sanusi Qrayo were residents of Benghazi's Sidi Khrebesh district; the Italian government offered compensation to the inheritors of al-Sanusi Qrayo, on 6 October 1917, for damages to their farm after six years; there was no fighting in that district after the end of 1911.

⁷⁰ MSBSMS, no. 202, 1914-1915, p.169; Aisha, the widow of Mohamed al-Brhami, worked as a field cook for harvesters in May of 1915, her wage was dependent on what the farm owners, al-Naihoum family, were prepared to pay her and Aisha was dissatisfied with this casual way of being paid, so she and some of the other women left harvesting and went to farm a plot in al-Sellmani district; MSBSMS, 1918-1922, p. 69; another case in 1920 concerned the custody of a child, al-Mabrouk al-Fazani, granted to the mother after her situation improved working as a field cook during the harvesting season.

⁷¹ Governo Della Cirenaica, *Bollettino Ufficiale*, Benghazi, 1918, p. 121; Giovanni Battista Ameglio was Benghazi governor from 1913 to 1918; MDJL (Jihad Centre for Historical Studies), al-nashra al-ikhbariya li hokumat berga (Cyrenaica Government News Bulletin), al-mektab al-'askeri wal siasi (Military and Political Office) no. 38 from 17 to 23 September 1918, Tripoli; the Italian military bulletin states that 'a company of our soldiers confiscated 200 *Qintar* (102.56 metric ton) of barley, and two type 91 guns and, ammunition, and arrested the harvest owner.'

residents for a fee.⁷² It required expenses, especially when cultivators had to stay on the farm through the working period. An example of the traditional ploughing methods has been found in examining the expenses for ploughing a field in 1920.⁷³ Methods used in the late Ottoman period continued to be used; these consisted of horse-drawn ploughs followed by a group of cultivators sowing the seeds (wheat or barley).⁷⁴ In the colonial period of 1911-1922, agriculture in Cyrenaica continued to use the same rudimentary methods that were in use during the previous century under the Ottoman rule since the Ottoman state mode of governance was to only collect taxes and leave the responsibility of conducting of economic activity and providing services to the provinces' population of; agricultural modernisation would have to wait until the fascist period, when the Italian government invested heavily in construction of Italian farm settlements to provide housing and employment for its disadvantaged population especially in southern Italy.

The impact of Italian colonisation on Benghazi's real estate in the pre-fascist period (1911-1922)

The Italian authorities issued decree no. 48 on January 1913, establishing the *Ufficio Fondairio* (Real Estates Department) in Tripolitania and Cyrenaica, and began

⁷² MSBSMS, 1917-1931, p. 8; On 17 October 1917, in the *shari'a* court record: 'Thursday, the ploughing began on the farm'.

⁷³ MSBSMS, 1917-1931, p. 12; MSBSMS, 1917-1931, p. 13; expenses, such as fees for female cooks and cultivators' expenses. Expenses also included clothes, especially as ploughing took place in the autumn. These expenses were probably deducted from harvesters' wages. Moreover, residential requirements such as a tent, and all living expenses including tea, sugar, and cigarettes were provided see Appendices nos. 11 and 12 for detailed expenses table

⁷⁴ MSBSMS, 1917-1931, p. 12.

registering properties according to Ottoman title documents known as *tabbu*,⁷⁵ duly observing the validity of these Ottoman documents.⁷⁶ In 1914, the Estates Department in Benghazi registered 392 properties, 661 properties in 1920, 851 properties in 1921, and 130 properties in 1922.⁷⁷ In addition, 131 rural properties such as farms in the area neighbouring Benghazi were registered, and the number of real estate verification requests reached 1,785 in the period 1919-1922.⁷⁸ Benghazi's residents wanted to register their properties (Land, houses, and shops) largely to avoid disputes among families, to legally protect ownership rights, guarantee the continuation of ownership, and to be able to invest. As the colonial government gave a twenty-day notice in Italian to change the Ottoman *tabbu* or face the possibility of a challenge to the ownership.⁷⁹ On 14 May 1916, the Italian government issued a decree to sequester all real estate properties belonging to non-resident subjects of the Ottoman Empire in either Tripoli or Cyrenaica. On 15 October 1916, another decree was issued to sequester all real estate properties belonging to "insubordinate" Libyans and Libyans who left Libya. By those decrees, the ownership of property belonging to the Ottoman Turks or Libyans who either left Libya or engaged in the Libyan resistance was transferred to the Italian government.⁸⁰

⁷⁵ In Ottoman Turkish, the word *tabbu* means land.

⁷⁶ *Governo della Libia Bollettino Ufficiale*, Tripoli, 1916; in Ottoman Turkish, the word *tabbu* means land.

⁷⁷ Dante M. Tuninetti, *Cirenaica D'oggi*, Bengasi, 1930, p. 110; *Ufficio Fondiario di Benghasi*.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ *Governo della Libia Bollettino Ufficiale*, Tripoli, 1916.

⁸⁰ *Governo della Libia Bollettino Ufficiale*, Tripoli, 1916.

Temporary real estate title documents were issued in the pre-fascist period. On 21 January 1915, M. Colloicci, the chief of the Estates Department, sent a letter to the Benghazi's *shari'a* court indicating that all administrative and legal bodies were required to take those documents as conclusive.⁸¹ Therefore, all courts – civil or otherwise – that pronounced directly on estate issues, legacy, alimony, guardianship and alike, were required to rely on such titles in their decisions upon ownership titles. Documents issued by the Estates Department, or other bodies authorised to resolve contracts of purchase, exchange, endowment, and so on, should also be submitted to the Benghazi's *shari'a* court.⁸² The clear signals represented by this law indicate the importance of real estate to the Italian authorities. They dictated that any sale transaction or legacy distribution could not be made without proper documentation and with the involvement of courts which would keep a copy of those transactions.⁸³ Even donated or granted property administered by Islamic endowments was not exempt from the Italian government real estate policy of sequestering; actions like this made it a difficult task for the endowment institution to manage, maintain, and collect rents from their properties.⁸⁴

On 3 July 1921, Law no. 1207 regarding organising real estate was issued. Per this law, the Italian government has ownership rights over beaches, running streams, dry

⁸¹ MSBSMS, 1911-1919, p. 5.

⁸² Ibid.

⁸³ See Appendices no. 13a and 13b for a copy of a provisional real estate title; two copies of the document were made, one in Arabic and the other in Italian.

⁸⁴ MSBSMS, 1911-1919, p.11; For instance, a letter dated 24 November 1915, sent from the Islamic endowments institution, stated, 'I, the signatory below, have received from the civil court in Benghazi Province three property---titles (*tabbu*) numbers 45, 44, and 47. These titles belong to donated properties of the al-Mkahel family with a copy of the balance sheet from the sequestered property department.'

riverbeds, caravan trails, market squares, archaeological sites, cemeteries, military lands, marshes, salt works, Quarries, minerals, forests, and railways. The fifth chapter of the first article of this law stated that land known as *miri* land formerly owned by the Ottoman State and utilised by Libyan farmers is now owned by the Italian State.⁸⁵ As for the former Ottoman *miri* land with rights of utilisation, the number of Libyans requesting to verify ownership was 3,798 requests between 1919 and 1922.⁸⁶

Summary

There was no one coherent economic plan over the almost ten years of the colonial Italian pre-fascist period (1911-1922), since the Italian governors of Benghazi (Major General Ottavio Briccola and Giovanni Battista Ameglio) concentrated their efforts in the first six years of colonisation on military consolidation. Italian forces established a strong military base in Benghazi, which they then used as a springboard to expand inland. Economic policies were mostly emergency measures to deal with a series of economic crises as they arose.

Benghazi's economy in the colonial period of 1911-1922 was thus determined by military demands and political conditions. After ten years, it had become clear to the Italian government that relatively rapid colonisation would not be possible. The war between the Italian army and the Libyan resistance was the main reason for suspending the caravan trade and stopping the flow of agricultural and livestock goods into Benghazi's port. After the Ottoman forces withdrew following the 1912 Lausanne Treaty, the Italian

⁸⁵ *Governo della Libia Bollettino Ufficiale*, Tripoli, 3 July 1921, no. 1207.

⁸⁶ Dante M. Tuninetti, *Cirenaica D'oggi*, p. 110.

army started to expand inland, by controlling the fertile al-Merj area 100 kilometres east of Benghazi to alleviate food shortages in Benghazi by bringing in cereal crops from that area. However, Italy's involvement in WWI required the Italian government to make a reduction in military expenses in Libya. This led to a decrease in military operations around Benghazi. In addition, the defeat of the Libyan resistance, led by Ahmed al-Sharif al-Sanusi, by the British forces at the Libyan-Egyptian border, and the subsequent departure of Ahmed al-Sanusi to Istanbul, resulted in a new Libyan resistance leader, Idris al-Sanusi, who was more willing to negotiate for peace than the hardliner, Ahmed al-Sharif al-Sanusi. The treaties of 'Akrama in 1917 and al-Rejema in 1920 secured peace at last, allowing the caravan trade to continue and for Benghazi's economy to begin recovery.

Hence, the first ten years of Italian colonisation did not have a tangible result in creating an African colony for Italy; agriculture continued to depend on traditional methods, industry was virtually non-existent, and the preliminary Italian settlements were on a small scale. However, this period could be considered a preparatory stage for future Italian colonists. The Cyrenaican population subsisted on meagre agricultural and livestock resources, always at the mercy of the climate. As Italy invaded Libya, the economic situation worsened and poverty increased. In areas under Italian control, such as Benghazi, the Italian government was under obligation to provide basic foodstuffs to the Libyans to avoid famine. In the first five years of this colonial period under the ravages of invasion, resistance, and global war, Libya suffered a series of misfortunes: chaos, droughts, and widespread hunger.

The impact of Italian colonisation on Benghazi's economy in the fascist period (1922-1942)

The political transformation of the Italian government was accompanied by huge transformations to the regime at all levels – political, economic, and social. With pervasive change and uncertainty as a background, Mussolini's *Partito Nazionale Fascista*, or Fascist Party, ascended to power in 1922 through an attempted coup d'état and some support from the Italian public. The Fascist Party's policies affected Italy and its colonies. This section of the chapter deals with the impact of Italian colonialism on Benghazi's economy during the fascist period, in which Benghazi witnessed colonial policy changes that adopted economic systems unknown locally. The extent of the impact of new economic statutes and laws on Cyrenaica's economy in general and Benghazi's economy and the response of the province to those changes are explored in this section. The discussion focuses on three components of economic life in Benghazi: commerce, industry, and agriculture.

Commerce

As was discussed in the previous section, there was no major change in Benghazi's economy, including commerce, in the pre-fascist period, except for the implementation of some laws to the benefit of Italy's forces in Benghazi and the interest of colonial authorities in controlling all commercial transactions. Similarly, the first years of fascist rule were overall a continuation of the prior period. An important exception was the abolition, in 1923, of all the agreements between the colonial government and the Libyans. These agreements allowed for self- rule in the inland regions, provided basic laws that granted certain rights to Libyans in Cyrenaica, and regulated the collection of

taxes. The fascist government started to enforce the collection of taxes on sedentary persons and nomads alike.⁸⁷ One characteristic of these taxes was that they had to be paid on demand to the tax collectors, and they varied: on all types of agricultural produce; farm animals, especially in the livestock market; residential and commercial real estate; and fallow farm land.⁸⁸

The second half of the 1920s saw the promulgation of some important laws to regulate wholesale and retail commercial activity in all the markets. Every merchant was required to obtain a permit allowing them to conduct business from their perspective municipalities and the permit was subject to conditions stipulated in the second article of the law.⁸⁹ The first condition was that the applicant must not have been convicted of a felony or imprisoned, was under surveillance by the public security administration, or had received a warning from public security for any reason. A committee of six members was formed to implement this law – the mayor, the secretary of the Fascist party or his deputy, two merchants appointed by the chamber of commerce, and two Libyans not engaged in commerce appointed by the governor. It should be noted that this was primarily an Italian committee since the two Libyan members were chosen by the Italian governor, who was more likely to pick Libyans who favoured Italian colonisation. In areas outside the jurisdiction of the municipality, the powers granted to the mayor in this committee were transferred inclusively to the Italian military leaders, and normally

⁸⁷ MDJL, Ministero Affari Esteri-l'Italia in Africa, Libia, Register 122-30, File 275, 'Governo della Tripolitania', p. 10.

⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁹ Governo della Cirenaica, *Gazzetta Ufficiale*, VIII, Benghazi, Nov. 1930, pp. 1059, 1063.

decisions taken by military leaders are more severe than decisions by civilians. The fifth article of the law stipulated the permit would be denied if the committee decided that there were enough shops in a certain area. Commercial permits were issued under rigid requirements, which were very clear as the act devoted five articles of the total twelve articles of the decree to conditions for denying the issuance of a business permit. Three correlated articles covered regulations, guidelines, and sanctions. Article 7 gave the mayor the power to set prices for basic food items in coordination with the secretary of the Fascist Party or his deputy and two merchants appointed by the chamber of commerce, while the eighth article stipulated that a price list must be displayed in the shops for the public to see. Articles 9 and 10 detailed sanctions on merchants violating the price list by selling foodstuffs for higher prices. Sanctions included temporary closure for the shops for a certain period proportional to the seriousness of the violation and forfeiture of the business permit for serious violations. In 1927, an Italian royal decree was issued to standardise weights and measures in Libya. On 20 November 1929, the colonial government in Cyrenaica ratified and issued the weights and measurements ordinance that changed the traditional weights and measures in use during the Ottoman period to the metric system.⁹⁰

The intention of these laws was to regulate procedures governing market conduct in Libya to bring those rules to be consistent with the market system in Italy. Its purpose was to link the colonies to the central administration in Italy. The laws were not

⁹⁰ See Appendix no. 14 for the attached page with Governo della Cirenaica, *Gazzetta Ufficiale*, VIII, Benghazi, Nov. 1929; the ordinance stated that a table of weights and measures in Italian and Arabic must be continuously displayed in local administrative and economic departments, exhibitions, and shops. It was also displayed anywhere transactions that required determination of a certain amount of weight took place. Violators of the above regulation were fined 25 to 100 francs.

intended purely for regulatory purposes but because through these laws, the colonial authority could impose its control on all areas of life, including the minutiae of daily life, and to penetrate the affairs of cities under its control to link their economy with the colonial centre and indirectly to the global markets. Subsequently, crises or changes in global markets were reflected in the local economy and its commercial transactions. Libyan merchants were compelled to be interested in events at the Italian capital or in whatever laws and procedures were issued by the government. Thus, there was increased interest in reading newspapers and obtaining information gained through the merchants' relationships with wholesalers, especially foreign wholesalers.

During the colonial period, the physical locations of Benghazi's markets did not undergo any major changes and remained the same as they were during the Ottoman period.⁹¹ The commercial activities that were conducted in markets were organised in three main categories: commercial, wholesale, and livestock markets. There were six main commercial markets: al-Hadada, al-Dalam, al-Jareed, al-Khudara, al-Gazzarah and al-Hashish. Each market was divided into shops in a straight street in a similar fashion to the ancient *suq*. These markets extended over seven city districts.⁹² The wholesale market was known as al-Fonduq, and was for wholesale commodities like cereals, vegetables, fruit, and manufactured goods. In addition, it also had subdivisions, like one for selling legacies and inheritances by auction.⁹³ Both the wholesale market and

⁹¹ See Appendix no. 15 for a map of Benghazi's main markets (*suqs*) during the Ottoman period.

⁹² MSBSMS, 1930-1934, no. 298, p. ١٣; in one lawsuit on 13 September 1934, a plaintiff described that the arrangements of the markets constituted one continuous market in the city; this applied to al-Fonduq and the commercial markets that started from the al-Baladiya square to the first street, Abu Ghoula Street, which extended straight ahead for no more than about five hundred metres and included seven districts.

⁹³ MSBSMS, 1933-1936, no. 68, p. 25.

livestock market were located just outside the city. There were also specialised markets like the fish market and the druggists' market, and individual shops in all the districts of Benghazi.

These market institutions were the most important economic institutions of the city and were expansive and large relative to the city's total area. Moreover, they formed an interrelated weave connecting the seven residential districts of the old town. Markets were open all day long for seven days a week and part of the night because they were attached to residential districts; this attachment provided them with safety, enabling them to open even at night.⁹⁴ As for the new markets, *suq* al Makoulat was inaugurated in 1932 as a refrigerated market; next to this market was the *suq* al-Hout – a fish market. Benghazi's markets had inventories of various types of groceries, textiles and spices with many trademarks and sizes, which suggests many sources of merchandise and an increase in the volume of imports, particularly in the last ten years of the colonial period, with the majority of goods imported from Italy.⁹⁵ For instance, Umran Ben Mohamed 'Amer owned two shops: one in Ben'sa district and the other in Louhichi district.⁹⁶ Inventory analysis of the first shop indicates that basic food items were available at low prices; for example, rice imported from Egypt and Italy was inexpensive, at a franc per kilogram, compared to other merchandise, such as olive oil that was imported from Italy and Tunisia. The reductions in import customs duties had a marked

⁹⁴ MSBSMS, 1930-1934, no. 298, p. ١٣.

⁹⁵ *Berid Barca*, 31 December 1934.

⁹⁶ MSBSMS, 1936-1956, no. 55, pp. 31, 32; see appendices nos. 16a and 16b; Umran Ben Mohamed 'Amer who died on 10 September 1937, was a resident of al-Shain Street in Sidi Hussein district, and owned two shops: one in Ben'sa Street of Ben'sa district and the other in *suq* Louhichi.

impact on prices and the variety of products had an impact on consumption. The variety of brands of tea was very noticeable as the price ranged between nine and twenty francs per kilogram, depending on brand and quality. In contrast with the same product in the inventory of Mohamed 'Awad al-Atrash's shop (who died on 16 July 1940), there were 79.71 kilograms of tea distributed as follows: 49.5 kg al-Nejma brand green tea, 5.25 kg Gazelle brand green tea, 14.75 kg of al-Shames brand black tea, and 10.3 kg of black tea with no brand name.⁹⁷ The abundance of trademarks for this product in Benghazi's markets was also evident in newspaper advertisements.⁹⁸ Merchant Sulieman al-Kanouni, who owned a shop in al-Shoukhat Street, advertised in 11 issues of *Berid Barca* regarding the availability of quantities of green and black tea at discounted prices.⁹⁹ Clothes merchants during the Ottoman period and the pre-fascist period rarely sold ready-made clothes, but instead sold textiles to be tailored, either at a tailor or at home. This can be observed in the inventory of clothes merchant, Ismail Ben Saleh al-Misteri.¹⁰⁰ The change to the sale of ready-made clothes happened in the fascist period, when they became more available, as evidenced by merchant 'Awad al-Zagoub's advertisement for shirts, sweaters and ties.¹⁰¹

The use of advertising in marketing was a qualitative development in Benghazi's

⁹⁷ MSBSMS, 1936-1956, no. 55, p. 100.

⁹⁸ *Berid Barca*, 26 August 1934.

⁹⁹ *Berid Barca*, 24 September 1932; 18 October 1932; 27 October 1932; 15 November 1932; 25 November 1932; 23 February 1935; 31 March 1935.

¹⁰⁰ MSBSMS, 1921-1925, no. 92, p. 175; see Appendix no. 17; merchant Ismail Ben Saleh al-Misteri resident of Louhichi district and died on 5 August 1924. He owned two stores in *suq* al-Dalam. The inventory had varieties of textiles bearing the name of the trademark or the kind of textile.

¹⁰¹ *Berid Barca*, 31 December 1934.

commercial markets. An abundance of products in the markets led to the use of a new method to market products. Merchants advertised in the third and fourth pages of the weekly newspaper *Berid Barca* to introduce new products, present price competition, or entice consumers to buy certain trademarks. This indicates that commercial activity was relatively increased in Benghazi, particularly in the 1930s. Italian business also used advertising to introduce their products such as tomato paste and canned vegetables' trademark *La Rondinella*.¹⁰² The statement that this drink is alcohol-free, such as occurred in the advertisement for the yogurt drink *shapezo* accompanied advertising for drinks by Italian companies.¹⁰³ Indications of the start of the importation of automobiles and machines into Benghazi's market can be seen by advertisements for the agents of *vidoil* engine oil brand .¹⁰⁴

There were no studies of local consumers' needs, so anything that was produced in Italy found its way to Benghazi's markets. For instance, this included some type of tomato pastes free of food dyes and fruit jams preserved in sugar syrup.¹⁰⁵ Imported meats from Italy, butchered per *halal* dietary Islamic rules, were priced lower than local meats because of weak demand.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰² Ibid., 24 September 1932.

¹⁰³ *Berid Barca*, 24 September 1932.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid, 22 February 1934; the agency al-Baji and Kanoun.

¹⁰⁵ *Berid Barca*, 22 February 1934.

¹⁰⁶ *Berid Barca*, 31 July 1934; Ibid., 31 December 1934; at Ali Linqi, *suq* al Jadeed, beef on bones at six francs a kilogram and beef with no bones at ten francs a kilogram.

Advertising as a marketing method was not known in Libya in general and Benghazi. The traditional method of marketing between artisans, merchants, and the consumers was known as *dalal*, or crier.¹⁰⁷ Two types of *dalal* criers can be distinguished: some specialised in fish markets, tanneries, and livestock; and general *dalal* criers, who cried to the public at certain times and places daily or weekly.

It seemed that there was a drop in prices of all goods in Benghazi's markets during the 1930s. Two indications of this included the establishment of a charitable market to help bankrupt merchants, and a decision by the port authorities to reduce all tariffs in Benghazi's port and other Cyrenaican ports by 6%.¹⁰⁸ Price decline was due neither to speculation nor counterfeit products, since the colonial government set the prices of basic foodstuffs and a price list with three copies was issued with the business permit. Additionally, article 279 of the penal code protected trademarks from counterfeiting.¹⁰⁹ It appears from the repetitive use of the same advertisement for food products that there was little improvement in demand in the local market, which in turn was indicative of a slowdown in commercial activities due to declines in personal income, to the point of not covering the necessities. This led to strong competition among the merchants, who offered discounts at specific times when cash liquidity was available, such as paydays

¹⁰⁷This term is derived from the person who calls attention of the buyers to a certain product. The Libyan proverb 'everyone has capital and the capital of the crier is lying' may be harsh but is an indication of the exaggeration of some criers to sell products.

¹⁰⁸ *Berid Barca*, 31 July 1934; this event collected 81,200 francs, which led the Italian colonial government's spokesman to describe Benghazi's residents as magnanimous since they were trying to share with the government the burden of this crisis. The 6% reduction was on all tariffs imposed by the Cyrenaican port regulations of 9 November 1923.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 11 December 1934; *ibid.*, 27 December 1934; with sanctions against anyone importing, distributing, or selling in any way goods with trademarks or any marks that may mislead the buyer about the origin of the merchandise.

and major holidays. There was an also an increase in foodstuff donations to kitchens feeding the poor.¹¹⁰

The decline in prices of goods in Benghazi's markets in the 1930s was due to a combination of factors; chief among these were the decline in the buying power of Benghazi's residents and the increase in imported goods. The reason for the decline in purchasing power was a reduction in the income of Benghazi's residents, who were dependent mainly on agricultural and livestock produce from the surrounding regions of Cyrenaica. Because of the new fascist government's cancellation of the 'Akrema and al-Rejema peace treaties, war started again in 1923. To confront this resistance, the colonial government implemented a plan in 1929 to remove forcibly the nomadic and semi-nomadic Cyrenaican population and their livestock to several internment camps on the coastal strip, thus, grain and livestock production decreased sharply.¹¹¹ The cessation of grain trade and the relocation of what remained of the livestock trade to a new location 200 kilometres' south-west of Benghazi in Ajdabia drastically affected Benghazi's economy. The inability of livestock owners to leave the concentration camps and reach Benghazi's market led them to sell their livestock in the closest market and livestock merchants then transported it to Benghazi.¹¹²

After the Cyrenaican population's release from the camps in 1933, they could not return

¹¹⁰ *Berid Barca*, 10 February 1932; al Sharf al Ghiryani donated 200 kilograms of rice, Ali al-Kibti donated 50 kilograms of pasta, and merchant Mustafa Bu Lifa donated 20 kilograms of pasta and 2 kilograms of canned tomato paste.

¹¹¹ Graziani, *Barqa al-Hadia*, pp. 130-131; for more on internment camps during the late 1920s see appendix no. 2.

¹¹² MSBSMS, 1925-1926, no. 20, p.122; For instance, in 1929, Abdulkaffi Ben Mohamed Abdulkaffi and Khalifa Mohamed al-Mrabit established a joint company in which both contributed a sum of money; the company bought goods, and al-Mrabit travelled to Ajdabia, sold the goods and purchased some livestock to be sold in Benghazi.

to their former homes or to their former nomadic way of life since they were relocated in the semi-arid southern slopes of al Jabel al Akhdar, with little pasture and water for their livestock.¹¹³ Consequently, in the fascist period, Benghazi's economy shifted from relying on the cereal and livestock trade to dependence on those who were able to obtain employment from the colonial government or as day labourers.

Industry

There was growth in traditional crafts due to individual initiatives to provide supplies to the Italian forces, and to the settlers, whose presence was reflected positively on improving some of the region's traditional skills, especially in shoe making, clothes manufacture, and housewares. The arrival of Italian settlers had a marked impact on Benghazi's prevailing industries, in addition to introducing other industries previously unknown to the Cyrenaican inhabitants and its capital Benghazi.

Documents clearly indicate that the settlers' need for equipment and tools led to the manufacture and repair of such items locally in their new home. This was not limited to one sector only. Some craftsmen started simple workshops to manufacture basic daily necessities as well as tools and rudimentary farming equipment. Cyrenaican inhabitants were mainly engaged in agriculture and livestock herding whereas Benghazi's residents were engaged in commerce; thus, the new industries that were beginning to appear in the local market were linked to the main source of income – commerce. The distinguishing characteristic of these efforts, however, was that they were individual efforts and not part of any economic plan by the colonial government, although the

¹¹³Angelo del Boca, *Gli Italiani in Libia*, p. 218; Chia-Lin Pan, 'The population of Libya', p. 117.

latter's support was forthcoming to some industrial projects linked to government needs such as supplying the armed forces, or servicing, supporting and encouraging the Italian settlers.¹¹⁴ The colonial government support for some basic industries was also used to reinforce its political policy and affirm its control.

Regardless of the seriousness of the colonial government's support of industrial projects in general, Italian reports stressed the necessity of enlarging Benghazi's port and the construction of roads and railway lines to facilitate transportation between Benghazi's port and Italian ports, in addition to improving communications such as the telegraph, telephone lines, and postal service. Observable in those reports was the fascist government's determination to implement development regarding the production of certain agricultural crops as a basis for an expansion of the food industry but this came late in the fascist period. About livestock production, the Agricultural Department began a sizable land reclamation project to produce food crops and animal feed crops. To support this, the director of Benghazi's Agricultural Department, G. Piani, called on the colonial government to provide water resources in areas where ground water was available by drilling wells. The Agricultural Department's goal was to attain self-sufficiency in dairy products and meat in Cyrenaica. This led the colonial government to establish dairies; in addition, several inspection committees were formed to oversee those facilities. A decree was issued on 1 May 1934 making milk pasteurisation

¹¹⁴ The years 1924 to 1934 saw the start of many Italian owned companies in Benghazi, such as natural sponge company Pacchianie C. Societta; beer distillers Societa Birra Cirene; brick and ceramics manufacturer Societa Calceelaterizi; ship builders Palla Cantiere Navale; shoe manufacturer Galluzzi & Rustichelli Calzaturificio; printing and graphics company Fratelli Pavone, Societa; tannery S. A. I. B.; pasta manufacturer Ditta la Mantica; and milling company Vaudette & Bernabo; see G. Narducci, *Istitan Berga Gadimen wa Hadithen* (Settling Cyrenaica: Ancient and Modern), T. Ibrahim Ahmed al-Mehdawi, (Sirte, 1985), p. 199.

compulsory for all milk sold in Benghazi's markets.¹¹⁵ It seemed that this affected milk self-sufficiency in Benghazi but the policy did not include dairy products such as butter and cheese.

Despite the availability of some agricultural crops and the presence of a road network, the colonial government did not establish food industries based on those crops that would supply the local market but looked to import manufactured goods from Italy.¹¹⁶ Some of those factories imported raw materials from Libya; for instance, in 1931, Italian settlers' farms in Cyrenaica produced 3,100 metric tons of wheat, all of which was exported to Italy tax-free, and sold to pasta factories at between sixty and seventy francs per metric ton.¹¹⁷ Pasta products and flour were then exported to Libya and sold with added value; for example, Sulieman al-Kanouni's shop sold flour at sixty centimes per kilogram, as well as pasta products.¹¹⁸ There was a sizable vegetable production effort in areas surrounding Benghazi; for instance, in 1934 the tomato harvest from 16 to 23 July

¹¹⁵ *Berid Barca*, 9 February 1935; the Committee of Food Price Control in consultation with the Health Department determined the modality of implementing this decree. The regulation of milk pasteurisation factories were: (1) every milk producer that has a pasteurisation factory permit must provide this service to other producers whether the milk was for sale or for private use; (2) prices for pasteurisation for milk amounts exceeding 40 litres were 55 centimes per litre and for milk amounts less than 40 litres prices were 60 centimes per litre; and (3) pasteurisation factories should conduct work in three shifts: (a) the first shift for milk received by 6:00 am; (b) the second shift for milk received from 11:00 am to 2:00 pm; and (c) the third shift for milk received from 4:00 pm to 6:00 pm for the months from October to March and from 5:00 pm to 7:00 pm from April to September. The milk was returned in sealed bottles within one hour of receiving the milk. Bottle deposits were four francs per one-litre bottle, three francs for a half-litre bottle, and two francs for a quarter-litre bottle. Bottles must be returned within 48 hours for deposit return. The maximum price of milk was 80 francs per one litre and violators were fined between 50 to 500 francs and forfeiture of the permit. The municipal health department, and the municipal guards oversaw executing this decree.

¹¹⁶ *Berid Barca*, 9 April 1935; most of the Libyan urban centres were located on 900 kilometres of paved roads and 300,000 kilometres of usable dirt roads.

¹¹⁷ *Berid Barca*, 23 February 1932; the Italian agricultural company Coniorecio exported 2,200 metric tons of wheat while Italian settlers exported 1,100 metric tons.

¹¹⁸ *Berid Barca*, 23 February 1932

was 4,100 metric tons and sold at an average price of fifty centimes per kilogram.¹¹⁹ However, there were no tomato paste canning factories – instead, Benghazi's markets sold Italian tomato paste.¹²⁰ Other canned vegetables such as peas and artichokes were imported from Italy.¹²¹ Cyrenaica also produced different types of fruits. In 1934, the grape harvest in the areas surrounding Benghazi was thirty-six metric tons of black grapes and nine metric tons of white grapes, retailing for one franc per kilogram for black grapes and seventy centimes for white grapes.¹²² The fish industry was limited to fish farms in the lakes between Benghazi and Tobra. In 1934, fish stock totalling 70,000 was imported from Italy to start a fish farm in al-Meqareen Lake.¹²³ Throughout the fascist period, the colonial government did not introduce agricultural products manufacturing to take advantage of the local agricultural produce such as cereals, vegetables, and fruits. Thus, all the canned food products in Benghazi's market at this period were imported from Italy. This indicates that the Fascist Party's policy looked to the Italian colonies as a market for Italian manufactured products and a source of raw materials for Italian factories. The commercial reports indicated an increase in imported goods from Italy and a corresponding increase in exports of raw materials from Libya to Italy.

¹¹⁹ *Berid Barca*, 26 August 1934.

¹²⁰ *Ibid*, 24 September 1932; Italian tomato paste sold under the trademarks La Rondinella and Elvea; the distributor company was al-baji and Kanoun.

¹²¹ *Berid Barca*, 26 August 1934; the distributor was Samuel Lapi.

¹²² *Ibid*.

¹²³ *Berid Barca*, 23 March 1934; as per the colonial government's economic department order no. 35848 on 12 February 1934.

Agriculture

In 1922, the new fascist government in Rome decided to cancel all treaties with the Libyans and embarked on a military campaign to re-conquest Libya and instituted a policy of land confiscation to prepare the ground for building Italian farming settlements, especially in the fertile areas of Tripolitania and Cyrenaica.¹²⁴

In Cyrenaica, the number of Italian settlers was fewer than 1% of those in Tripolitania, or about 429 settlers.¹²⁵ This led Mussolini to reconsider the colonial policy in Cyrenaica first by extending Italian control into Sanusi dominated areas and then expropriating the fertile areas of al Jabel al Akhdar.¹²⁶ The goal of expropriating farmland was achieved in a variety of ways: by using the Ottoman land records; amending the tribes' collective land holdings statutes; and confiscating lands belonging to rebel tribes and the Sanusi's *zawiya*.¹²⁷ A decree was issued in 1923 to confiscate plain and uncultivated land that had not been planted with fruit trees or any other crops and, in order to avoid

¹²⁴ This treaty guaranteed that all inland areas were under the rule of the Libyan Amir Idris al-Sanusi and the coastal areas were under Italian rule. A committee was formed to execute the fifth article of this treaty regarding the need to register all Sanusi land and property in Benghazi to be tax exempt. Italian judge Colloicci and a Sanusi representative chaired the committee.

¹²⁵ Luigi Longo, '*turoq wa ahdaf al-imbralia al-fashistia*' (Methods and Goals of Imperial Fascism), tr. Mohamed Mustafa al-Sherkasi, *Majallet al-Shahid*, MDJL, (Tripoli, 1989), p. 5.

¹²⁶ The idea of settling unemployed Italian labourers in Libya did not originate with the fascists but was initially promoted as one of the reasons to invade Libya and provide colonial alternative for the masses of poor emigrants who left Italy in great numbers each year for America and French Algeria or Tunisia. This rationalisation of colonialism played down obvious political and military factors in favour of widely recognised internal social and economic needs in Italy, which made colonial expansion appear a necessary and even healthy phenomenon.

¹²⁷ Federico Cresti, "The Early Years of Agency for the Colonization of Cyrenaica (1932-1935)", *Italian Colonialism*, ed. Ruth Ben-Ghiat and Mia Fuller, p. 74; the Ottoman State recognised three primary types of landholding: private property belonging to Muslims (*osri* land), private property belonging to non-Muslims (*haraci* land), and conquered land under state control (*miri* land). The Italian colonial government considered the Ottoman *miri* land as land now belonging to the colonial government; see M. Sukru Hanioglu, *A Brief History of the Late Ottoman Empire*, p. 20.

ambiguity, the decree stated that grassy lands were not to be considered cultivated.¹²⁸ This reading of the decree allowed the colonial government to confiscate almost all cereal crops and farmland. Similarly, the governor of Tripolitania issued a decree in 1922, transferring ownership of all unused land to the government, and in 1923 three decrees were issued, allowing the colonial government to confiscate 200,000 hectares.¹²⁹ The first decree forbade the sale or transfer of uncultivated plain lands, the second to confiscate rebellious tribes' land, and the third allowed the government to confiscate land that had not been used for three years.¹³⁰ The colonial government seized land owned by the Sanusi confraternity totalled 70,000 hectares and in Benghazi; the Sanusi owned two thousand hectares and eight homes were confiscated.¹³¹ General Rodolfo Graziani estimated the annual income of the Sanusi *zawiyas* at 200,000 francs used in financing the resistance and considered closing the *zawiyas* as an essential procedure to end the rebellion.¹³²

Italian colonisation policy in Libya went through three distinct stages: privately

¹²⁸ Mohamed Mustafa al-Sherkasi, '*musadart al-araḍi al-zira'aia fi Libya 1911-1923*' (Expropriating Farmland in Libya), *Majallet al-Shahid*, MDJL, (Tripoli, 1989), p. 77; compare this to the Italian colonial policy in Somalia where the land decree of 1911 granted grazing rights for livestock and pastoral use and harvesting rights for fruit and vegetable farmers. While the first article of the decree considered any land not cultivated or not in continuous use to be government-owned land. It can be understood from the decree of granting grazing and fruit harvesting rights how the conditions of land confiscation were read. By applying the first article to the nomadic population or the semi-nomadic farmers, it was easy to present evidence that the confiscated land was, now, uncultivated or not used in continuous way. See Luigi Longo, '*turoq wa ahḍaf al-imbralia al-fashistia*', p. 5.

¹²⁹ al-Sherkasi, '*musadart al-araḍi al-zira'aia fi Libya 1911-1923*', p. 71

¹³⁰ Ibid.

¹³¹ Ministero Affari Esteri-l'Italia in Africa, Register 150-5, File 29, 'The wealth of the Sansui's *zawiyas* in Cyrenaica', 14 April 1931.

¹³² Ministero Affari Esteri-l'Italia in Africa, Register 150-8, File 15, Letter no. 2230; A letter from General Rodolfo Graziani to Libya's colonial governor Pietro Badoglio.

organised colonial concessions 1922-1928, state-run colonisation 1932-1935, and intensive colonisation 1937-1940. In the first stage, the only active bidders for prime Tripolitanian concessions were intermediary colonial developers. Lacking a clear commitment from the colonial government to develop infrastructure, very few private developers were willing to tie up their own capital to clear land, subdivide, and offer improved parcels to smaller colonists. Mussolini's fascist government began to confront the reluctance of private developers to carry through with colonial projects, initially by taking full responsibility for extending Italian control into Cyrenaica, and then by altering the terms of concessionary colonisation to install state-subsidised unemployed Italians on privately developed parcels. This colonial policy had unsatisfactory results in Libya in general and Cyrenaica where there were twenty-six private concessions by 1930, farming 14,547 hectares; individually owned parcels numbered seventy-one, farming 2,138 hectares.

After years of disappointing experiences with privately organised colonisation, a new policy was formed in Rome for state-run colonisation. The second stage of state-run colonisation (1932-1935) was started by a royal decree in 1932, authorising the creation of the Agency for the Colonisation of Cyrenaica (*Ente per la Colonizzazione della Cirenaica*, ECC) supervised by the Migration and Internal Colonisation Administration (*Commissariato per le Migrazioni e la Colonizzazione Interna*, CMCI) and the Ministry of Colonies. In the first year of ECC activities (1933-1934), 154 colonist families had been settled in Cyrenaica, a total of 1,048 people.¹³³ These initial gains were imperilled,

¹³³ Federico Cresti, 'The early years of the Agency for the Colonization of Cyrenaica (1932-1935)'

p. 77; at Beda Littoria, seventy-four families, totalling 480 people; at Luigi di Savoia, sixty-nine families totalling 502 people; at Giovanni Berta, two families totalling fourteen people; at Primavera, there were no families, but only

however, by the financial situation of the ECC in 1934. The agency's budget was set at thirty-eight million lire but the ECC asked for a new budget of seventy-five million lire.¹³⁴ The agency increased its activity when a decree in October 1934 authorised it to operate in Tripolitania; thus it became the Agency for the Colonisation of Tripolitania and Cyrenaica (*Ente per la Colonizzazione della Tripolitania e della Cirenaica*).¹³⁵

Libya's Governor Italo Balbo approved the involvement of another agency, the National Fascist Institute for Social Prevention (*Istituto Nazionale Fascista per la Previdenza Sociale*, INFPS) in the colonisation of Tripolitania. The ECL continued to have financial difficulties, as the government could not provide the needed budget, instead offering a yearly budget of five million lire a year, which was not sufficient. As this demonstrates, the Italian government had begun a large-scale undertaking although it did not have the necessary capital to implement it. The arrival of more than 2,200 settlers from Italy was symbolically important but they did not match the fascist's government ambitions.

After 1937, the finances of the *Ente per la Colonizzazione della Libia* (ECL) improved through the help of Governor Italo Balbo and the intensive programme of mass colonisation started. The year 1938 saw the arrival of twenty thousand Italian settlers and in a six-month period about ten thousand Italian workers and twenty-three thousand Libyan labourers, built hundreds rural homes, roads, and wells.¹³⁶ Each parcel

three individuals; at Barce, seven families totalling forty-one people; at Qusr Tecniz, two families totalling eight people; see Appendix no. 18 for a map of Italian farm settlements in Cyrenaica and Tripolitania.

¹³⁴ Ministero Affari Esteri-l'Italia in Africa, Vol. 3, Governo della Tripolitania, ECL.

¹³⁵ Cresti, 'The early years of the Agency', p. 78; the agency took on its definitive name, *Ente per la Colonizzazione della Libia*, a year later in 1935.

¹³⁶ Aldo Moranti, *Libya Settlement Plan*, 1938, p. 955.

of fifteen to fifty hectares depending on soil fertility had a rural home of three rooms, a basement, cattle shed to accommodate four cows, and a well.¹³⁷ The second large arrival of settlers was in 1939; eleven thousand Italian settlers arrived in Tripoli, 5,586 of whom were destined to Cyrenaica.¹³⁸

It seemed that the Italian settlers adapted well to the living conditions in Cyrenaica, since their numbers reached sixty thousand just before WWII while the Libyan population of Cyrenaica was a hundred and fifty thousand. Data on population distribution in the period 1938-40, when the settlement programme was in full swing, are not available; however, data from the 1936 census give some indication of the geographical pattern of Italian settlement. The census showed that the number of Italians per 1,000 natives was greatest in northern Cyrenaica, lying in the range of 200-300 in Benghazi, 100-200 in Derna and Susa, 50-100 in al-Merj and Tobruk, and below 10 in Ajdabia.¹³⁹ It was possible that the number of Italian settlers would have exceeded the number of the Libyans had WWII not interfered. The colonisation agency ECL presence in Libya extended well beyond the colonial period and continued to function through the British Administration. The Italian settlers in Cyrenaica were repatriated just after WWII, but of the one hundred thousand Italian settlers in Libya, fewer than fifty thousand remained in Tripolitania.

¹³⁷I bid; the researcher visited some of those homes in al-Merj and in 1975 the Libyan government built farm homes per the same plan.

¹³⁸ Sergio Nannini, 'Rustico in Libia', *Rascenia Socala Della Africka Italiana*, 9 Sep. 1939, pp. 1019-1922.

¹³⁹ Pan, 'The population of Libya', *Population Studies*, p. 115.

Summary

Implementing the colonial government's economic model of farm settlements greatly affected the local population. Those effects were represented chiefly in land expropriation and demographic changes. The colonial government's justification of land expropriation as a development plan for uncultivated land or agricultural reclamation of land having little value were only excuses to obtain prime land by the quickest and least expensive ways to prepare the ground for Italian settlement activities in Libya.

The colonial government's basic standard for land confiscation was to be certain that the land conformed to the settlement's economic and political guidelines and the land's potential productivity. However, the standard followed in transferring ownership was not equitable since it did not take in consideration ownership rights. The focus of land selection was not based on the legality of ownership nor the amount of benefits to the local population, but on the land's location. The ideal land location was between the coast and the mountains because of its proximity to the coastal towns' markets; second to that, land located in the mountain plateau was chosen because of its fertility and water resources. Therefore, the colonial government implemented the planned forced removal of almost half the population of Cyrenaica, estimated at between ninety thousand and one hundred thousand, to desert concentration camps. This plan did not include the urban inhabitants of Cyrenaica, estimated at fifty thousand, since they lived in towns; their land was not targeted for settlement activities, and they were easier to monitor and control than the semi-nomadic inhabitants of the mountains.

After the Libyans' release from the concentration camps in 1933, they were relocated to the semi-arid southern slopes of al-Jabel al-Akhdar mountain, but many moved to the

coastal towns such as Benghazi, where they found employment as labourers in construction and other sectors. They constituted a source of labour for construction in the colonial settlement, with ten thousand Libyan labourers hired in Cyrenaica alone. The colonial government started savings accounts for those labourers from money deducted from their wages to be used to buy livestock once their work with road and settlements construction was finished.¹⁴⁰ This was done so they could return to their former occupation – pastoralists. However, the Governor General of Libya, Balbo, in his speech welcoming the Italian settlers in 1938, said that the al-Jabel al-Akhdar area was designated for Italian settlers and it was forbidden for Arabs to pass through, graze their livestock, or plant nearby; except for the semi-arid southern slopes of the al-Jabel al-Akhdar were the new home for the Arab tribes.¹⁴¹ General Graziani stated that the new redistribution of the population did not mean a return to the former traditional semi-nomadic life of free movement but, on the contrary, the new location of the tribes would be under strict surveillance and guarded.¹⁴² Thus, the Italian settlements in Cyrenaica not only caused demographic pressure on the resources of local inhabitants but also introduced new agricultural methods, causing a threat to their traditional way of life. The Italian settlements in Cyrenaica deprived the Libyans from their best fertile land, pastures, and their traditional way of free movement, which was needed to move livestock from one grazing area to another.

¹⁴⁰ For day labourers, two lire a day was deducted and, for monthly wage earners, thirty lire a month.

¹⁴¹ Del Boca, *Gli Italiani in Libia*, p. 250; a Libyan notable, Ali al-'Abiadi, responded to Governor Balbo by saying that this action meant the extermination of the Libyan people since the designated areas for the Libyans did not provide pasture for livestock, or have rain, or ground water. The opinion of writer Del Boca was that such action was clearly a theft and one of the most detested thefts in the continent of Africa

¹⁴² Del Boca, *Gli Italiani in Libia*, p. 218; this statement was in a letter to Governor General Italo Balbo.

The development of agricultural methods in Cyrenaica, such as the Italians' introduction of farming machine equipment and new irrigation methods, increased land productivity for crops which were exported to Italy, although their use was limited to benefiting Italian farmers. The main agricultural products in Libya were grain and livestock, with production fluctuating considerably from year to year; grain production estimates for 1933, 1937, and 1939 were about 50,000 metric tons, and for 1938 about 77,000 metric tons.¹⁴³ The number of sheep and goats was estimated at about 1.4 million in 1928, about 1.2 million in 1931 to 1933, and 1.6 million in 1938.¹⁴⁴ With the chronic threat of drought, the precarious nature of the Libyan economy is revealed. Unlike other colonies in Africa, Libya, at that time, did have any cash crop or mineral wealth to export; its main exports to Italy were skins and wool, whereas it imported from Italy textiles, flour, pasta, wine, tobacco, wood, marble, soap, and animal feed.¹⁴⁵ Those imports were consumed by both the Italian settlers and the urban Libyans. The estimated revenues of Tripolitania and Cyrenaica in 1924 were 54 million lire and 15 million lire respectively.¹⁴⁶ The cost of imported Italian goods to serve the needs of Italian settlers and urban Libyan areas exceeded six billion lire.¹⁴⁷ Libyan revenues improved slightly in the 1930s over 1924, but the cost of a continued military presence and providing for the

¹⁴³ Pan, 'The Population of Libya', p. 112.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid., p. 111.

¹⁴⁵ Nicola Labanca, 'Studies and Research on Fascist Colonialism, 1922-1935', in *A Place in the Sun: Africa in Italian Colonial Culture from Post-Unification to the Present*, ed. Patrizia Palumbo, University of California Press, (London, 2003), p. 41.

¹⁴⁶ Nicola Labanca, 'Studies and Research on Fascist Colonialism, 1922-1935', p. 41.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid.

Italian settlers was huge and constituted a burden on the Italian treasury.

The 1936 census showed that 75% of the population was engaged in agriculture while manufacturing accounted for 15%, and trade accounted for 5%.¹⁴⁸ The census data showed a settled population of 84%, semi-nomadic peoples at 12%, and nomads at 4%.¹⁴⁹ However, these percentages are not reliable because of the looseness of the definitions and the possibility of under-enumeration.¹⁵⁰ The figures for the population settlement trend in the 1931 and 1936 censuses for Cyrenaica seem inconsistent; they showed 23% of the population of Benghazi in 1931 as nomads or semi-nomads and only 6% in 1936.¹⁵¹ It was estimated in 1931 that in Cyrenaica about 25% of the native population lived in houses and 75% in tents.¹⁵² These estimates are further evidence of the precarious conditions of life which the poor economic conditions imposed upon a large proportion of the Libyan people.

Conclusion

During thirty-one years of colonial rule, successive Italian governments struggled to reach the goal of establishing an economically viable colony in Libya due to many

¹⁴⁸ Pan, 'The Population of Libya', p. 111.

¹⁴⁹ Pan, 'The Population of Libya', p. 112.

¹⁵⁰ The settled population was defined as families having their residence in a definite seat with provisions for water and other needs and with periodical sowing and pasturing, even at a distance. The semi-nomads were defined as family members who move more frequently and cover greater distances, either within their own territory or to other areas where they may remain for long periods when conditions in their own areas were adverse. The nomads were defined as families who, though they may have lands considered as their own, migrate for long periods to other regions, not always moving together but assembling in limited groups for water and pasture; these people normally move in desert areas and engage entirely in animal husbandry; see Pan, 'The Population of Libya', p. 107.

¹⁵¹ Pan, 'The Population of Libya', p. 107.

¹⁵² Ibid.

factors. Chief among them was the Libyan population's resistance to assimilation and the lack of resources available to the Italians to implement a comprehensive economic plan. Italian colonial economic policy was focused on serving the needs of Italian settlers, with a disregard of the needs of the Libyan population. It achieved minimal success towards that goal since the Libyan colony was not self-sufficient and was a burden on the Italian budget.¹⁵³ The development of the Italian settlements was achieved at the expense of reduced resources for the maintenance of the native population, even though it constituted a net addition to the productive capacity of Cyrenaica.

As an administration centre for the colonial government in Cyrenaica, Benghazi saw noteworthy commercial development and the establishment of some basic industries to serve the needs of the settlement building programme, such as brick factories, but overall Benghazi's economy was highly linked to the Italian economy, with a significant amount of imported manufactured goods.

Cyrenaican economy started a shift from an economy driven by livestock and agriculture to an economy that was completely dependent on the metropole's economy. Since the Italian agricultural settlements did not reach its production goals and continued to receive financial support, the two provinces of Libya continued to operate on a budget deficit especially during the fascist period when the Italian government was more concerned with its national prestige than actual economic performance in its Libyan colony.

¹⁵³ Labanca, 'Studies and Research on Fascist Colonialism, 1922-1935', p.45.

Chapter 5

The Italian Colonisation and Education

This chapter explains the impact of Italian colonisation on Benghazi's cultural life by focusing on Italian colonial educational policies and the extent to which they were implemented. The chapter is divided into three parts. The first part provides a survey of the nature and style of education in the Ottoman province of Benghazi from the late nineteenth century to 1911. Thereafter, the second part of the chapter discusses Italian educational policy in Benghazi in the pre-fascist period 1911-1922, whilst the impact of Italian colonisation on Benghazi's cultural life in the fascist period 1922-1942 is discussed in the third part of the chapter. In so doing, the chapter provides a discussion of the implementation of Italian colonial policies drafted during the pre-fascist period and how changes to those policies were made in the late 1920s to conform to the fascist party's totalitarian ideology. Through the discussion and analysis undertaken within, this chapter addresses the primary research questions pertaining to the role of the colonial education in perpetuating colonial rule and the colonial government's perception of the goals of education.

Education in Benghazi during the Ottoman period

There was no secular education in Libya before 1860. Thereafter, a variety of schools were established in Tripoli and Benghazi by private individuals financed through

donations and endowments.¹ Education in the first half of the nineteenth century and until 1846 was, with the exception of military education, entirely religious in nature.² Privately funded madrasas were the primary means of education in the Ottoman provinces of Tripolitania and Cyrenaica, either attached to mosques and *zawiya*, or in separate buildings, with a curriculum focusing predominantly upon the Qur'an, the *Hadith*, and principles of reading and arithmetic.³

After 1869, and because of the reforms initiated by Sultan Abedulhamid, secular education was empowered; this process began with primary, vocational, and secondary schools.⁴ However, the implementation of educational reforms did not achieve the desired results since it was subject to local conditions in each Ottoman province.⁵ Moreover, even though Ottoman administrative, financial, and educational reforms (known as *tanzimat*), were implemented between 1839 and 1856, the effects of the reforms, particularly those pertaining to education, only reached the provinces of Tripolitania and Cyrenaica in the last quarter of the nineteenth century, when secular

¹ Mohamed Bashir Swaysi, "Awḍḥ 'a al-T 'alim fi Libya 1935-1950 (The Conditions of Education in Libya)", *Majallet al-Bohouth al-Tarikhiya*, 2 (Tripoli, 1999), p. 88; DMT, *Wathiqat* no. 1838, Tripoli, Libya; Tripoli's School of Arts and Crafts was founded in 1901 by private donations.

² DMT, *Wathiqat* no. 1716, Tripoli, Libya.

³ BSBSMS, 1902-1910, no. 84, pp. 76-77; in Benghazi, madrasas' curricula were limited to teaching the Qur'an and the *Hadith* per the list of books in the private library of the jurist and madrasa teacher, Ali Mahmoud Badi. His library contained, for instance, 66 books. The subjects of these books can be categorised into four groups: the Qur'an and the *Hadith* books; books of Qur'an exegesis and commentary on the *Hadith* texts; books on Islamic jurisprudence per the Malki school of North Africa; and books about the Arabic grammar, syntax, rhetoric and literature.

⁴ Ali Hasoun, *Tarikh al-Dawala al-Uthmania wa Ilaqatiha al-Khrijia* (History of the Ottoman State and its Foreign relations), (Damascus, 1980), pp. 149-161; Francesco Coro, *Libya Athn 'a al-Ahd al-Uthmani al-Thani*, p. 118.

⁵ Ali Hasoun, *Tarikh al-Dawala al-Uthmania wa Ilaqatiha al-Khrijia*, p. 159.

education was founded.⁶ In Benghazi, this took the form of the Ottoman administration founding a limited number of primary and secondary secular schools teaching a modern curriculum of mathematics, physics, economy, law, painting, geography, and history,⁷ as well as languages such as Ottoman Turkish, Arabic, and French.⁸ In 1910, there were 26 government-administered schools in Tripolitania.⁹

One aspect of European culture activity especially favoured by the Italian and French in Libya between 1881 and 1911, was the founding of schools.¹⁰ This can be illustrated by the fact that between the late nineteenth century and 1911, there were six Italian schools founded in Benghazi teaching the same curriculum taught in Italy.¹¹ Those schools, which were founded during Prime Minister Francesco Crispi's government, taught Italian language and culture to Italian expatriates.¹² In like manner, Benghazi's Jewish population also founded their own schools, which taught a similar curriculum to the European schools and concentrated on providing a vocational education. An example of

⁶ Ali Hasoun, *Tarikh al-Dawala al-Uthmania wa Ilaqatiha al-Khrijia*, p. 159.

⁷ DMT, *Wathiqa no. 187*, Tripoli, Libya.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Salvato Bono, 'al-Hiyat al-Fikriya fi Libya 1881-1911 (Intellectual Life in Libya)', *al-Majella al-Tarikhiya al-Maghribiya*, (Tunis, 1990), p. 689.

¹¹ Ahmed Sudiqi al-Dajani, *Libya qubil al-Ihtilal al-Itali* (Libya before the Italian Occupation), (Cairo, 1971), p. 276.

¹² Leonard Appleton, *Siyasat al-Ta'alem al-Itali nahu al-Libieen al-Arab 1911-1922* (The Italian Education Policy towards Libyan Arabs), tr. Abdulqader al-Muhishi (Tripoli, 1999), p. 55.

this latter type of school was the Livorno Sons vocational school founded in 1876.¹³

Benghazi's Jewish pupils also attended French and Franciscan schools.¹⁴

Until the second half of the nineteenth century, the Ottoman Empire did not consider providing educational services as one of the core functions of the state. Rather, it viewed the provision of education as being the preserve of non-state institutions or individuals. This limited, or even non-existent, involvement of the state in the provision of education was a policy stance that contributed to illiteracy throughout the Ottoman Empire. Another unintended result of this policy was that the Arab states under Ottoman rule preserved their language, culture and traditions. Indeed, individuals within the Arab states of the Ottoman Empire did not learn Ottoman Turkish language and therefore the impact of the Turkish culture was minimal. Furthermore, the Ottomans' reluctance to provide educational services permitted long-standing Arab educational institutions, such as al-Azhar in Egypt and al-Zitouna in Tunisia, among others, to continue to provide religious education.¹⁵ As the second Ottoman rule in the Libyan provinces of Tripolitania and Cyrenaica ended in 1911, education was mainly conducted within the madrasas.

¹³ Gabriele Vittorio Raccach, *Uppunti per un Archivio delle Faniglia Ebraiche della Libia*, (Tripoli, 1914), p. 14; for more on the Jewish population of Benghazi and Libya see Nahum Sloush, *Travels in North Africa*, The Jewish Publication Society of America, (Philadelphia, 1927), p. 116.

¹⁴ Salvato Bono, 'al-Hiyat al-Fikriya fi Libya 1881-1911' p. 689.

¹⁵ Mohamed Bashir Swaysi, "Awḍḥ 'a al-T 'alim fi Libya 1935-1950", pp. 75-76.

Italian educational policy in Benghazi 1911-1922

Italy considered education to be one of the most important and powerful peaceful means of rapprochement with the Libyans, since it was an effective means of penetrating the country. The emphasis was on primary schools because, in early education, the minds of children would be influenced gradually in a process of conversion to Italian culture through Italian language and spirit.¹⁶ Italian-Arabic school annexes were founded in Tripoli attached to Tripoli's National Italian School, with the goal of teaching an identical curriculum to that taught in Italian elementary schools. In deference to Libyan national and religious feelings, Arabic and the Qur'an were added to this curriculum.¹⁷ Around the same time, the colonial government founded Italian-Arabic school annexes attached to the Benghazi's Italian Elementary School.¹⁸

As a provisional measure, Libya's military governor, General Caneva, issued a special decree to form an educational agency in Tripoli, headed by the Director of Civil Affairs Administration, Caruso Angileri, and a similar agency in Benghazi.¹⁹ The two educational agencies' main function was related to three areas: the curriculum and the role of the Arabic and Italian languages in education; assessing Libyan reactions to the national Italian schools; and the consideration of planning provisions designed to

¹⁶ Roland De Marco, *Talyanett al-Afariqa: Ta'alem al-Hokuma al-Mahaliya fi al-Must'amarat al-Italiya 1890-1937* (The Italianisation of Africans: Local Government Education in the Italian Colonies), tr. Abdulqader al-Muhishi (Tripoli, 1988), pp. 2-29.

¹⁷ George Ramon, min *Dakhil Mu'askarat al-Jihaz fi Libya* (from Inside the System's Camps), tr. Mohamed Abedulkarim al-Wafi, (Tripoli, 1972), pp. 72, 73.

¹⁸ George Ramon, min *Dakhil Mu'askarat al-Jihaz fi Libya*, pp. 72, 73.

¹⁹ Caruso Angileri to P.C.M. April 1912, p. 18; the Ministry of Colonies was established later that year in June and would take over administering educational policy in Libya.

increase future peaceful penetration in Libyan society.²⁰ The two agencies presented intermittent reports to the colonial government during 1912 but it seemed that they merged shortly after the establishment of the Ministry of Colonies.²¹ It appeared that the goal of this instantaneous Italian educational policy immediately after the occupation was to avoid previous mistakes that had been made in other colonies such as Somalia and Eritrea, where education was voluntary and left in the hands of the Catholic Church, without any interest by the Italian government.²² The point of view of Italian politicians, such as the Foreign Minister San Julianio, regarding Africa and including Libya at the beginning of Italy's colonisation, was that education should be in the Italian language, primarily for the benefit of Africans and secondarily for Italy's benefit.²³ In addition, there should be special care taken when teaching Western culture.²⁴

The colonial government policy towards religious education was centred, as early as 1912, on the use of the madrasas in the education programme as one means of the peaceful penetration of Libyan society.²⁵ During the months of March and April of 1912, the Italian-Arabic annexes were still in an experimental phase, but the colonial government noticed – through Caruso's report statistics – that the number of Libyans enrolled in Italian schools was much lower than the number in Ottoman schools during

²⁰ Malvezzi de Medici, "Native Education in the Italian Colonies", *Educational Yearbook*, 1931, p. 651.

²¹ Appleton, *Siyasat al-Ta'alem al-Itali nahu al-Libieen al-Arab 1911-1922*, p. 56.

²² Ibid., p. 34.

²³ Appleton, *Siyasat al-Ta'alem al-Itali nahu al-Libieen al-Arab 1911-1922*, p. 19.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Appleton, *Siyasat al-Ta'alem al-Itali nahu al-Libieen al-Arab 1911-1922*, p. 205.

their last year.²⁶ At the same time, the madrasas were crowded, as a result of Libyans' dissatisfaction with the Italian-Arabic schools.²⁷ Caruso argued that such an imbalance could not be corrected without posting Italian teachers at the madrasas and that this procedure could begin as soon as they were moved to new locations with acceptable sanitary conditions and after the introduction of modern education methods in those schools.²⁸ A cholera epidemic spread throughout Libya in October 1911, however, causing a delay in the start of school year to February 1912 and the Italian teachers were recalled to Italy.²⁹ In Caruso's report, that Benghazi's residents avoided enrolling their children in Italian schools was noticeable; the Italianisation policy in the Italian schools did not sit well with the degree of national and religious fervour in Libya at this early stage of colonisation. Even Libyans collaborating with the colonial government declined to enrol their children in those institutions since the prevailing concept was that Christian clergy administered those schools and therefore the fear of religious conversion prevented many Libyans from sending their children to Italian schools.³⁰ Subsequently, Italy needed to amend its Italianisation policy and adopt a policy more suitable to the Islamic culture to abate Libyans' fears.³¹

²⁶ Appleton, *Siyasat al-Ta'alem al-Itali nahu al-Libieen al-Arab 1911-1922*, p. 205.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Ibid., p. 54.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Appleton, *Siyasat al-Ta'alem al-Itali nahu al-Libieen al-Arab 1911-1922*, p. 37

³¹ Appleton, *Siyasat al-Ta'alem al-Itali nahu al-Libieen al-Arab 1911-1922*, p. 37

The Italian government's decision to annexe Libya in 1912 had a negative impact on Libyan national feeling since Libya lost its sovereignty and Libyans became Italian subjects. This was especially important given the protection given to Muslims under the terms of the Lausanne Treaty.³² There were no articles in that treaty concerning education. Because of this oversight, there was no choice in for Libyans about education except to attend schools administered by the colonial government. This led many Libyans to believe that the Italian government's policy was to Westernise them.³³ Italy's education policy in Libya, from 1911 to 1919, was designed per colonial principles and thus incompatible with the local population. Moreover, Italian assurances about respecting local culture pursuant to the Treaty of Lausanne did not materialise. The policy whereby only Italian staff were entrusted to undertake administrative services and all Libyans were excluded from government policy, along with the heavy Libyan casualties during the Italian invasion, led to an increase in the spirit of Libyan patriotism and a desire for independence. Thus, as soon as contacts with the Ottomans were renewed during World War I, Italian rule shrank to coastal areas. This was one of the causes of the continuous decline of enrolment in Italian schools from then onwards. To militate against this, the Italian government decided to form a commission of inquiry which was charged with the task of creating an effective education system that would be acceptable to both themselves and the Libyans.³⁴

³² Appleton, *Siyasat al-Ta'alem al-Itali nahu al-Libieen al-Arab 1911-1922*, pp. 38-39.

³³ Ibid., p. 40.

³⁴ Appleton, *Siyasat al-Ta'alem al-Itali nahu al-Libieen al-Arab 1911-1922*, p. 50.

One member of the commission of inquiry was Alfonso Nallino, a professor at the University of Rome. He criticised the Italian government's policy about language, religion, and culture.³⁵ Instead, Nallino advanced a policy compromise which earned him the approval of some Libyans. Indeed, Nallino is seen to represent a position of impartiality in the role of Italian policy planners.³⁶ He pointed to Italy's need to return to a 'proper' footing in all future dealings with the Libyans and thus supported the granting of local autonomy to the Libyans under the terms of the 1912 Treaty of Lausanne. Further, Nallino suggested the educational policy's failure was due to its imposition of unsuitable civilisation patterns onto a local community.³⁷

Nallino presented several justifications for the position that he advanced against Italy's educational policy in Libya. First, he noted that there were no major population centres in Libya equal in size or population density to cities such as Tunis, Cairo or Alexandria since the population was dispersed over a large area.³⁸ This meant that the educational needs of Libyans in urban centres were comparatively lower than those in the more populous cities of Cairo or Tunis. This in turn meant that there did not exist a critical demand to train doctors or engineers from the local population.³⁹ Secondly, Nallino suggested that because of the lack of trained Libyan teachers who could use the Italian educational approach, it seemed to be necessary to continue in stages, and use the

³⁵ Appleton, *Siyasat al-Ta'alem al-Itali nahu al-Libieen al-Arab 1911-1922*, p. 50.

³⁶ Ibid.; such as the two members of the presidential council of the newly formed Republic of Tripolitania Farhat Bey and Sulieman al-Barouni.

³⁷ Appleton, *Siyasat al-Ta'alem al-Itali nahu al-Libieen al-Arab 1911-1922*, p. 50.

³⁸ De Marco, *Talyanett al-Afariqa: Ta'alem al-Hokuma al-Mahaliya fi al-Must'amarat al-Italiya 1890-1937*, p. 68.

³⁹ Ibid.

existing schools, madrasas, and *zawiyas*.⁴⁰ Further, he proposed that the Italian government needed to supervise the educational system through an inspection committee composed of Libyan and Italian staff familiar with Islamic education curricula.⁴¹ He believed the most effective solution was to train Libyan teachers to start an educational programme for local primary schools, in their own language and according to their own needs.⁴² Nallino's proposals for the future of education in Libya can be understood as an intermediate stage in changing the Libyan educational system from a religious based to a secular one.

Alternatively, Italian education inspector, Rodolfo Micacchi, presented to the Ministry of Colonies a possible solution to the problems of colonial education, which proved its importance fully with the growing Italian rule in the country and gradually became a benchmark for the Italian attitude towards education in Libya under authoritarian fascist rule.⁴³ The arrival of the Italian educator Micacchi to Libya in 1919 was at the request of Department of Civil and Political Affairs in Tripoli. The department insisted, a year after Colonial Minister Gaspare Colosimo prepared his report, that official inspection of schools in Libya must be a prerequisite for any policy reform in the future.⁴⁴ This review was also a response to political changes in both Italy and Libya that brought about Nallino's orientalist policy however, Nallino's approach was perceived by

⁴⁰ De Marco, *Talyanett al-Afariqa: Ta 'alem al-Hokuma al-Mahaliya fi al-Must 'amarat al-Italiya 1890-1937*, p. 68.

⁴¹ Appleton, *Siyasat al-Ta 'alem al-Itali nahu al-Libieen al-Arab 1911-1922*, p. 70.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ MDJL, *Taqarir Mufateshi al-Ta 'elim, Rodolfo Micacchi Report of 1919*, Fondon Volopi, Cartella, 6-2, fascicolo. B. I, p. 122; Rodolfo Micacchi became the Director of Education in the Ministry of Colonies.

⁴⁴ Ibid., p. 111.

the Ministry of Colonies as a threat to all the Italian schools in Libya.⁴⁵ The changes proposed by Nallino also presented significant challenges to administrative change where implementation may be required to train Libyans to work in schools and in recruiting teachers from neighbouring Arab countries where the ideas of Arab nationalism and Islam might be a problem.⁴⁶

When Micacchi arrived in Benghazi, school conditions were far from stable and schools formerly under Ottoman authority were still in operation.⁴⁷ The colonial government's educational system in Benghazi took the form and content of the schools that existed before the Italian occupation.⁴⁸ In the early days of the Italian occupation, additional schools were built as annexes to the existing Italian National School, in addition to the establishment in 1912 of a small Italian-Arabic school in al-Berka at the outskirts of the Sidi Daoud district.⁴⁹ This school was still in operation in 1919 but the Italian-Arabic annexe of the Italian National School was moved inside Benghazi in 1912 and renamed the Central Italian-Arabic School, and another school was built in al-Saberi

⁴⁵ MDJL, *Taqarir Mufateshi al-Ta'elim*, Rodolfo Micacchi Report of 1919, Fondon Volopi, Cartella, 6-2, fascicolo. B. I, p. 111.

⁴⁶ MDJL, R. Micacchi Report of 1919, p. 111.

⁴⁷ MDJL, R. Micacchi Report of 1919, p. 111.

⁴⁸ Ibid., pp. 121-128.

⁴⁹ ACS, P.C.M. Amministrazione civile esetcizi Inhenet, Relazione *mensile*, Direzione Del servcizi civile, cirnaica, Bengasi (Giugno, 1912) T. ½, p. 208; Appleton, *Siyasat al-Ta'alem al-Itali nahu al-Libieen al-Arab 1911-1922*, p. 12.

district.⁵⁰The three schools mentioned in Micacchi's report were in operation.⁵¹The attendance rate in the Central Italian-Arabic School was high; Micacchi personally surveyed a number of students about the educational level, and they were satisfied.⁵² In addition, he did not have any criticism of the school principal, G. B. Guasc, who taught third grade, or his aides Domenico and Chirico, who taught first and second grades. Micacchi described the two aides as not having had a good education, but they did not mind working under the guidance of Mr Guasc.⁵³ The al-Saberi school was in operation but the number of students declined from 142 in the school year 1917-1918 to 115 students for school year 1918-1919.⁵⁴ The attendance rate was 69% of the number of registered students, which Micacchi described as a good result and attributed it to the school principal, Giacomo De Bellis, a qualified teacher who was carefully selected for Italian schools abroad, where he spent six years in the colony studying of Arabic and Arabic literature.⁵⁵ He was in charge of teaching Arabic in the first, second and third grades.⁵⁶The responsibility of teaching Arabic and the Qur'an was delegated to Jalal Khalil, who was described by Micacchi as well prepared, and Bashir Badi, who was

⁵⁰ The enrolment statistics for the Central Italian-Arabic School: the number of students rose from 44 students in April 1912 to 60 students in June of the same year, 38 students in the school year 1915-1916, and 86 students in the school year 1916-1917. In the school year 1917-1918, the number of students rose to 115 but Micacchi stated that the number dropped to 90 during the spring due to the spread of the cholera epidemic in 1918; see Appleton, *Siyasat al-Ta'alem al-Itali nahu al-Libieen al-Arab 1911-1922*, p. 68.

⁵¹ MDJL, *Micacchi Report of 1919*, p. 122.

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ MDJL, *Micacchi Report of 1919*, p. 122.

⁵⁴ MDJL, *Micacchi Report of 1919*, pp. 121-125.

⁵⁵ MDJL, *Micacchi Report of 1919*, pp. 121-125.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

considered not to be at the same level as Khalil.⁵⁷ The other school in Benghazi, which gave Micacchi a poorer impression than the Central and al-Sabri Schools, was al-Berka school, where attendance and the educational level were low.⁵⁸ Micacchi has attributed this situation to the school director Antonio Di Venere, who he believed was not excited by his work and had not done well since coming to Libya.⁵⁹ Teaching Arabic and the Qur'an was in the hands of Libyan teacher Mustafa Idriza. Whilst Micacchi did not evaluate his work, he remarked that the school would gain only if Antonio Di Venere made some effort to take advantage of his ability.⁶⁰

The chief teacher at the Italian-Arabic secondary school in Benghazi, Di Berardinis, had a more realistic point of view than Micacchi's in his report, since the former had not researched the Italian-Arabic schools to spread Italian language and culture.⁶¹ A year after Micacchi's report, the number of students at the Central Italian-Arabic School dropped to 71 in the school year 1920-1921. At the al-Berka Italian-Arabic School in the same year, the number of registered students was 52, of whom only 44 attended.⁶² However, Di Berardinis followed Micacchi's analysis in the distinction drawn between the high level achieved at the Central School and the low level of al-Berka School and

⁵⁷ MDJL, *Micacchi Report of 1919*, pp. 121-126.

⁵⁸ Ibid.; Micacchi's statistics between 1912-1918 showed an increase in the number of enrolled students from 25 to 95. Attendance during 1912 was 18 students and in the school year, 1918-1919, attendance was 44 students. This must be compared with statistics given by Colosimo where he estimated the number of students in the school year 1915-1916 at 42 students and in 1916-1917, the number was 96 students, with 109 students in 1918-1919; see Appleton, *Siyasat al-Ta'alem al-Itali nahu al-Libieen al-Arab 1911-1922*, p. 45.

⁵⁹ MDJL, *Micacchi Report of 1919*, pp. 121-126.

⁶⁰ MDJL, *Micacchi Report of 1919*, pp. 121-126.

⁶¹ MAI-AS, *Di Berardinis Report of 30 March*, Bengasi, Fondon volpi, cartella 6-2, Fascicolo B-L, p. 10.

⁶² Ibid.

laid the blame at the bad management of Di Venere, who was still the school's principal.⁶³ The Grand Mosque of al-Berka had an annexe madrasa teaching the Qur'an and Arabic with a large attendance of students and Di Berardinis suggested the establishment of a school teaching both curricula under one roof.⁶⁴ Di Berardinis did not report on al-Sabri School but included in his report recommendations by the Central Italian-Arabic School's new principal, Giovanni Randozzo.⁶⁵ The recommendations in the report included the establishment of Italian preparatory classes taught by Libyan teachers to enhance the students' ability to express their thoughts in Italian, adjusting the school calendar according to Islamic holidays, and providing experimental gardens, since 80% of students were the sons of farmers.⁶⁶ It was impractical to start experimental gardens near the schools since that required land purchase; however, the government offered the use of the experimental gardens in al-Berka for the students twice a month.⁶⁷ Di Berardinis also mentioned in his report the founding of the school of arts and crafts in Benghazi that was recommended by a committee on vocational education during Micacchi's visit.⁶⁸ An Italian-Arabic school annexe was attached to the arts and crafts school to prepare students to enrol in this vocational school.⁶⁹ The

⁶³ MAI-AS, *Di Berardinis Report of 30 March*, Bengasi, Fondon volpi, cartella 6-2, Fascicolo B-L, p. 10.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ MDJL, *Taqarir Mufateshi al-Ta'elim*, Angelo Piccioli's Report to the Parliament of Cyrenaica on the school of arts and crafts, August 1923, p. 22.

⁶⁸ Ibid., pp. 22-23.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

number of students at the Italian-Arabic annexe was 61 and, in its first year intake of 22 students in the vocational school, the majority were Italian.⁷⁰

It was possible to reform education in Benghazi to increase the percentage of Libyan students' enrolment in Italian schools but some steps had to be taken. One problem was that the level of education in Italian-Arabic schools was low because of the inferior preparation of Libyan teachers, who used poor Arabic and Italian language teaching methods.⁷¹ In addition, replacement of those untrained teachers would not be a difficult task since the replacement teachers would be compensated adequately, and through the continuing appropriate supervision of those Libyan teachers without professional training, by Italian teachers with sufficient knowledge of Arabic.⁷² One step to remedy the lack of qualified teachers was that a teaching school had to be established in Benghazi to train Arabic language teachers and Libyan teachers.⁷³ Another step was that knowledge of Arabic principles had to be compulsory for all Italian teachers appointed in Libya and additional allowances paid of not less than 1,000 lire for Italian teachers proficient in Arabic.⁷⁴ In addition, Arabic had to be the language of instruction in the Italian-Arabic schools and improvements should be made to the economic situation of Libyan and Italian teachers in Libya.⁷⁵

⁷⁰ MDJL, *Angelo Piccioli's Report*, August 1923, p. 22-23.

⁷¹ Appleton, *Siyasat al-Ta'alem al-Itali nahu al-Libieen al-Arab 1911-1922*, p. 43.

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ Appleton, *Siyasat al-Ta'alem al-Itali nahu al-Libieen al-Arab 1911-1922*, p. 43.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

Micacchi's remedy for the educational system in Cyrenaica emphasised the establishment of a comprehensive elementary education for the population to include reading and writing in Arabic, and in Italian if possible.⁷⁶ It was determined that the curricula must include teaching arithmetic, health care, agriculture, and handicrafts, as well as religious education.⁷⁷ This elementary education would prepare students to enter secondary schools and for jobs in commerce and trade.⁷⁸ Some kind of secondary education had to be established to prepare students for entry-level jobs in the public service and the establishment of some kind of advanced education to train imams and judges.⁷⁹ Based on those recommendations, Micacchi was able to convince the Ministry of the Colonies to frame the Cyrenaican basic law draft to include articles 10 and 12 from the Tripolitanian basic law, with an amendment to article 11.⁸⁰ This was an attempt to establish a rule to keep bilingual education in the Libyan colonial government's schools. It seemed that Micacchi's concept depended on the political recognition of the necessity of bilingual education in Cyrenaica to implement joint rule in the colony. However, Micacchi had overlooked an important acknowledgement by the Italian government that Libyan education was to be Islamic, as had been discussed in 'Akerma treaty's negotiations and in the meetings of the consultative committees for implementing the

⁷⁶ MDJL, *Micacchi Report of 1919*, p. 159.

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁰ Ibid.; those recommendations were derived from a special government bulletin no. 10-2464 dated 22 May 1919.

basic law in February 1919.⁸¹ Although Micacchi during 1919 was able to find a way to implement the controversial article 11 of the Tripolitanian basic law and at the same time retain the Italian-Arabic schools, he was not able to influence the Cyrenaican consultative committee's desire to have some kind of Islamic education in the future. This concept would be discussed further during the complicated negotiations between Prince Idris al-Sansui and the Italian government to implement the Cyrenaican constitution.⁸² However, article 11 of the Tripolitanian constitution proved to be an impediment to the implementation of the constitution. The Italian-Arabic schools were to be retained and the new Arabic elementary schools could not begin because of the Italians' doubts in finding trustworthy teachers from Libya or among the teachers recruited from neighbouring Arab countries.

Nevertheless, studying Micacchi's early position toward the orientalist policy of Nallino and towards an Islamic educational system as proposed by the Libyans, shows that both positions were considered a basis for implementing Libyan laws in both Tripolitania and Cyrenaica. However, both Nallino's and Micacchi's proposals should be considered from the perspective of the Italian colonial policy to institute a colonial education. The question of religious education as represented by the madrasas fell under Italian control; Micacchi admitted in 1919 that the basic law could not be implemented in the future in either colony without reference to the madrasas, which in Libya was considered a traditional education.⁸³ He considered madrasas to be an inferior place to

⁸¹ Appleton, *Siyasat al-Ta'alem al-Itali nahu al-Libieen al-Arab 1911-1922*, p. 127.

⁸² Ibid.

⁸³ MDJL, *Micacchi Report of 1919*, p. 152.

receive general education since madrasas' teachers, in general, lacked teaching qualifications and were paid low wages.⁸⁴ There was no doubt that Micacchi and other colonial educators considered madrasas to be the reason behind the relative backwardness of Islamic culture since the teaching method at the madrasas was limited to the development of memory at the expense of other human faculties.⁸⁵ Granted, such criticism of Islamic culture was valid, but the real problem in madrasas for the Italians was that they constituted a political danger, since non-Muslim teachers were not allowed to teach there. A solution to reform the madrasas required the training of teachers, new buildings, and development of modern curricula, in addition to prohibiting corporal punishment.⁸⁶ Therefore, madrasas were to become part of the educational system in Libya, instead of being limited to religious education. Around this time, the madrasas stopped working in Benghazi, either to implement reforms or because the hiatus was part of a regular programme to prepare wooden tablets in a process known as *tanjeer* (engraving the text to be copied by the students on the wooden boards); the madrasas' teachers were not paid during this period.⁸⁷

Although Nallino was interested in secondary education, Micacchi was silent on the subject. Another Italian educator, Bartolini, presented a proposal to establish an Islamic

⁸⁴ MDJL, *Micacchi Report of 1919*, p. 152.

⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁷ BSBSMS, 1911-1919, no. 5, p. 10; the madrasa's teacher was Khalel al-Shouhidi who died and his family was asking for his back pay. Madrasa teachers usually depended on payments from the students' families in the form of food or money. In the madrasas' schoolrooms, there were two sets of wooden boards: the teaching board had the text to be learned by the student engraved on it and the student's wooden board, where the pupil copied the text with erasable ink.

school to train judges and muftis and his recommendation included only a reference for a Libyan secondary education.⁸⁸ Bartolini's recommendations was to establish some form of Italian schools (kindergarten, elementary, primary, and secondary), Libyan schools (elementary, Italian-Arabic schools, Arabic secondary schools, and Islamic studies schools), and vocational education schools.⁸⁹

Nallino's proposal to the post-war committee and Micacchi's report to the Ministry of Colonies despite having different intent would have to wait to be implemented. The two correlated problems affecting Italy at that time were international post-WWI conditions, especially about its effect on Italy in the short-term relative to its long-term plans in Africa, and the special problem facing Italy in Libya since there was a danger of military confrontation in Tripolitania. Such a war might draw in Cyrenaica, which had a peace treaty with Italy. In any case, neither Nallino's nor Micacchi's recommendations could be implemented until the execution of joint rule in both Tripolitania and Cyrenaica through the establishment of two separate parliaments which would have the right to accept or refuse the new education policy. The problem that was facing Italy in 1919 was establishing some form of joint rule in Libya before the end of the year, or the basic laws granted to Tripolitania and Cyrenaica would be worthless. In a way, Italy was trying to guarantee that the Libyans accept Italian sovereignty over Libya by diplomatic means. This policy was more difficult to implement in Tripolitania than Cyrenaica since the

⁸⁸ MDJL, *Micacchi Report of 1919*, p. 176.

⁸⁹ MDJL, *Micacchi Report of 1919*, p. 176.

Treaty of 'Akerma founded the basis of future deliberation and the establishment of a quasi-protectorate.⁹⁰

In 1921, a new six-member technical committee on education was formed in Benghazi.⁹¹ Among the members were Micacchi, Nallino, the new education superintendent in Cyrenaica, Anglo Piccioli, and two members of the Cyrenaican parliament: Mohamed al-kikhia and Mahmoud Shatwan.⁹² After the committee finished the draft education law, it was passed by the Cyrenaican parliament on 5 February 1922.⁹³ This law formed the official educational policy until 1928 when it was replaced by fascist legislation.⁹⁴ It consisted of twelve articles related to educational matters such as types of schools and curricula. The second article stated that Arabic was to be the language of instruction in the madrasas and their curriculum should include memorisation of the Qur'an, reading, and writing.⁹⁵ The third article stipulated that the language of instruction in elementary schools would be either Arabic or Italian, according to what was decided by article 11 of the basic law.⁹⁶ Arabic and Italian would be part of the elementary school curriculum in

⁹⁰ MAI-AS, *Cirenaica, 1911-1939*, Pos, 139, fascicolo 1-6; the fourth article of the al-Rejema Treaty stipulated that Italy had to establish schools of science and the arts besides Islamic schools. In addition, Italy pledged to train some Libyan students abroad (presumably in Italy) and to respect Islam as the religion of the land. Therefore, it was important for Italy to implement the Treaty to allay the Libyans' religious concerns and affirm that future joint Italian-Libyan rule will not be contrary to their religious beliefs.

⁹¹ Appleton, *Siyasat al-Ta'alem al-Itali nahu al-Libieen al-Arab 1911-1922*, p. 41.

⁹² R. Micacchi, 'Le scuole nelle colonie Italiane di Dominio Diretto', *Rivista pedagogica*, 1930, p. 19.

⁹³ Appleton, *Siyasat al-Ta'alem al-Itali nahu al-Libieen al-Arab 1911-1922*, p. 44.

⁹⁴ R. Micacchi, *L'Enseignement aux Indigenes*, p. 533.

⁹⁵ Appleton, *Siyasat al-Ta'alem al-Itali nahu al-Libieen al-Arab 1911-1922*, p. 112.

⁹⁶ Ibid.

addition to religious studies, arithmetic, history, geography and agriculture.⁹⁷ The length of study in elementary schools would be six years, and three years for students who successfully passed the final examination at the madrasas or a special entrance examination.⁹⁸ The fourth article divided the four-year secondary schools into two sections: one section to train students in commerce, accounting, and public jobs, and the other section to train madrasas' teachers.⁹⁹ Students who passed the final elementary school examination or who passed a special entrance examination would be admitted to secondary school.¹⁰⁰ The secondary school curriculum would include, in addition to the subjects taught at elementary schools, natural sciences, geometry, teaching methods, *shari'a* law and logic.¹⁰¹ The fifth article was related to higher education that was limited to three years and its purpose was preparatory education to enrol in Italian universities or training elementary and secondary schools teachers.¹⁰² Article eight was about vocational education with the establishment of the school of arts and crafts in Benghazi and a project to establish an agriculture school.¹⁰³ Article 12 contained conditions for teacher contracts where Libyan teachers would be paid at the

⁹⁷ History and geography texts had a concentration on Italian history and civilization and ignored Arab and Muslim's material; see *al-Liwa al-Taraboulsi*, 20 November 1919; 31 March 1921; also, see De Marco, *Talyanett al-Afariqa: Ta'alem al-Hokuma al-Mahaliya fi al-Must'amarat al-Italiya 1890-1937*, pp. 48-107; and see Appleton, *Siyasat al-Ta'alem al-Itali nahu al-Libieen al-Arab 1911-1922*, pp. 158,178,198, 203.

⁹⁸ Appleton, *Siyasat al-Ta'alem al-Itali nahu al-Libieen al-Arab 1911-1922*, p. 112.

⁹⁹ Appleton, *Siyasat al-Ta'alem al-Itali nahu al-Libieen al-Arab 1911-1922*, p. 112.

¹⁰⁰ Appleton, *Siyasat al-Ta'alem al-Itali nahu al-Libieen al-Arab 1911-1922*, p. 112

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

¹⁰² Ibid.

¹⁰³ Ibid.

same rate as Italian teachers having the same qualifications and experiences and would receive similar allowances and bonuses.¹⁰⁴

Any evaluation of the 1922 Cyrenaican education law should start by the recognition of the spirit of compromise emerging from this law. There was indeed evidence of a new spirit of compromise in the Italian colonial administration and a balance between Nallino's opposition and Micacchi's arguments. While Nallino's style found expression in providing teaching methods to the madrasas and in the secondary education, keeping Italian language in the elementary schools satisfied Micacchi's point of view. On the Libyan side, there was a readiness to accept a place for Italian in the curricula except for the madrasas' curriculum as an alternative for repealing the goals of Italianisation and as an alternative to Bartolini's project and Colosimo's recommendations. The main strength of the new law was inherent in dispute settlement and tolerance that found expression in the reformed madrasas included in one educational system with the elementary and secondary schools. However, this law was not devoid from some weakness as a development plan. One weakness was the failure to include Nallino's recommendations to establish Islamic higher education, which was also a part of the recommendations of the consultative committee to found Islamic universities in Benghazi and Derna. The other weakness of the law was the establishment of vocational education where the eighth article of the law failed to provide a clear commitment to provide the chance for vocational education, especially, agricultural vocational training.

¹⁰⁴ Appleton, *Siyasat al-Ta'alem al-Itali nahu al-Libieen al-Arab 1911-1922*, p. 112

The uncertainty of the colonial government intention to implement the Cyrenaican basic law was not resolved until 1920 when the two sides signed the al-Rejema Treaty.¹⁰⁵ With regard to education, the agreement stated that elementary and preparatory schools would be established according to local needs.¹⁰⁶ The areas to have schools were Benghazi with a preparatory school and secondary schools, and elementary schools in Derna, Tobruk, Ajdabia, and al-Merj.¹⁰⁷ As for al-Bayda and Merada schools would be established according to local needs.¹⁰⁸ While special committees appointed by the Cyrenaican parliament were in process of framing article 13 of the Treaty, instructions were given to the local educational institutions in Benghazi to begin the recommended reforms.¹⁰⁹ However, the absence of an education director prevented the execution of any radical steps in the form of acquiring new buildings, equipping them to start elementary, preparatory, and secondary schools and recruiting teachers from Italy and neighbouring countries.¹¹⁰ Such steps would wait until the appointment of new education superintendent in Cyrenaica Anglo Piccioli.¹¹¹ The reorganisation of Benghazi's Education Department in 1920, before the colonial government commitment to implement article 13 of al-Rejema treaty, by its director Volugio Cantini, paved the

¹⁰⁵ MAI-AS, *Di Berardinis Report of 30 March*.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid.

¹¹⁰ MAI-AS, *Di Berardinis Report of 30 March*.

¹¹¹ Ibid.

way for the new director Piccioli to inform the Cyrenaican Parliament in 1922 of the colonial government commitment to implement the new education legislation.¹¹²

It seemed that Piccioli was eager to implement the new education legislation and article 13 of the al-Rejema treaty. He divided problems facing the educational plan into three areas: teaching staff, school buildings and equipping schools.¹¹³ Providing enough school buildings required long-term planning by the Ministry of Public Works, which accordingly started to renovate some buildings and presented plans for new school buildings.¹¹⁴ The colonial government, contrary to its previous policy, allocated funds to implement the educational plan. Piccioli presented to the Cyrenaican Parliament expense statistics in 1922 where the total under construction in Cyrenaica was 92,464 lire, with Benghazi's share at 36,400 lire and preparatory works expenses in Cyrenaica at 305,000 lire, with 115,000 lire of that going to works in Benghazi.¹¹⁵ For that, the colonial government criticised Piccioli for excessive expenditure.¹¹⁶ The problem of providing qualified teaching staff for the Cyrenaican schools was as difficult a task as the school buildings issue, since it would take at least four years for the Libyan secondary schools to graduate Libyan teachers.¹¹⁷ Therefore, a temporary teaching staff would need to be appointed, comprised of either Italians or Libyans from the former Italian-Arabic

¹¹² MDJL, *A. Piccioli's Report to the Parliament of Cyrenaica*, April 1922, p. 1.

¹¹³ Ibid.

¹¹⁴ Appleton, *Siyasat al-Ta'alem al-Itali nahu al-Libieen al-Arab 1911-1922*, p. 5.

¹¹⁵ *A. Piccioli's Report to the Parliament of Cyrenaica*, April 1922, p. 2.

¹¹⁶ Appleton, *Siyasat al-Ta'alem al-Itali nahu al-Libieen al-Arab 1911-1922*, p. 7; Piccioli Report to the governor of Cyrenaica, Bengasi, August 1923, p. 37.

¹¹⁷ *A. Piccioli's Report to the Parliament of Cyrenaica*, April 1921, p. 3.

schools, and supplemented by a number of the madrasas' teachers.¹¹⁸ When choosing the Libyan teachers, Piccioli concentrated on their knowledge of Islamic doctrine in addition to modern teaching methods and in this task, the education department consulted the chief judge of Benghazi's *shari'a* court and the mufti.¹¹⁹ When there was no consensus or difficulty in choosing the prospective teacher, the *'ulama*, or board of Islamic scholars, in the area was invited to a meeting to deliberate the question.¹²⁰ A few teachers were recruited through the Italian diplomatic missions in Beirut and Alexandria for the new Arabic secondary schools.¹²¹ Similarly, female teachers were recruited through the Italian missions in Arab countries to staff Benghazi's girls' school. At the end, Piccioli was forced to rely on the available teachers in the colony even if there were not enough of them.¹²² He reported to the Cyrenaican Parliament that the available teachers were not qualified to teach the curriculum, especially at secondary school level.¹²³ The only option was to train more Libyan teachers and screen all Libyan and Arab teachers before allowing them to take teaching positions.¹²⁴

The absence of any kind of general education in Libya before 1895, except for religious education, prevented the development of female education.¹²⁵ In 1899, the Ottomans

¹¹⁸ A. Piccioli's *Report to the Parliament of Cyrenaica*, April 1921, p. 3.

¹¹⁹ Ibid.

¹²⁰ A. Piccioli's *Report to the Parliament of Cyrenaica*, August 1923, p. 3.

¹²¹ MDJL, A. Piccioli's *Report to the Parliament of Cyrenaica*, April 1921, p. 3.

¹²² Appleton, *Siyasat al-Ta'alem al-Itali nahu al-Libieen al-Arab 1911-1922*, p. 14.

¹²³ Ibid.

¹²⁴ MDJL, A. Piccioli's *Report to the Parliament of Cyrenaica*, April 1921, p. 4.

¹²⁵ Appleton, *Siyasat al-Ta'alem al-Itali nahu al-Libieen al-Arab 1911-1922*, p. 49.

founded a girls' elementary school in Tripoli but it is unclear whether they founded a similar school in Benghazi.¹²⁶ Libyan women did have a chance to receive education before 1911 at the Italian schools or at private school for wealthy families; however, there was opposition to female education by traditional groups.¹²⁷ Two girls' schools were established: one in Benghazi and the other in Derna, and by November 1922, the number of students at both schools had reached 80.¹²⁸ The programs avoided any of the educational plans followed in the Italian schools in an attempt to gain Libyans' approval.¹²⁹ The school was divided into three sections: a two-year section with a curriculum similar to the boys' schools with the addition of home economics classes and gardening, a three-year practical section, and a one-year crafts section.¹³⁰ In the practical and crafts sections, fifteen to twenty hours were devoted to practical skills such as embroidery, knitting, and carpet making.¹³¹ Five hours a week was given aside for learning subjects such as Arabic and the Qur'an, and an optional five hours a week were allocated to learning Italian.¹³² This programme became a model in all girls' schools for the remainder of the colonial period.¹³³ The teaching staff at Benghazi's girls' school was

¹²⁶ Appleton, *Siyasat al-Ta'alem al-Itali nahu al-Libieen al-Arab 1911-1922*, p. 50.

¹²⁷ MDJL, *A. Piccioli's Report to the Parliament of Cyrenaica*, April 1921, p. 3.

¹²⁸ MDJL, *A. Piccioli's Report to the Parliament of Cyrenaica*, November 1922, p. 16; Appleton, *Siyasat al-Ta'alem al-Itali nahu al-Libieen al-Arab 1911-1922*, p. 54.

¹²⁹ MDJL, *A. Piccioli's Report to the Parliament of Cyrenaica*, November 1922, p. 16; Appleton, *Siyasat al-Ta'alem al-Itali nahu al-Libieen al-Arab 1911-1922*, p. 55.

¹³⁰ De Marco, *Talyanett al-Afariqa: Ta'alem al-Hokuma al-Mahaliya fi al-Must'amarat al-Italiya 1890-1937*, p. 40.

¹³¹ Ibid.

¹³² Ibid.

¹³³ Appleton, *Siyasat al-Ta'alem al-Itali nahu al-Libieen al-Arab 1911-1922*, p. 56.

composed of a Libyan teacher, Hamida al-Unizi, an Arab teacher, Badi'a Souror Page, and three Italian teachers, including the school's principal, Lena Liboratti.¹³⁴ This was a landmark event for establishing government administered female education in Cyrenaica and al-Unizi was the first ever Libyan female teacher in Benghazi. Text books, exercise books and materials for practical lessons were provided free of charge for the first year for all students, but thereafter they were only available free of charge for indigent students.¹³⁵ This was a sound policy since educational expenses would prevent already reluctant parents from allowing their daughters to attend school.

Educational recommendations by Italian educators such as basing several schools in the Cyrenaican's interiors and the establishment of female education were realised in a short time. In 1920, there were only 21 schools in Cyrenaica; by 1922 there were 74 schools and another six about to open with a budget of 489,136.25 lire.¹³⁶ At the beginning of 1923 all school buildings were furnished and equipped at a cost of 100,000 lire.¹³⁷ The typography section in Benghazi municipality was charged with producing Arabic wall maps.¹³⁸ Italy fulfilled its entire obligation in the joint rule agreements towards the development of schools in Cyrenaica by 1923.

¹³⁴ MDJL, *A. Piccioli's Report to the Parliament of Cyrenaica*, November 1922, p. 17.

¹³⁵ Ibid.

¹³⁶ MDJL, *A. Piccioli's Report to the Parliament of Cyrenaica*, April 1922, p. 1; Appleton, *Siyasat al-Ta'alem al-Itali nahu al-Libien al-Arab 1911-1922*, p. ١٢٢; The number of elementary school teachers was 29 with salaries of 259,473.5 lire, the number of secondary schools' teachers was 10 with salaries of 32,600 lire, at the madrasas, there were 28 teachers with salaries of 141,762.25 lire, and at the girls' schools, there were 7 teachers with salaries of 55,300.50 lire.

¹³⁷ Appleton, *Siyasat al-Ta'alem al-Itali nahu al-Libien al-Arab 1911-1922*, p. 113.

¹³⁸ Ibid.

Even though Nallino saw religious education at the madrasas as indispensable for any Arabic education system in Libya, it was rare to find any positive reference to it by colonial Italian educators and administrators.¹³⁹ Micacchi described the madrasas in Tripolitania and Cyrenaica as in 'total deteriorating conditions'.¹⁴⁰ In addition, because of poor organisation, there were no statistics compiled as to the number of students attending the madrasas.¹⁴¹ Some of the madrasas were just small room annexes to mosques; others were small rooms with an opening in the ceiling for air and light and the students were provided with wooden boards to write their lessons on.¹⁴² The madrasas continued to function in the same way as the centuries before without change in either their teaching method or their facilities. Micacchi's criticism was not limited to the conditions at most madrasas; his criticisms were also applied to Italian-Arabic schools in the countryside as well as private Islamic, Jewish, and Catholic schools.¹⁴³ The bad conditions at schools stemmed from the unsuitable nature of school buildings and a disregard for sanitation.¹⁴⁴ This in turn led to the colonial education administrators having to implement measures to prevent the spread of contagious diseases within the schools.¹⁴⁵ The school administration at the Ministry of Colonies

¹³⁹ MDJL, A. Nallino, *The post-war Commission's Report of January 1919*, (Istruzione nelle Colonie, Kuttab), p. 132.

¹⁴⁰ MDJL, A. Piccioli's *Report to the Parliament of Cyrenaica*, August 1923, p. 3.

¹⁴¹ Ibid.

¹⁴² MDJL, A. Piccioli's *Report to the Parliament of Cyrenaica*, August 1923, p. 3.

¹⁴³ Ibid.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid.

agreed, according to the Cyrenaican education law of 1922, to modernise 34 madrasas; 24 of them were reorganised, but reform at the other ten madrasas was delayed due to local difficulties.¹⁴⁶ Many of the madrasas' students attending non-reformed madrasas left to attend the reformed madrasas.¹⁴⁷ However, as the Fascist Party consolidated its control in Rome, stopped the extension of this policy to include the madrasas at the Sanusi's *zawiyas* as was planned in 1922 according to the al-Rejema Treaty.¹⁴⁸

The possibility of finding a quick solution to the perplexing problems of religious education at the madrasas was greater than merely transforming existing Italian-Arabic schools into elementary Arabic schools.¹⁴⁹ The agreement of the Cyrenaican Parliament and the Ministry of Colonies to reforming the curricula in response to the ministerial committee's recommendation allowed them to be added to the education law of 1922 and as a result some steps were taken including transferring non-Libyan students to the new Italian school.¹⁵⁰

Vocational training in Benghazi saw an important development in the establishment of the arts and crafts school in 1919.¹⁵¹ This school was for boys, whilst the girls' schools in Benghazi and Derna were partly concerned with vocational training.¹⁵² The three-year

¹⁴⁶ MDJL, *A. Piccioli's Report to the Parliament of Cyrenaica*, April 1922, p. 5.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid., November 1922, p. 19; Appleton, *Siyasat al-Ta'alem al-Itali nahu al-Libieen al-Arab 1911-1922*, p. 35.

¹⁴⁸ MDJL, *A. Piceoli Report to the Parliament of Cyrenaica*, November 1922, pp. 8-19.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid., August 1923, p. 38.

¹⁵⁰ MDJL, *A. Piceoli Report to the Parliament of Cyrenaica*, November 1922, p. 11.

¹⁵¹ Appleton, *Siyasat al-Ta'alem al-Itali nahu al-Libieen al-Arab 1911-1922*, p. 68.

¹⁵² Ibid.

arts and crafts school's teaching staff was recruited from Italy and it was well equipped, with its primary goal to train students in specific industrial skills and local arts and crafts, as was done in Tripoli's school of arts and crafts.¹⁵³ It had a residence for students from outside Benghazi, where board and lodging were provided free of charge.¹⁵⁴ Di Berardinis's report in 1921 stated that the school had 83 students and was proof of the success of the policy of cooperation with the Libyans.¹⁵⁵ He also stated that Italian-Arabic school annexe would prepare Libyan students to a level that would enable them to enrol in the industrial section, but Di Berardinis doubted whether the Libyan students would reach such a level.¹⁵⁶ After 1922, the educational goal of the school was that Italian students would enrol in the industrial section and Libyan students would enrol in the traditional crafts section.¹⁵⁷ This came close to Micacchi's plan and became the model for vocational training for the remainder of the colonial period.¹⁵⁸

Summary

The position of the Ministry of the Colonies was uncertain regarding the basic law of Cyrenaica and implementing articles 10, 11 and 12 regarding education. While there was an initial effort to gather all the educational experts to draw up plans appropriate to the

¹⁵³ Appleton, *Siyasat al-Ta'alem al-Itali nahu al-Libieen al-Arab 1911-1922*, p. 128; MDJL, *A. Piccioli's Report to the Parliament of Cyrenaica*, August 1923, pp. 43-48.

¹⁵⁴ Appleton, *Siyasat al-Ta'alem al-Itali nahu al-Libieen al-Arab 1911-1922*, p. 65.

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 77.

¹⁵⁶ MDJL, *Piceioli Report of April to the Governor of Tripolitania*, July 1919, p. 135.

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

Italian colonial policy, there was then a slowdown and hesitation in implementing recommendations and reforms until the fascist far right party take-over in Italy. The period of 1911-1922 can be considered a transitional period in education up to the fascist period, which clearly considered granting the Libyans local laws under joint rule, a national humiliation. The educational policy in Cyrenaica of this period was the most reached by any Italian education policy, a result of the colonial educators' assumption of Italianisation as a kind of a 'civilising' mission. The contradiction between the materialistic concept of the Italians and the Libyan religious aspect in that early period of colonisation was apparent in the colonial educators' dismissal of the fact that education in Libya, at that time, was complementary to religion and therefore the Italianisation effects in that period were minimal. The colonial government sought to place the independent and religious madrasas under direct government control since it could not oppose, at least outwardly, their existence for political reasons. It took the 1902 madrasa reforms implemented by British Consul-General in Egypt Lord Cromer as a model for change.¹⁵⁹ Italian policy makers believed it was important that Libyans should learn Italian since it was impossible to have an interpreter available everywhere. The Italian colonial policy to reform religious education in Cyrenaica did not include religious education conducted at the mosques' madrasas or the madrasas at the Sufi lodges, such as the Sanusi *zawiya*; therefore, in the period 1911-1922, there were no significant changes to the mosques' madrasas in Cyrenaica but the Sanusi *zawiya*'s madrasas were limited to teaching the Qur'an.

¹⁵⁹ The de facto governor of Egypt (1883–1907); those reforms divided madrasas in Egypt into two types: government-run madrasas and private madrasas.

The impact of Italian colonisation on Benghazi's cultural life in the fascist period 1922-1942

After the fascists ascended to power in Italy, Italian-Libyan relations entered a new stage, in which the fascists intended to end Libyan resistance in Cyrenaica by various means, such as targeting the civilian population with collective punishment. The colonial government in Libya designed new education and economic policies after 1922 that influenced aspects of life in Benghazi, including cultural life. This part of the chapter addresses the manifestations of cultural life in Benghazi as the Italians achieved full control of Cyrenaica after the end of the Libyan armed resistance in the 1930s. Since stability and order usually have a positive impact, this section investigates whether this was the case in Cyrenaica and its capital, Benghazi. This section will be divided into two parts: education, and the media. There was no perceptible change in the colonial policy towards the mosques in the fascist colonial period as the same policy continued in this period.

Education

Fascist policy-makers saw schools a way to reach into society and the promotion of their policy, whether in Italy or Italy's African colonies, sentiment expressed in a speech by an Italian parliamentarian: that the natives would not be replaced by Italians but must be contained within the economic scheme.¹⁶⁰ Through schools, the family is reached and thus Italy would be able penetrate the tribes; therefore, schools must be civilising

¹⁶⁰ A. J. Steel-Greigh, *History of Education in Tripolitania*, The government press. (Tripoli, 1948), p. 18.

missions.¹⁶¹ The thinking of Italian educators, at the time, was that the people of the colonies were Muslims associated with traditional customs and roles, and that their institutions retained many primitive elements, and it was not possible to change everything at once without damage, therefore there had to be a gradual transition.¹⁶² In addition, it had to be made clear to them that the goal was development without taking from their past.¹⁶³ Thus, the educational policy of the fascist government became clear. It paid special attention to schools as a tool, especially in the process of cultural penetration in the country. The school building must have a marked prominence to become one of the area's monuments that varied in its design, geometry, architecture and construction from the simple buildings frequented by citizens, in order to have an effect on the people's psyche.¹⁶⁴ The colonial government during the fascist period equipped the schools with the most modern equipment and teaching aides and made them, in a few years, the standard in the whole country.¹⁶⁵ The curriculum had been developed along the same principles as those enshrined within the pre-fascist period education policy. Principles such as reassuring the Libyans the curriculum at the Arab-Italian schools will not negatively impact either the Arabic language or Islam. The fascists pinned their hopes on education and were extremely interested in it as a tool to spread their ideology; therefore, they watched the educational results achieved by students with anxiety and tension. The colonial government were issuing successive

¹⁶¹ A. J. Steel-Greigh, *History of Education in Tripolitania*, The government press. (Tripoli, 1948), p. 18.

¹⁶² Ibid., p. 24.

¹⁶³ Ibid.

¹⁶⁴ Fulvio Conni, 'Cenni Sulle', *Anno In 3*, (Tripoli, 1953), pp. 59-61.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid.

decrees, amended decrees and ministerial decisions reorganising education without considering the time needed to evaluate the success of such experiments.¹⁶⁶ The madrasas were excluded from the public education system by Libyan legislation of 1927. Due to its pure religious nature, an inspector from the education administration was appointed to oversee the madrasas and allocated special financial support to them from the *waqf* fund.¹⁶⁷ The focus was on elementary schools as the core of education with the language of instruction being Italian. The curriculum also included Arabic, Islamic studies, and social and natural science subjects.

Perhaps the law that most effected a clear change on education was the Libyan local law of 1928, which formalised the fascist character of Libyan education.¹⁶⁸ This was an attempt to Italianise the Libyans; new five-year elementary schools were set up all over Libya under the banner of Muslim schools with Italian being the language of instruction.¹⁶⁹ It was essential to be proficient in Italian for a student if he wished to study at secondary school level. In the school year 1931-1932, there were four general

¹⁶⁶ Mahmoud M. Farhat, *Nazrit al-Tarbia al-Arabia al-Islamia*, Vol. 1, Tripoli, pp. 121-122; first, the Libyan local law was issued in 1924 which dealt with public national law to conform to 'fascist ideals' based on Italian royal decree no. 472 for 1924. Then there was the Italian education law no. 1013 on 26 June 1927, the Italian law no. 148 on 28 June 1927. A year later, the Libyan local law that was based on the Italian Royal decree no. 1698 on 21 June 1928, which made all Libyan schools bilingual and one of its articles founded evening schools for students unable to attend during the daytime. In 1939, a local education law was issued based on the Italian Royal decree no. 1737 for 24 July 1936.

¹⁶⁷ Mahmoud M. Farhat, *Nazrit al-Tarbia al-Arabia al-Islamia*; in 1932, there were 12 madrasa classes with 335 students.

¹⁶⁸ Ministero della Colonie (MC), *Annuario delle scuole colonial Anno scolastico 1931-1932*, Angelo signor elle Editore (Roma, 1932), p. 21.

¹⁶⁹ Ministero della Colonie (MC), *Annuario delle scuole colonial Anno scolastico 1931-1932*, Angelo signor elle Editore (Roma, 1932), p. 21.; the new labour law forbade some occupation for illiterate individuals, especially taxi drivers who could continue working provisionally until they attend evening school; see *Berid Barca*, 30 November 1929.

schools, one vocational school, one girls' school, and the madrasas with a total of 816 students 93 of them were female students.¹⁷⁰ That Italian was used as the primary language of instruction explains why there were only one or two Libyan teachers to teach Arabic. The chief object of this educational system was to have an Italian-oriented curriculum; for instance, in history classes, students were taught only Italian history and the glories of the Roman Empire.¹⁷¹ In the 1930s, especially after the end of the Libyan armed resistance in Cyrenaica and the release of the population of the countryside from the internment camps, there was an increase in the number of students attending the government's Muslim schools in Benghazi. In the school year 1933-1934, the number of students increased more than three-times over the previous school year at 3,055 students; of those, there were 29 Christians and 6 Jewish students.¹⁷² This was not the total number of Benghazi's students since there were students attending private Christian, Jewish, and Islamic schools that seemed to be limited to wealthy families.¹⁷³ Libyan students were distributed over all the private schools; where in the school year 1931-1932, the Libyan Islamic school had 368 students, the Christian school had 177,

¹⁷⁰ Ministero della Colonie (MC), *Annuario delle scuole colonial Anno scolastico 1931-1932*; The general schools were Benghazi's al-Merkazia School with 202 students, al-Saberi School with 175 students, General Toreilli School with 188 students, and al-Berka School with 105 students ; the vocational school had 53 students and Benghazi's girls' school had 93 students; Benghazi's al-Merkazia School had two Libyan teachers Saleh al-Khoja and Yossef al-Athrum; the al-Saberi School had two Libyan teachers Mustafa Edriza and al-Sanusi al-Murtadi; General Toreilli School had two Libyan teachers Hussian F. al- Wahishi and Husni F. al-Amir; al-Berka School had one Libyan teacher al-Unaizi.

¹⁷¹ A. J. Steel-Greigh, *History of Education in Tripolitania*, pp. 17-21.

¹⁷² Ministero della Colonie (MC), *Annuario delle scuole colonial Anno scolastico 1933-1934*, Angelo signor elle Editore (Roma, 1934), p. 8; See tables at appendices 19 and 22.

¹⁷³ BSBSMS, 1925-1930, no. 400, p. 1; in a letter addressed from Benghazi's *shari'a* court to Mr. 'Ashour al-Bejoo ordering the increase of his child's allowance due to school fees; Omar al-Bejoo who was under guardianship of his mother, Fatima Aga.

and the Jewish school had 183 students.¹⁷⁴ There was an increasing integration with Libyan Muslim students attending Christian schools where the number of those students increased from 381 in the school year 1931-1932 to 429 in the school year 1933-1934.¹⁷⁵ However, the number of students attending private schools was relatively small compared to the free government-run Muslim schools.

The fascist education was an ideological education that saw all knowledge through the prism of the authoritarian party. The policy was intended to keep the Libyan pupils away from the psychology of local traditions and beliefs and to indoctrinate students to believe in fascist ideas.¹⁷⁶ Through the schools' curriculum Italian fascist educators emphasized Italy, its geography, history, leaders, and policies. For example, the pictures in the reading and comprehension textbooks were limited to the pictures of Italy's king, the governor of Libya, and Rome's landmarks. Material dealing with any non-Italian subject was strictly limited in the second grade and mentioned the local environment in Libya along with Muslim holy days.¹⁷⁷ In the third grade textbook, the role of ancient Rome in Libya was exalted and the Italian colonisation of Libya was connected to the

¹⁷⁴ Ministero della Colonie (MC), *Annuario delle scuole colonial Anno scolastico 1931-1932*, p. 12; see table appendix 19.

¹⁷⁵ Ministero della Colonie (MC), *Annuario delle scuole colonial Anno scolastico 1931-1932*, p. 12; see tables at appendices 20 and 23.

¹⁷⁶ Steel-Greigh, *History of Education in Tripolitania*, pp. 24-25.

¹⁷⁷ Mohamed K. al-Hamali & Abdelcattob B. Elssari, *illa al-haya* (second grade reading and comprehension textbook), Pelino Magi, (Tripoli, 1938), p. 116; one subject in the second-grade reading and comprehension textbook was titled the flag: schoolchildren passing in front of a flag greet it with a roman salute; do you know the meaning of this respect? This tricolour flag conversing with our heart says I am King, I am State Minister Benito Mussolini, leader of fascism, and head of the government of Italy, which includes Libya and the rest of its colonies. I am the Italian fleet and its victorious army.

history of ancient Rome.¹⁷⁸ Ideological fascist directives were not limited to Libyan students, with attention also being given to images of the Black Shirts and accompanying written material detailing information on fascist heroes and excerpts of Mussolini speeches.¹⁷⁹

The establishment of Tripoli's Islamic school on 13 May 1935 to train judges, muftis and Arabic teachers was an important achievement of a recommendation in the pre-fascist period by Italian educator Bartolini.¹⁸⁰ This was used as fascist propaganda inside Libya and in other Muslim countries; however, the real purpose was to create a university-level Islamic theological studies alternative to Cairo's al-Azhar University, where Libyan opposition political movements sought contact with Libyan students. Education at this school was conducted in three stages: a three-year preparatory stage, four-year middle stage, and three-year graduate stage.¹⁸¹ Despite the establishment of this university-level religious school, Benghazi residents continued to send their children to al-Azhar University and it seemed that the Italian colonial government did not oppose it, but on the condition that the student and his family maintained 'good conduct', which meant

¹⁷⁸ Ministero della Colonie (MC), 1934, *Scuole Elementari per Indigeni, Libro Sussidiario per la Terza Classe Elementare*, Firenze; "Everything shows that Italy will be able to give to these lands. Impoverished by many centuries of violence, anarchy, and abandonment, the prosperity which they had had in ancient times under the domain of Rome. But to reach this prosperity it is necessary that the populations of Libya have for Italy, which does so much for them, the gratitude, and the worship that their ancient ancestors had for Rome."

¹⁷⁹ Steel-Greigh, *History of Education in Tripolitania*, pp. 24-25; for example, in mathematics textbooks adding and subtracting examples were done using adding or subtracting a member of the fascist youth organisation *Gioventu Italiana del Littorio*, and in Language grammar was elucidated by adding adjectives to *il Duce*, such as fascist and Italian. Geography covered mainly Italy with an interest in Nazi Germany and fascist Spain. History textbooks only mentioned the greatness of Italy and fascism.

¹⁸⁰ *Governo della Tripolitania Bolletino Ufficiale*, XIII, 10 Ottobre 1935, No. 38, p. 137.

¹⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 21 Marso 1936, No. 8, p. 428; the middle stage had two sections: one to train teachers and the other to train public employees.

that they did not engage in any hostile action against Italy. Usually the mayor of the district issued a Certificate of Cognisance to those students residing within his jurisdiction.¹⁸² This kind of education was limited to the children of Benghazi's wealthy families who transferred the students' tuition and expense funds from the Benghazi branch of *Banco di Roma* to the bank's Cairo branch after receiving permission from the colonial government.¹⁸³

The fascist party's youth organisation, *Gioventu Italiana del Littorio* (GIL), was an ideological counterpart to school and served as a paramilitary organisation.¹⁸⁴ The Libyan branch of this organization, named *Gioventu Araba del Littorio* (GAL), attracted, in addition to the government schools' students, the madrasas' students and other children who were divided according to age into two groups: 9 to 12 years old and 12 to 17 years old.¹⁸⁵ They were trained at summer camps in sports, military skills, and hiking before they toured various agricultural projects and institutes highlighting the fascist achievement in Libya.¹⁸⁶ The Libyan GAL visited Italy in 28 October 1935 to

¹⁸² BSBSMS, 1933-1940, no. 161, p. 120; a certificate issued on 20 January 1938, reported that Ibrahim Mohamed al-Akab, born in Benghazi, resident of Derbi Street, Sidi Salem district, had acquired a travelling permission on October 1937 to study at al-Azhar; there was another certificate on 10 August 1938 issued from the same district stating that Abdulhamid al-Fallah had obtained permission to travel to Egypt in order to study at al-Azhar see BSBSMS, 1933-1940, no. 161, p. 134; the district mayor of Sidi Shabi district wrote a detailed report stating that Mohamed al-Mortadi al-Asmae had travelled to Egypt to study at al-Azhar on 4 October 1937 see BSBSMS, 1933-1940, no. 161, p. 109.

¹⁸³ BSBSMS, 1933-1940, p. 109; Sidi Khrebesh district's mayor issued a statement on 10 December 1937 explaining that Abdulla Gargoom was a student at al-Azhar and was requesting the authorities to allow his father to send him 300 francs; another statement on 18 September 1937 stated that the amount needed by Jibreel Faraj Shallof for tuition and expenses reached 400 francs a month.

¹⁸⁴ Greigh, *History of Education in Tripolitania*, p. 23.

¹⁸⁵ *Libya al-Mosoura*, 4 January 1935; in Libya, it was known commonly as the *Balilla* after the Italian name of the predecessor of this organisation *Opera Nazionale Balilla*.

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid.*

participate in the celebration of the fascist march on Rome.¹⁸⁷ The number of the members of the Libyan GAL reached 16,000 members in 1936, of which 1,500 were from Benghazi.¹⁸⁸ In the same year, 1,500 Libyan members of GAL visited Italy.¹⁸⁹ The late 1930s amendment in the Italian constitution to grant special Italian citizenship for the Libyan Muslims gave particular importance to the membership of the *Littorio* for at least one year.¹⁹⁰ The extent to which this institution was successful in the performance of its mission in Libya of indoctrination of Italianism and ‘a better fascist tomorrow’ is a difficult question to estimate, because soon after, school and all related activities came to a stop because of the outbreak of World War II.

It was only after 1928 that the education plan inherited from the pre-fascist period were implemented; therefore, its impact on the population appeared only after 1932, i.e. after the end of the Libyan armed resistance in Cyrenaica. Colonial educators argued that education did not have to be a force for the subversion and dissolution of colonial domination; if controlled and adapted to native needs and conditions, it could be a useful instrument of peaceful penetration and moral conquest.¹⁹¹ For example, the

¹⁸⁷ *Libya al-Mosoura*, 2 November 1935.

¹⁸⁸ Steel-Greigh, *History of Education in Tripolitania*, p. 27; the colonial government used the local notables to attract a large number of students to join this organisation, for example, Muhamed al-Meterdi stated that Omar al-Muhayshi, managing editor of *Berid Barca* newspaper and *Libya al-Mosoura* magazine, contacted him and Ali Nuruldin al-Enezi urging them to join GAL while stating that membership will be compulsory for school students; for more see Muhamed al-Meterdi, *jihad Libya fi nisf Qern* (Half a Century of Libyan Struggle), Benghazi, 2013, p. 16.

¹⁸⁹ Steel-Greigh, *History of Education in Tripolitania*, p. 27; Libyan GAL uniforms were different from the Italian GIL uniforms to distinguish between them.

¹⁹⁰ *Libya al-Mosoura*, 2 November 1938.

¹⁹¹ Mininni Caracciolo, “Le Scuole nelle Colonie Italiane Diretto Dominio”, *Revisita di Pedagogia* 23, nos. 3-5, (1930), pp. 186-187.

fascist Minister of Education, Giuseppe Bottai, wrote that the method should be instruction rather than education for the indigenous.¹⁹² Native education “instruction” aimed not to produce masters of European skills but expert manual labourers who would work to the best of their limited capacities. The colonial government during the fascist period continued with same educational goal of limiting education to the elementary level outlined during the pre-fascist period. The outcome of such an educational system was the training of low-level government clerks, interpreters, and colonial soldiers. Benghazi’s residents began enrolling their children in schools, resulting, later, in the appearance of a generation staffing the government’s administrative jobs. In 1932, and after 22 years of colonial rule in Cyrenaica, the number of students was only 2% of the general population, which meant only 2% of the population could speak Italian.¹⁹³ This statistic implies that education was available only for a small segment of the Cyrenaican population. The percentage slightly increased to 3% of the general Cyrenaican population in 1934.¹⁹⁴ After the end of Italian colonialization, Libya emerged with 90% illiteracy rate and with very few people adequately trained to run the country.¹⁹⁵

¹⁹² Giuseppe Bottai, “La Scuola Fascista nell’Africa Italiana”, *Etiopia* 3, no. 3, (1939), p. 3.

¹⁹³ Pan, ‘The population of Libya’, p. 119; the population of Cyrenaica was 136,215 according to the 1931 Italian census.

¹⁹⁴ *Ibid.*; the population of Cyrenaica was 137,582 per the 1936 Italian census.

¹⁹⁵ Karim Mezran, Tiziana Giuliani, and Massimo Campanini, ‘Libya: Evolution and Prospect of Democratic Change’, *Oriente Moderno*, anno 87, Istituto per l’Oriente C. A. Nallino, (Rome, 2007), pp. 457-482. (p. 463).

The Media

During the Ottoman period, media activity in Libya was rudimentary, represented by a few newspapers in Tripoli, such as the weekly *al-Raqeb al-Ateed* newspaper, published in Arabic and Ottoman Turkish.¹⁹⁶ This continued during the first period of Italian colonisation with the publication of the bi-weekly *al-Liwa al-Trabelsi* newspaper in 1919.¹⁹⁷ In Benghazi, the bi-weekly *Berid Barca* newspaper was founded by Mohamed Taher al-Muhayshi in the mid-1920s; after his death in 1927, his brother Omar al-Muhayshi (1898-1942) became its editor. This newspaper concentrated on news related to the colonial administration, including newly issued laws and regulations, besides the visits and movements of top colonial Italian officials and commercial advertisements. During the Libyan armed resistance in Cyrenaica, a majority of the population considered this newspaper to be a pro-colonial Italy publication.¹⁹⁸ It also published news of colonial Italian sanctions and property confiscation after the end of the Libyan armed resistance and in its editorials responded to exiled Libyan opposition anti-colonial positions.¹⁹⁹ The language used in these newspaper articles was colloquial

¹⁹⁶ The archives of University of Benghazi's central library have several issues of this newspaper. It was founded by Mussa Bin Nadim in 1908.

¹⁹⁷ Few issues of this newspaper are available at the archives of University of Benghazi's central library; it ceased publishing after the fascists came to power.

¹⁹⁸ *Berid Barca*, 18 September 1931; covering the capture of the Libyan resistance leader Omar al-Mukhtar in the first page headline was a crucial event for establishing peace in the country. The subtitle: 'The arrest of the Rebels' leader' was indicative of the pro-colonial language and terminology used in the second and third pages of this issue that described in detail the capture, trial and exaction of the elderly Omar al-Mukhtar.

¹⁹⁹ *Berid Barca* was severely criticised by some Libyan intellectuals for being pro-colonial Italy. Among those critical of it was the poet Amed Rafiq al-Mehdawi (1898-1961) who asked, 'Did what *Berid* said reach? Nonsense, it has neither benefit nor harm'. See Qerira Zarqoun Naser, *al-Haraka al-sh'aria fi Libya fi al-'Aser al-Hadith* (Modern Poetic Movement in Libya), Dar- al-Kitab, (Beirut, 2004), p. 24.

Arabic, since it was more easily understood by the majority of Benghazi's residents than formal Arabic.²⁰⁰

Omar al-Muhayshi founded the monthly magazine *Libya al-Mosoura* in October 1935. This magazine was characterised by its print quality, powerful style, and diversity of subjects. It represented, without a doubt, the Libyan intellectual elite of the time, regardless of their cultural and intellectual orientation.²⁰¹ In the forefront of the magazine's subject matter were propaganda writings that were presented as the magazine's editorial. This body of writings can be grouped under three main themes: propaganda news; propaganda writings on the Italian fascist projects in Libya; and some articles dealing with specific sections such as housing, transport, agriculture, health, industry, that were usually accompanied by statistics. The propaganda news listed the most important colonial administration events in Libya, while propaganda articles on the Italian fascist projects in Libya analysed Italian politics with a focus on the fascist period's achievements in Italy and Libya. It also published topics about cultural institutions such as the Academy of Sciences and Orientalism centres and their activities, especially those concerned with Libya and the Islamic world. In addition to social issues that dealt with the Libyan environment, women's education and health studies, it published archaeological studies, language investigations and poems.²⁰² The

²⁰⁰ The reasons for the use of colloquial Arabic, at the time, were mainly illiteracy and the absence of an auditory media to broadcast Arabic plays and songs. The newspaper was read to most Benghazi's residents at cafes, markets, and social gathering.

²⁰¹ *Libya al-Mosoura* is a rare collection and the full collection is privately owned. The archives of the University of Benghazi's central library have an incomplete collection donated by a private owner in 1971, but the researcher could not access this collection. Another incomplete collection is at the library of Italian African studies in Rome.

²⁰² *Libya al-Mosoura*'s sections were fixed and the variety was in its subjects; see the issue of 5 February 1937.

main reasons for the publication of *Libya al-Mosoura*, as expressed by al-Muhayshi in the first issue's editorial, was to provide readers not only in Benghazi or Libya, but also in the wider Arab world, with information and to correct unfounded rumours about Libya.²⁰³ It seemed that the magazine had a relatively large readership of a generation hungry for cultural activity and for political stability. For example, Libyan writer Wahbi al-Bouri (1916-2010), translated and published Italian stories and, for the first time in the history of the Libyan press, Arabic crossword puzzles were published.²⁰⁴

Most of the topics covered in the *Libya al-Mosoura* magazine and the *Berid Barca* newspaper were explicit propaganda that sought to encourage support for the fascists or propaganda in the guise of scientific and statistical reports. Other topics raised included Italian cultural elements, but these were less propagandist in tone. The editors and writers at both the newspaper and the magazine excused what they were doing on the basis that its primary purpose was to entertain, to present useful material, and to enrich the intellect while preserving the traditions. This was, precisely, the position of the colonial government to follow gradual slow steps to convince the Libyans to be part of Italy; however, the Italian censors allowed a certain amount of local culture to be published. The *Libya al-Mosoura* magazine and the *Berid Barca* newspaper were

²⁰³ *Libya al-Mosoura*, 1 October 1935; the first issue's editorial contained stirring words written in the third paragraph of the text where he said that "Italy came to Libya a quarter century ago driven by several factors from the necessities of life. The people of Italy communicated with the active and highly motivated Libyan so they can progress to greatness under the pressure of the memories of ancient glory. It was the connection of the negative to the positive in electricity produced a jolt to the nature and requirements of life in this age and remained in a steady progressive movement despite the opposed factors."

²⁰⁴ *Libya al-Mosoura*, 5 February 1936; Wahbi al-Bori's first short story was published in this issue; Libyan writer Mustafa al-Saraj from Hune in southwest Libya published his articles and translations in this magazine and then moved to Benghazi to work closely with Omar al-Muhayshi, see the issue of 17 April 1936.

printed at *Matba'at suq al-Jareed* located in the ground floor of al-Muhayshi house.²⁰⁵

This printing company also printed advertisements and invitations in Arabic and Italian and was probably established to serve the interest of the Italian colonial government as Italian media laws in Libya did not allow for the freedom of the press. The first article of the law stated that the newspaper manager must submit a copy of the newspaper to the authorities three hours before going to print.²⁰⁶ The second article gave the state governor the right to shut down any newspaper and confiscate all printed copies if it was deemed a threat to public security.²⁰⁷ The third article stated that violators of the law could be fined between 100 and 1000 lire, imprisoned for six months, or exiled.²⁰⁸ In essence, the articles of the law banned all newspapers and books that criticised the Italian authorities in Libya. Therefore, the *Berid Barca* newspaper was acting as a media outlet for the Italian authorities and publishing Italian news in Arabic, especially for most Libyans who did not speak Italian.

In addition to the issues of newspapers and magazines, Libya's Italian Governor, Italo Balbo, inaugurated Tripoli's AM radio station, which started to broadcast in 1939. The Arab section included a political propaganda side, which intensified in the months immediately prior to the outbreak of World War II. In terms of content, the radio was limited to anti-British propaganda, and had regular entertainment programmes and

²⁰⁵ BSBSMS, 1936-1956, no. 55, pp. 219-223; for a complete inventory of this printing company, see appendix no. 4; the researcher visited al-Muhayshi house in 2010 where it was used as a boarding house for migrant workers with the old printing equipment and tools stored on the ground floor.

²⁰⁶ Governo della Cirenaica, *Gazzetta Ufficiale*, Benghazi, Oct. 1922, p. 5.

²⁰⁷ Ibid.

²⁰⁸ Ibid, p. 6.

lessons in Islamic culture.²⁰⁹ The radio signal reached Benghazi but the number of radio receivers was limited. Nevertheless, the radio was an important fixture in cafes and seems to have created a kind of enthusiastic political dialogue about internal and external challenges, including during World War II. The station did not stop its broadcast until the Allies entered Tripoli.

Benghazi enjoyed the publication of its first weekly newspaper and monthly magazine even though Italian censorship laws were severe. These provided a form of diversity in local and global issues whereby a generation of writers and readers during the Thirties was formed. Among the writers whose talents were fostered included the former Minister of the Economy, Abdul Hamid Rajab Mohammed bin Kato (1920-1995) and the Libyan parliamentary member in the 1950s and 1960s, Ramadan Salem al-Kikhia (1906-1997). This meant that the fascist period influenced the intellectual life of Benghazi, allowing writers to publish in the pro-colonial *Libya al-Mosoura* magazine. The magazine continued to be published during the British Military Administration after World War II, and subsequently during the nascent Libyan government after independence in 1951.

Conclusion

The Italians came to Libya with a clear objective of creating an Italian demographic and geographic extension in Libya. Education was the means to achieve the Italianisation of

²⁰⁹ Tahir Bakir, a teacher at the Islamic School in Tripoli, gave lectures on Islamic history. The political section was limited to anti-British propaganda with the slogan “England out of the Mediterranean”; see *Libya al-Mosoura*, 1 January 1939.

the local population and it was the only means for peaceful penetration by the Italians because it can contain the Libyans and gradually teaching them Italian culture, for example, through primary schools. It was further hoped that a breakthrough into the local culture could be achieved gradually by teaching Italian language. All the focus was on schools, since they were the most appropriate place to foster the seeds of Italian civilisation and culture in Libya as defined by Italian education experts since 1914 – teaching the local population Italian sentiments and helping them understand and admire the civilising Italian mission.

Colonial educator Angelo Piccioli called on the Italian government to speed up the deployment of schools in Libya with the aim of the immediate assimilation of the local population through a curriculum of Italian language, history and geography. Thus, the Italians, in the first stage, rushed to impose Italian culture in Libya in a spontaneous, peaceful manner. However, because the reaction on the part of the Libyans was a reluctance to go to the Italian-Arab schools, Italy was forced to pause and review its educational policies in Libya. Libyans' reactions to the new curricula varied; there were some who wanted to participate in the Italian educational experience, and those who chose to leave the country to seek education in neighbouring countries. There was also a third group who decided to resort to the traditional religious education of the madrasas. The madrasas were crowded with large numbers of students, despite the confiscation of the funds of the Islamic Waqf - the madrasas' main source of financing. The increased attendance at the madrasas was a surprise for Italian colonial educators such as Rodolfo Micacchi, during which time the enrolment of Libyan students in Italian schools was decreasing, which he attributed to the incompetence of the Italian teaching staff.

The most likely reason for the decreases in attendance at Italian schools was the failure of the colonial educators to reassure the indigent population, by allowing them a participatory role in the curriculum through the study of history and geography. Additionally, the Italians' refusal to find a Libyan or even a Libyan-Italian institution to participate in including Libyan history and geography in the schools' curricula was problematic. This insistence in teaching an Italian-oriented curriculum, as well as the lack of qualified teachers capable of teaching the positive principles of Western civilisation to Libyan pupils without disparaging the Islamic civilisation as backward and extremist, were significant reasons for the lack of success of the policy. Another reason for the reluctance of Libyans to attend Italian-Arabic schools in the pre-fascist period was the failure of the colonial government to prepare enough qualified Libyan teachers, possibly because of the Italians' fear that a teachers' corps might in the future challenge Italy's colonial ideas. However, the paradox was that, by allowing the Libyan pupils to attend the madrasas, the colonial government drove them to be indoctrinated by extremist religious feelings of hatred towards the Italians.

The idea to train Libyan teachers required the establishment of an Islamic education institute in Tripoli, financed from the funds of the Islamic Waqf to graduate teachers able to mitigate the nationalist extremism of Libyan college graduates of the major Islamic universities in Egypt and Tunisia. This proposal was opposed by some Italian education experts, such as orientalist Alfonso Nallino, who argued that the establishment of such a school would lead to national and Islamic intellectual proliferation in Libya. He suggested, however, that greater national and Islamic

intellectual activity would lead to significant opposition to Italy and its annexation of Libya; therefore, the idea to found such an institute was suspended until 1937.

The goal of educational policy during the pre-fascist period (1911-1922) was the training of low-level government clerks, interpreters, and colonial troops. The Italian colonial educators perceived that education in Cyrenaica should be at an elementary level to serve the needs of the colonial administration and to avoid higher-level educational stages that would produce intellectuals who might contest the idea of colonial rule.

During the fascist period, the outline of policies planned in the Liberal period continued with adjustments to conform to the fascist part-totalitarian ideology by imposing curricula designed to indoctrinate young Libyan pupils with those fascist ideas, precluding the progress of education beyond indoctrination.

Conclusion

Three decades of Italian colonial experience in Libya, and the two decades of intermittent anti-colonial Libyan armed resistance, have left social, economic, and cultural legacies. Italian records of the period support the conservative estimate that Cyrenaica lost a third of its adult male population and a large proportion of its livestock wealth because of the resumption of military conflict and the removal of the semi-nomadic and nomadic population from their land, into internment camps in the late 1920s. The dismantling of pre-colonial socio-political institutions such as the Sanusi *zawiya* (centres), that had religious and educational functions, disturbed an extant social structure to institute in its place an alien structure (the coloniser's). The beginning of WWII led to the termination of the colonial rule in Libya. The Sanusi-led Libyan resistance underwent a reorganisation phase with the support of the British, and its leader Idris al-Sanusi was accepted by most of the leaders of Tripolitanian leaders as well as Cyrenaicans, who granted him extensive powers to negotiate with the Allies for Libya's independence.

Two phases in the Italian occupation of Libya can be distinguished: the first phase, known as the liberal period (1911-1922) and the second phase, the fascist period. The first phase was characterised by alternating between military conflict and *détente*; however, as the Fascist Party ascended to power in Italy, it ushered in a second, more repressive, period, which began by abrogating all treaties with the Libyans. The socio-political system in Cyrenaica, therefore, remained feudal and tribal, except for Benghazi,

where a narrow elite of urban notable families had already developed. In the second colonial period from approximately 1934 to the outbreak of WWII, there was an attempt by the colonial government to involve and integrate Libyans in the civil and administrative life of a unified country and to stimulate an indigenous productive economy, even if the best agricultural lands had already been assigned to Italian settlers who continued to be, *vis à vis* Libyans, first-class citizens. This phase proved too short to train a future leading class adequately. Evidently, Italy had no intention to create purely indigenous institutions but instead to integrate the Libyans into its own system of government and make it easier for them to rule the country. Libya's governor in the 1930s, Italo Balbo, embraced the idea of cooperation, participation and integration between the Libyans and Italians in the development of the colony, yet the measures taken by Balbo to improve the social situation were cautious and modest because of budgetary shortfalls and the Fascist Party's racial outlook.

This study has revealed that the resistance movement left a cultural legacy of a very complex reaction to colonialism, where the focus was on the alliance between tribes (kinship) and religion (the Sanusi movement) with the assistance of the urban population's social movement. This alliance, which constituted the struggle for self-determination, challenged the colonial state, deterred its expansion and slowed down its advance. Historical evidence uncovered the existence of features of civil society in Benghazi. The colonial period saw the beginnings of the formation of Libya's civil society, composed of the urban group constituents of merchants, workers, and peasants, where they faced the challenges of a colonial invasion that brought hard economic times and choices. It was this civil society's interaction with the political and economic

pressures in the city of Benghazi that paved the way for the creation of the modern Libyan state.

The first phase of the occupation attempted to find stable institutions in Libya, which was a priority for any community looking for stability, and thus the colonial government developed a Cyrenaican constitution for joint rule per the treaties with the Sanusi-led resistance. The joint rule agreement provided for a parliament, government council, and local councils in both Libyan provinces of Cyrenaica and Tripolitania. In Cyrenaica, parliament representation was per tribe, except in the urban centres, and there were three Italian members representing the Italian settlers. The grouping of deputies in the Cyrenaican Parliament, unlike European divisions into political parties, was determined almost exclusively by tribal ties, which outweighed all political considerations. Benghazi witnessed, during this peaceful period, a recovery directly caused by the accord between the Italians and the Sanusi-led resistance; municipal elections were held and two local political parties were formed.

There was a common awareness between the colonised and the coloniser during the liberal colonial period to resolve the occupation problem and its social repercussions, and such awareness was ruled by certain conditions and stages of occupation and resistance. It was evident, to the Libyan side, the importance of investing the balance of power resulting from WWI to reach peace treaties that ultimately affected the nature of relationship between the Italians and the Libyans. However, the democratic experiment of joint rule ended in failure, as the political situation changed in Rome when the Fascist Party assumed power in 1922.

This study confirmed that Benghazi's urban growth and the significant increase of its population was a direct result of Italian colonial policies that moved tens of thousands of the nomadic and semi-nomadic populations of Cyrenaica first into internment camps in the late 1920s, then after their release from those camps in the early 1930s the colonial government prevented them from returning to their former areas. Tens of thousands of them settled in Benghazi. The study, also, found that Benghazi's urban development was mainly because of its new status as the administrative headquarters for the Italian farm settlements in Cyrenaica. The urban development of Benghazi was driven by Italian colonialism in the period between 1911 and 1942.

The Fascist Party's rise to power in Italy was a decisive factor in changing the path of colonial policy in Libya; a new policy which aimed to impose full control on Libya and to settle southern Italian peasants there. The fascists considered the accords with the Sanusi movement as a sign of weakness for an ambitious state like Italy; therefore, they followed a new militaristic policy to defeat the Libyan resistance and to construct colonial farm settlements in Libya. The colonial government envisioned in 1921 that settlement activities would be carried out by private enterprise and issued concessions to Italian companies but later, in 1928, changed the terms of the concessions to oblige large-scale holders to install state-subsidised Italian peasants on their parcels. By the mid-1930s, the colonial government turned to state-run colonisation to construct more farm settlements. After the elimination of the Sanusi-led resistance in the 1930s, efforts were concentrated on the intensive colonial development of farm settlement and increasing the Italian population in Libya; by 1936 the number of Italian settlers in Libya reached 115,000. The development of agricultural settlements was achieved at the

expense of reduced resources for the maintenance of the native population, even though it constituted a net addition to the productive capacity of Cyrenaica. Successive colonial governments, during thirty-one years of colonial rule, struggled to reach the goal of establishing an economically viable colony in Libya. Several factors hindered those efforts; chief among them was the Libyan population's resistance and the lack of resources available to the Italians to implement a comprehensive economic plan. The Italian colonial economic policy in the fascist period was focused to serve the needs of Italian settlers and disregarded the needs of the Libyan population. It achieved minimal success towards that goal, however, since the Libyan colony was not self-sufficient and was a burden on the Italian budget.

The colonial government expropriated grazing and farming land in Cyrenaica and transferred its population to desert internment camps which disrupted the local economy of Cyrenaica and Benghazi. The fragmentation of the pastoral and agricultural system directly affected related commercial activities that provided the population with basic food goods, leading to widespread unemployment, poverty and migration inside the country and abroad. The weakness of the tribal institutions that helped its members in the lean years, and the dismantling of the Sanusi *zawiya*, which distributed subsidies to the needy as a measure to retain feudal authority, exacerbated the conditions of the semi-nomadic and nomadic population of Cyrenaica. Therefore, thousands of tribesmen (peasants and shepherds) who found themselves without livestock or land migrated to coastal towns, and mainly to Benghazi, to find employment in the orchards outside the city or as workers within it. These new residents of Benghazi started unplanned

residences in the outskirts of the city which subsequently created the phenomenon of the substandard areas of shanty towns.

Italian cultural policy towards the Libyans varied in terms of importance, forcefulness and effectiveness. They used the religious establishment, educational institutions, and the press to convey their message of rationally attracting people to allow their children to attend the Arab-Italian schools without provoking religious emotions. The colonial government was trying to put an end to the religious establishment's monopoly on education by establishing twenty three-year primary schools in the interior of Cyrenaica, with Arabic as the teaching language, whereas in the schools founded in coastal towns, Italian was taught side-by-side with Arabic. During the first colonial period, school attendance was very low but it slightly improved in the 1930s. One of the reasons for the Libyans' reluctance to attend Italian-Arabic schools in the pre-fascist period was the teaching of an Italian-oriented curriculum, as well as a lack of qualified teachers capable of teaching the positive principles of Western civilisation to Libyan pupils without disparaging Islamic civilisation as backward and extremist. Another reason was the failure of the colonial government to prepare enough qualified Libyan teachers, possibly because of the Italians' fear that such a teachers' corps might in the future challenge Italy's colonial ideas. However, the paradox was that, by allowing the Libyan pupils to attend the madrasas, the colonial government drove them to be indoctrinated by extremist religious feelings of hatred towards the Italians. Graduates of Arab-Italian schools were not able to obtain government jobs during the first colonial period; however, in the 1930s, the colonial government started hiring Arab-Italian school

graduates. The goal of their educational policy was the training of low-level government clerks, interpreters, and colonial troops.

The Italian colonial educators perceived education in Cyrenaica as being necessary only at elementary level to serve the needs of the colonial administration, and to avoid higher-level educational stages that would produce intellectuals who might contest the idea of colonial rule. During the fascist period, the outline of policies planned in the liberal period continued, with adjustments, to conform to the fascists' partially totalitarian ideology, by imposing curricula designed to indoctrinate the young Libyan pupils with those fascist ideas and precluded the progress of education beyond indoctrination. The educational policy of colonial Italy in Libya was a failure, since at the end of Italian rule the rate of illiteracy in Libya was 90%.

In total, the features of the colonial policy regarding Libyans' status was a combination of integration and separation: this was apparent from the first colonial period of granting Italian citizenship to all male Libyans, through the 1927 law which established a new category of Italian-Libyan citizenship, to the 1938 law of special Italian citizenship, which stated that social and cultural differences between the Italians and the Libyans must be observed.

The nature of Italian capitalism led to the adoption of the farm settlements as a colonial model in Libya. Italian capitalism was not as developed as its British or French counterparts and hence it chose that model instead of the political partnership policy with the local elites adopted by the French in Tunisia or the British in Egypt. France used different colonial policies in its different colonies. In Algeria (1830-1962), because of the extent and longevity of colonial rule, France eradicated its ruling Ottoman

infrastructure and expropriated much of the best land and marginalised the Algerians. In the protectorates of Morocco (1912-1956) and Tunisia (1882-1956), by contrast, the French deliberately preserved the pre-colonial political order, as French capitalism had become stronger and more developed; therefore, the focus on cheap labour was more important than farm settlements.

The role of civil societies as a force that challenged colonialism in North Africa is a poorly studied subject because of the misconception in studies by orientalists and modernists, which limiting civil societies' existence only to industrialised, Western societies since, the orientalists argued, North African societies were traditional ones. This misconception rests on a misunderstanding of the internal formation dynamics of social movements in those societies; for instance, in both Tripolitania and Benghazi, there were professional trade institutions, Sufi movements, and tribal alliances. Such formation dynamics were not frozen in time but continued their renewal as ideologies changed.

Thus, communities in the same area reacted differently to colonialism, and therefore the colonial results were not similar. The weakness of the Ottoman Turkish elite in Algeria and its isolation from Algerian society made that elite easily targeted by the French fleet. On the other hand, the cooperation of the ruling elite in Egypt, Tunisia, and Morocco helped the colonial powers in ruling those colonies. The North African colonies' reaction centred on alliances between the tribes or peasants and Sufi religious movements such as Abdulqader in western Algeria (1830-1847), Abdulkarim al-Khatibi in Morocco (1921-1932), and Sanusi-led resistance in Cyrenaica (1911-1932). Despite regional differences in North Africa, it is linked geographically and economically by social classes

and peasants' groups that devised different responses to capitalist economic pressures and colonialism. Studies focusing on states or cities in themselves make the colonial period difficult to understand. For instance, there was a continuity of the role of religion and tribal collective relations until the end of the twentieth century, and continuing tribal collective economic relations such as land-share in Libya and Morocco despite it disappearing in Algeria and Tunisia, because these societies were merged in the capitalist economy and the tribal members became workers and immigrants in the French capitalist economy.

The continuation of underdevelopment in former colonies is a symptom of the failure of forming modern state institutions, such as deliberative democratic institutions that guarantee political justice in a way whereby everyone has equal access to political power. Plans and programmes presented to former colonies were formulated by policymakers who overlooked the need to first develop democratic institutions, before any attempt at industrialisation. In other words, those policies did not suit the needs of societies emerging from decades of colonial rule. The absence of capital, the lack of technical skills, and the weakness of the knowledge base of the working classes stunted the growth of industry. In addition, the post-colonial emerging social classes in the former colonies were a fragile formation, unable to affect positive political and social change, but necessary for economic development, leaving those proto-states to rely on exporting either cash crops or mineral raw materials and importing manufactured goods from the former colonials; essentially the same economic paradigm prevailing under colonialism. Thus, as modernisation theory proved a failure, some former colonies abandoned solutions suggested by the West, as was the case with former colonies that have a

Moslem majority. In North Africa, the transformation from religious to secular society as a basis of modernisation became illusory, as the modern Islamic political movements drew ever-increasing supporters who recognised any liberal voices as foreign agents or instigators of tyranny. The predominant trend is that neither the Islamists nor the Liberals recognised political compromise as viable; therefore, religion and tribe, one hundred years later, still play a major role in Libyan society and politics; at times subsiding due to economic self-interest but continuing because of the resistance's alliance against the Italians between religious and tribal leaders.

There are many drawbacks to social theories, such modernism, and traditional Marxism that can be used to analyse the colonial period. Despite the modernists' development programmes, there is a continuation of non-capitalism relations, economic dependency, and political instability. This failure in understanding the nature of social change in Libya and the region is due to neglecting the role of the civil society and its vitality because those theories looked at the post-colonial society as a traditional one which had a potential to transform into a modern society adopting modern Western ideologies. This failure was displayed in not foreseeing the Iranian revolution by those analysts who regarded the Shah of Iran as a modernist model driving political development expected to replace the religious traditional thought of the Iranian society. The modernist system prohibited the existence of a vital civil society capable of creativity from the inside, even though it had a different culture than that of the West, thus, the West is the only model of modernity. This system refuses to consider the local state formation, such as the Sanusi's or the renewal of the Ottoman state itself after the political development of 1908. The Marxist theory neglected the internal factors in the underdeveloped countries

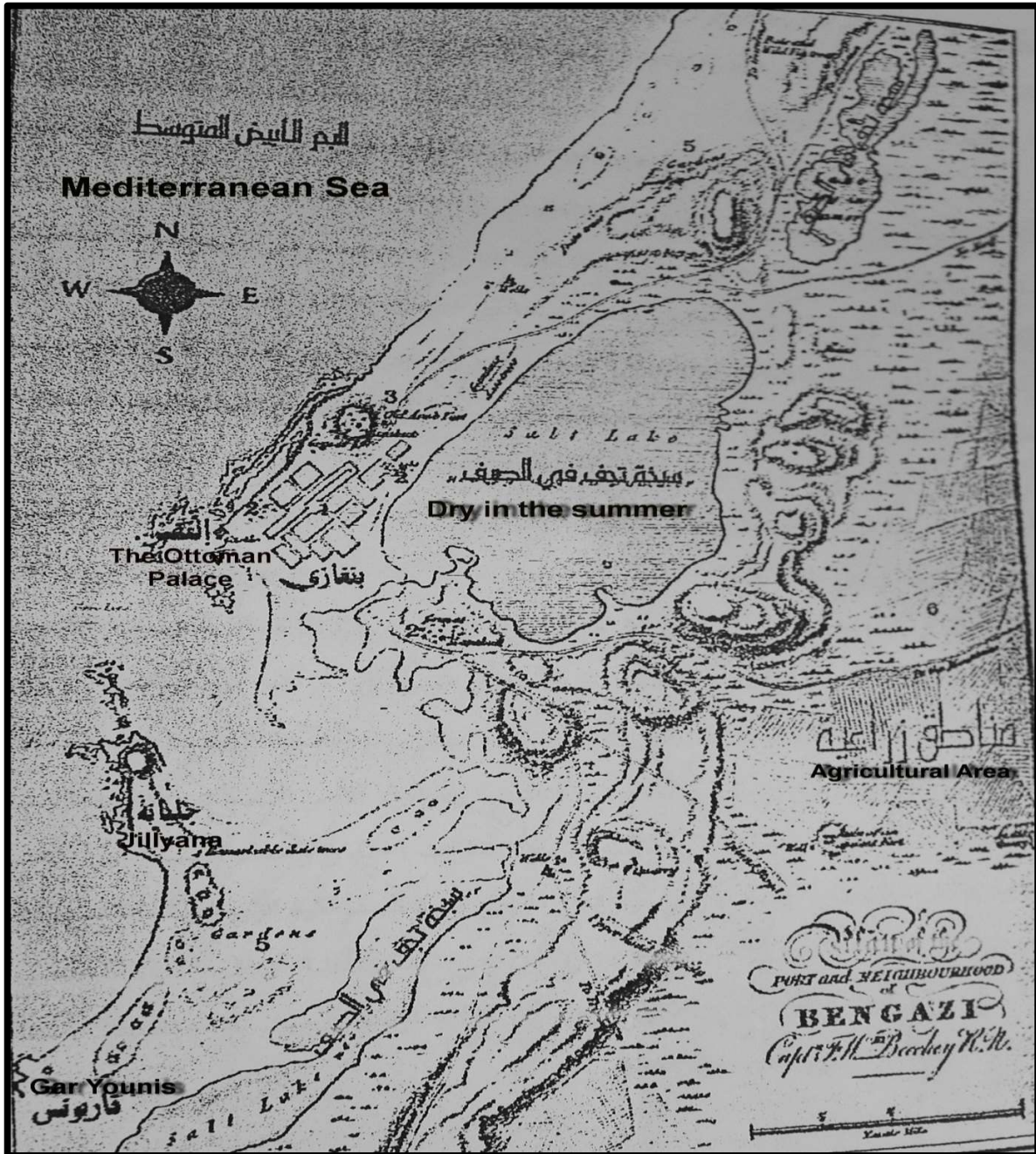
by describing it as a closed Asian model and thus the advent of capitalist imperialism will lead them to economic opening. Those theories have in common a neglect of internal factors at play in the different underdeveloped societies and its difference from one place to another. What is needed is a double criticism of both colonial period and the local heritage without portraying the history of the colonies as chronicle of victims or a history of heroes but as precise human history of tribes and peasants despite the particularity of details.

A focus on the importance of re-reading social economic history is needed, and precisely how the classes' in the colonial society tried to adapt or resist. This can be achieved by re-examining the colonial period in Libya and the reaction of ordinary segments of the cities or the countryside's population: the women and marginalized groups that has not received its portion of the analysis. This requires the study of the relations of production, classes' composition, popular culture, and regional economies. This programme may require the release of more Italian documents relating to its colonialization of Libya. In any case, those documents often reflect the colonial state point of view but could be augmented by the study of local sources of social history and popular cultural heritage such as epics and popular folklore. Suggestions for future research therefore relate to the period under study and should include the relationship between the urban inhabitants of the coastal towns with the Sanusi movement, and how the semi-nomadic and nomadic population related to their former land and way of life after settling in Benghazi. One drawback of this study was the absence of accurate population statistics within the study period. The only accurate numbers were gathered by the colonial government in 1936; prior to this date, Italian statistics were simply

estimates, for example as can be seen in the 1930 statistics. Another problem encountered by the researcher was the lack of anthropological studies related to women during the study period, and the lack of documents concerning the construction of colonial Benghazi.

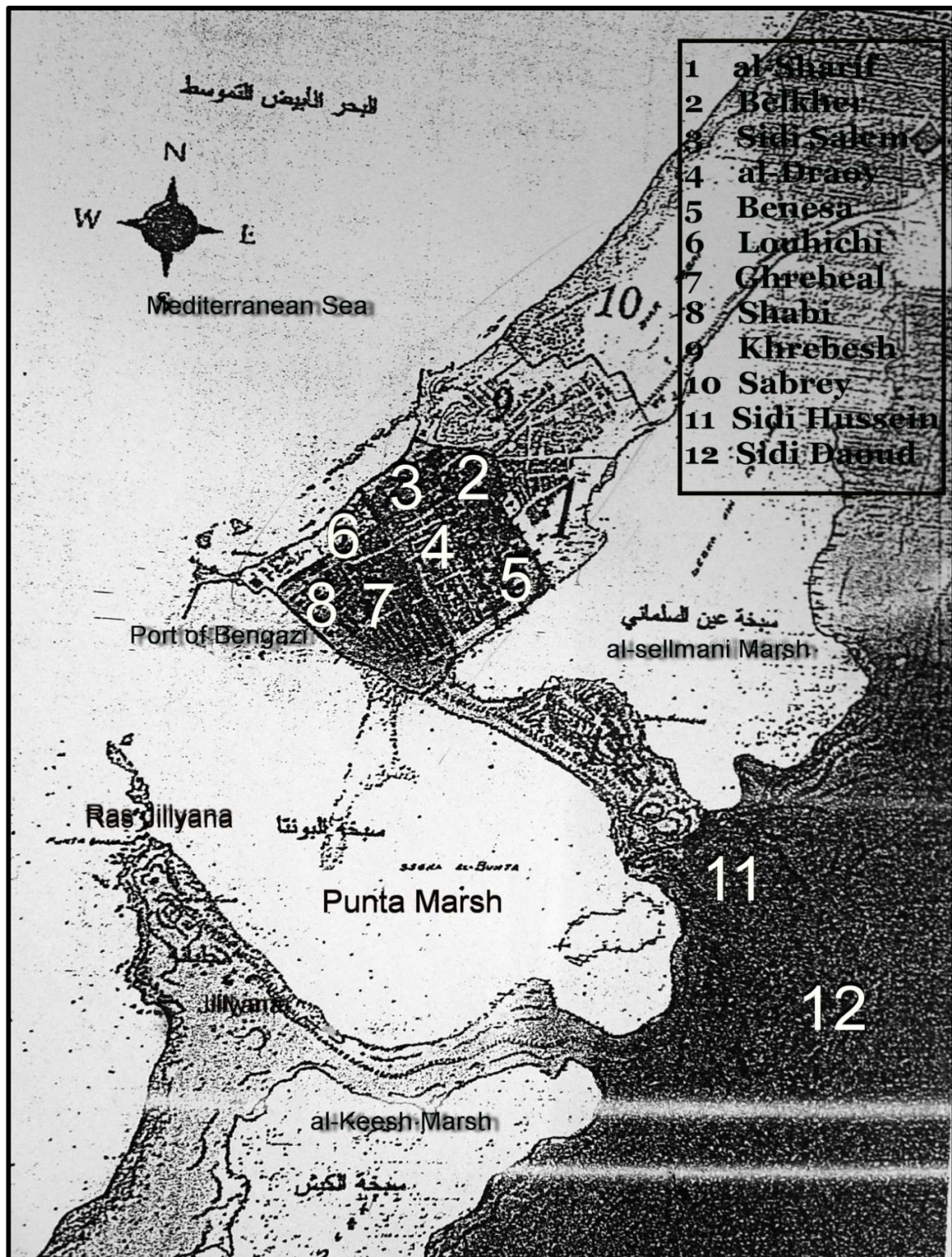
Appendices

Appendix 1: Map of Benghazi in 1821



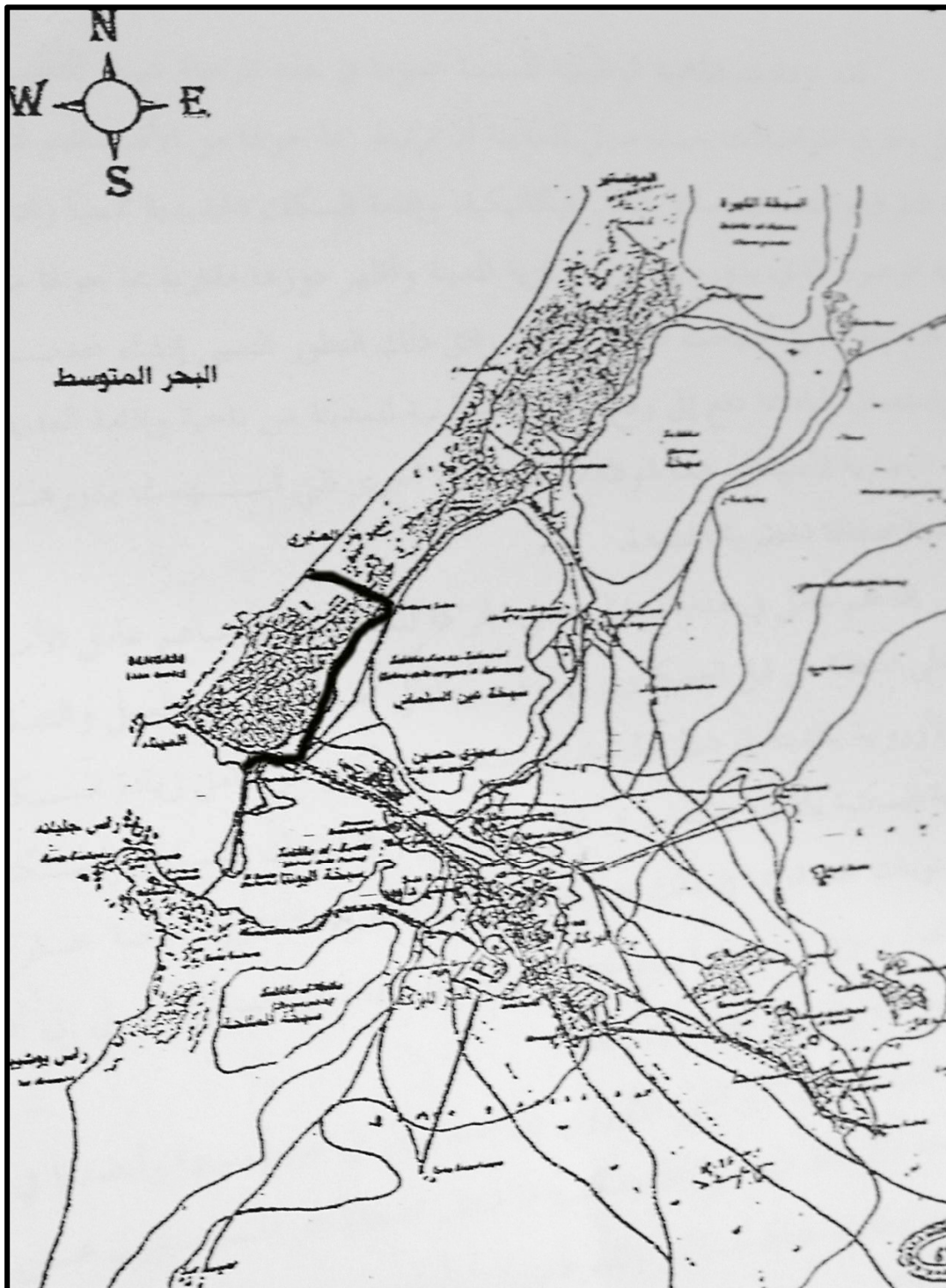
Source: F. W. and H. W. Beechey, *Proceedings of Expedition to Explore the Northern Coast of Africa from Tripoli Eastward*, (London, 1827)

Appendix 1: The Division of Benghazi into 12 Districts in 1865



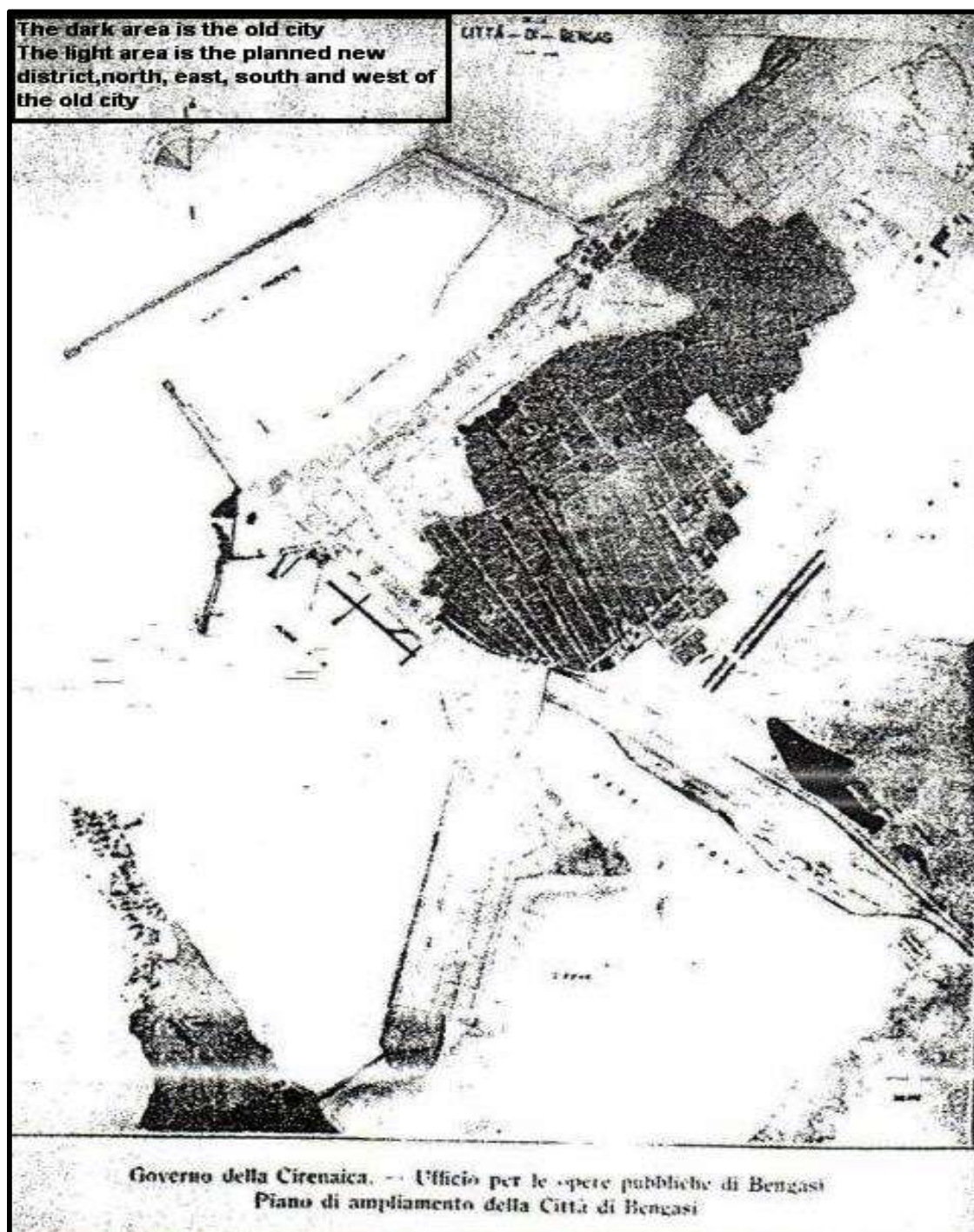
This map is based on A. Darz, *La Citta' di Bengasi. Urbanistica e Colonizzazione, Storia di un Secolo di Transformazioni*, Institute Unversitario di Architettura di Venezia, (Venezia, 1991)

Appendix 3: The Defensive Wall around Benghazi in 1913



Source: A. Darz, *La Città' di Bengasi: Urbanistica e Colonizzazione, Storia di un Secolo di Trasformazioni*, Institute Universitario di Architettura di Venezia, (Venezia, 1991)

Appendix 4: The 1914 Benghazi Development Plan



Source: R. Simonetti, *La Opera Pubbliche della Tripolitania e della Cirenaica*, (Roma, 1914)

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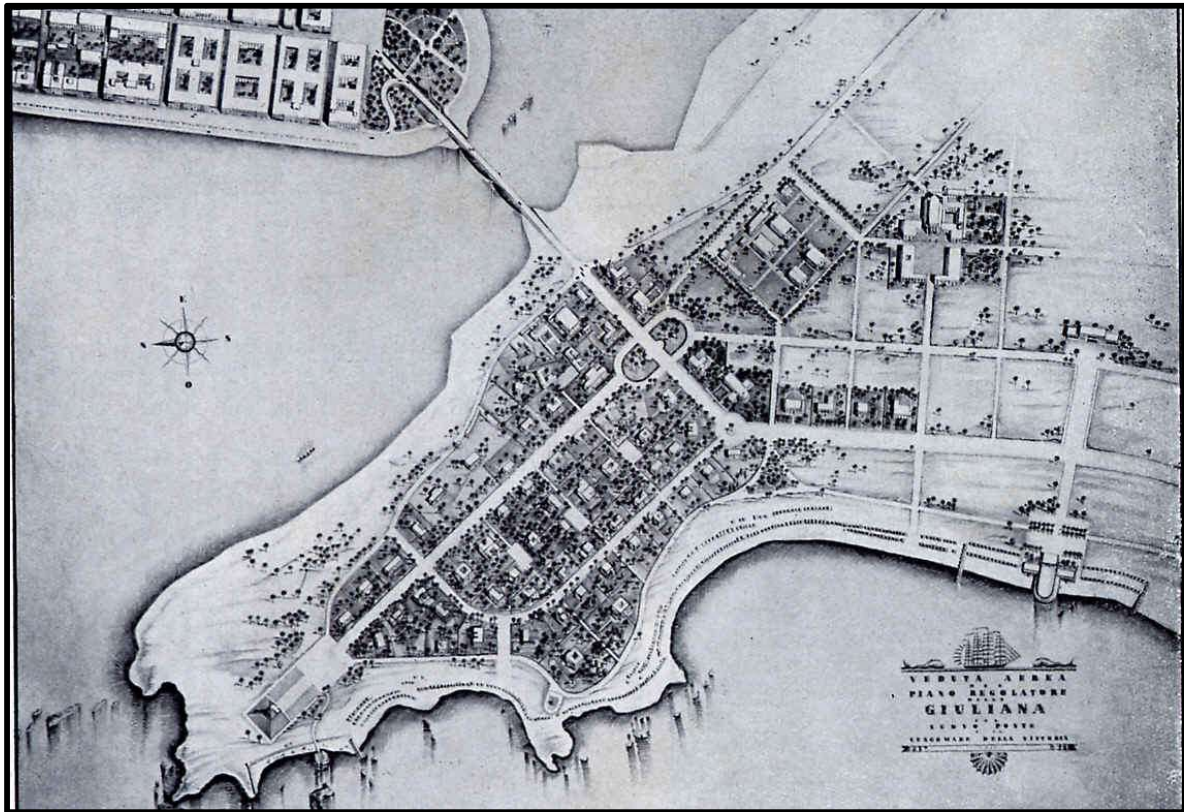
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NUOVO PIANO RI COLUORE DELLA CITTA DI GENOVA SECONDO L'ANNO 1700

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Appendix 6: The 1930 Benghazi Organizational Plan for the Jillyana Peninsula



Source: *Municipio Bengasi: Relazione sul Nuovo Piano Regoiato del Bengasi*, (Milano, 1930)

**Appendix 7: Map Showing the Development of Benghazi
per the 1914 and the 1930 Plans**



The dotted lines indicate uncompleted work on the 1930 plan.

Source: A. Darz, *La Città' di Bengasi: Urbanistica e Colonizzazione, Storia di un Secolo di Trasformazioni*, (Venezia, 1991)

Appendix8: List of prisoners in Benghazi's prison

No.	Prisoner's name	Type of punishment	Date of imprisonment
1	Adam Othman al-Brasei	30 years in prison (he was 30 years old)	12 January 1915
2	Suleiman Mansour Emnaina	Imprisonment & confiscation	12 January 1915
3	Mohamed Ben Ibrahim Emnaina	Imprisonment & confiscation	12 January 1915
4	Rajab Ali Yusuf al-Atrash	Imprisonment & confiscation	12 January 1915
5	al-Sanusi Ben Jaber al-Magboub	Imprisonment & confiscation	12 January 1915
6	Hassan Ben Mustafa Aboleefa	Imprisonment & confiscation	12 January 1915
7	Al Zaroog Ben Ageala al-Raeid	Imprisonment & confiscation	14 January 1915
8	Abobaker Faraj Alferjani al-Said	Imprisonment & confiscation	24 January 1915
9	Sasi Baker Faraj al-Ferjani al-Said	Imprisonment & confiscation	13 June 1915
10	Aboshnaff al-Bsaikri	Imprisonment & confiscation	13 June 1915
11	Muftah ben al-mahdi Zew	Imprisonment & confiscation	14 June 1915
12	Abdulla Makloof	Imprisonment & confiscation	14 June 1915
13	Abdukader Ahmed Othman	Imprisonment & confiscation	15 June 1915
14	Salem ben Mahdee Mussa	Imprisonment & confiscation	18 June 1915
15	Melad Muftah al-Zyani	Imprisonment & confiscation	19 June 1915
16	Mohamed al-Wakwak Ben Abdulla Shatwan	Imprisonment & confiscation	20 June, 1915

Source: MSBSMS, 1914-1915, no. 125, p. 4;1902-1915, no. 86, pp. 56-71

Appendix 9: List of Cyrenaica's internment camps (1929-1933)

Internment Camp Name	Estimated Number of internees
al-Brega	21,117
al-Magrun	20,123
Sulouq	13,050
al-Agaila	10,900
Ajdabia	10,000
al-Abiar	3,123
Derna	225 families
al-Noufilia	375 families
Sidi Khalifa (Benghazi)	130 families
Swani al-Teria(Benghazi)	100 families
al-Quarsha and al- Kuifia(Benghazi)	245 families

Source: DMT, al-Watha'q al-Italiya, Malef Libya, Khana 150-22, Malef 98, min Graziani illa Emilio De Bono, 2 May 1931, Tripoli

Appendix 10: Poverty certificate dated December 27, 1937 signed by the Mayor and Imam of Sabery district, Benghazi
Source: MSBSMS, no. 44, 1936-1939, p. 13

شهادة فقر

محلة الصابري

نحن امام مختار المحلة المذكورة اعلاه نشهد بان سالم الحبيب

ابن محمد و محمد بن عبد الله

البالغ من العمر ٥٥ سنة المولود في مصر الساكن بشارع الصابري

رقم ١٦ هو فقير الحال

وقد اعطيت له هذه الشهادة لاجل فقرها

بنغازي في ١٦ / ١٢ / ١٩٣٧ فاشيستي

امام مختار عبد الله

Traduzione

CERTIFICATO DI POVERTA,

Rione Sabry

I sottoscritti Imam e Mukhtar del suddetto rione certifica

che Salma figlia di Ramadan El Gialan

e di Kadija bent Abdalla di anni 55

nata in Misurata abitante in via di Sabry N.

È povera

Si rilascia il presente per attestare la sua povertà

Bengasi 27 / 12 1937 A XVI E. F.

F.to Mohammed El Mukhtar IMAM

F.to Abdulwahab Nazim MUKTAR

Le Interpreti M. K.

Visto per la legalizzazione delle firme

del Mukhtar Mohammed El Mukhtar

Bengasi, 28-12-1937

IL PODESTA

Appendix 11: A sample of ploughing expenses during the 1920 planting season

Ploughing Requirements	Franc	Centimes
Fodder for horses and supply for ploughs (4 pieces)	100	
Iron blades	47	
Tent equipment	11	20
Roaster	5	
Tent	28	
Cost of barley	120	
Plough sharpening	32	
Ropes and blades (ploughshares)	16	
Sum for cultivator Faraj al-Abed	40	
Expenses of cultivators with al-Taib	10	
Sieve	20	
Turmeric and pepper	5	
Sum in possession of the cook	60	
Garlic and pumpkin	10	


Source: Mahkamit Shamal Benghazi, *Sijil al-Mahkama al-Shar'ia*, 1917-1931, p. 12

Appendix 12: Cultivator Mohamed al-Tarhouni's account in 1921

The account	Franc
First earnest money	50
Provision	50
Wooden handles from the market	13
Tea, peppermint, and cigarettes bought by the cultivator	19
Sugar, tea, cigarettes, and oil bought by the cultivator	25

Source: Mahkamit Shamal Benghazi, *Sijil al-Mahkama al-Shar'ia*, 1917-1931, p. 13

Appendix 13a: The Italian page of a provisional real estate title for land owned by Fatima Bent Hag Mohamed Gerbu and Emine Bent Hag Mohamed Gerbu dated April 13, 1918

 REGNO D'ITALIA GOVERNO DELLA CIRENAICA UFFICIO FONDARIO di <i>Bengasi</i> TITOLO PROVVISORIO DI PROPRIETÀ Libro Fondiario della Proprietà libera — Accertamenti provvisori	
PARTE <i>rustica</i> VOLUME <i>2</i> FOGLIO <i>1</i>	
N. <i>14</i> d'iscrizione N. <i>436</i> del Registro Generale N. <i>1488</i> del fascicolo degli accertamenti provvisori	
UBICAZIONE, NATURA, DESTINAZIONE E CONSISTENZA DELL'IMMOBILE	
Città, paese o villaggio <i>Bengasi</i>	Quartiere, contrada <i>Arreibise</i>
Via, piazza, l'azione o località <i>Zacaria</i>	Località <i>Zacaria</i> N. <i>22</i> civico N. <i>22</i> di mappa
Natura e destinazione dell'immobile <i>Terreno sabbioso inido.</i>	
Consistenza dell'immobile e suoi accessori <i>delimitato dai termini ufficiali di circoscrizione R. G. L. 254-255-104 della superficie di ind. 4404.</i>	
Servizi prediali attivi e titoli di esso	
Superficie complessiva <i>ETNA</i> <i>ARE</i> <i>CENTIARE</i>	corrispondenti a <i>GIABIE</i> <i>SEDULE</i>
Confini <i>ind. - terreno Hag Mohamed (Bendi) Salala Salani e Bendi adibingeh</i> <i>est. - terreno Salala Salani</i> <i>sud. - terreno Bendi adibingeh e Bendi Salala Salani</i> <i>ovest. - terreno Bendi Salala Salani</i>	
Prezzo dell'immobile risultante da atto a titolo oneroso	
Generalità e domicilio della persona o delle persone a favore di cui è stato fatto l'accertamento provvisorio e loro quote rispettive <i>Fatima ed Emine bent Hag Mohamed Gerbu</i> <i>domiciliati a Bengasi</i> <i>- a quote uguali -</i>	
Titoli e documenti che servono di base per l'accertamento provvisorio e l'iscrizione nel LIBRO FONDARIO degli accertamenti provvisori	Natura e data del titolo e dei documenti che servono di base per l'accertamento provvisorio <i>Chiamata dei capi d'azione in data 10 agosto 1916 e atti di suddivisione</i>
Natura e data del titolo che dette luogo a nuova iscrizione in caso di precedente iscrizione nel LIBRO FONDARIO	
N. <i>14</i> di precedente iscrizione nel Libro degli accertamenti provvisori. N. <i>436</i> del precedente fascicolo degli accertamenti provvisori. N. <i>1488</i> del titolo che venne sostituito col presente.	
Oggi <i>13 Aprile 1918</i> fatta l'iscrizione dell'immobile suddescritto nel foglio sopraindicato del LIBRO FONDARIO degli accertamenti provvisori. IL CAPO DELL'UFFICIO FONDARIO <i>Mohamed</i>	

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Appendix 14: Measurements and weights used in Libya during the Ottoman period and their metric equivalent

Measurements	Weights
Textile measurements: Al-Hindaza = 68 cm Al-Derah = 49 cm	Standard Market Weights: Quintal (50 Oka) = 64.1025 kg Oka = 1.28205 kg Ounce ($1/20$ of Oka) = 40.064 g
Land measurements: al-Gadem (Foot) = 30 cm. al-Khatwa (Step) = 1 metre. al-Gamah (Fathom) = 1.60 metres	Ostrich feathers, Ivory, and leather weights: Quintal = 40 aka = 5.282 kg Oka = 1.38205 kg Rotl (pound) = 16 ounces = 512.816 g
Cereal measurements: al-Mayzoura = 19.8 litres al-Sa'ie (6 al-Mayzoura) = 118.8 litres	Gold, silver, perfume, and silk weights: Rotl (pound) = 16 ounces = 490.7968 g Ounce = 30.6748 g Dirham = $1/10$ of ounce = 16 kharobah =

Source: Governo della Cirenaica, *Gazetta Ufficiale*, VIII (Benghazi, Nov. 1929)

Appendix 15: Map of Benghazi's Main Markets (*suqs*) during the Ottoman period



Map by the researcher based on Benghazi's Municipality's map

**Appendix 16a: Inventory of Umran Ben Mohamed Amer's
grocery shop in Benesa district**

Products	kg	g	Fran	C.	Fran	C.
			Price per		Total	
Cans of oil	58		5		290	
420 tea glasses			3		105	
Glass light lamps					98	
Boxes of salt (39)	25				9	
Cans of tomato paste 500 g			1	40	128	
Cans of evaporated milk (30)			1	30	39	
Cans of Shereyo tomato				60	11	
12 of American glasses					14	
Cans of tomatoes (330)	20		1	55	181	
Cans of sardines (38)				70	64	
Boxes of soap (51)		25		80	40	
Boxes of soap (60)		10		40	24	
Benzoic resin		90			35	
Castor oil		50			10	
Shaker (candy)	1	50	11		16	
An ounce of cumin (3)			9		27	
Canes of candy (30)		25			45	
Steel wool (5)			2	50	10	
Boxes of twine thread (5)			2		10	
Boxes of white thread (8.5)			2		34	
Boxes of braided thread (1.5)			7		10	50
Ounce of mint			11	50	269	10
Shoe laces			9		9	
Sewing threads x12			4		42	
One dozen mirrors (3)			8		24	
Candy	12		6		72	
Dozen American glasses			14		14	
White socks (27)			1		27	
Boxes of thread reels (5)			7		35	
Watee soap	13		3	30	452	10
Al Arneb tea	1		22		22	
Black tea	2		16		32	
Al Sinza tea (sold by weight)	8		22		160	
Turmeric	35		5		175	

Source: Mahkamit Shamal Benghazi, *Sijil al-Mahkama al-Shar'ia*, 1936-1956, no. 55, pp. 31, 32

**Appendix 16b: Inventory of 'Umran Ben Mohamed 'Amer's
grocery shop in Benesa district**

Products	kg	g	Fran	C.	Fran	C.
			Price per		Total	
Red pepper (14 ounces)			9		133	35
Peanut oil	12		6	50	812	50
Olive oil	14		9	50	1358	50
Honey (20 ounces)			5	50	111	50
Sugar (pebbles)	73		3	80	277	40
Beans	40		2	60	104	
White almonds	14		5		70	
Red almonds	18		4	50	81	
Coffee	6		10		60	
Fenugreek	10		1	40	14	
Tea			26		1419	
Clarified butter (74.83			14	50	1085	
Rice	11		1	60	179	
Sugar	54		3	75	2055	
Cocoa	10		4	40	44	
Chickpea	34		1	60	54	
Soap-free caustic soda	13		6		792	
Canes	36		1	40	50	
Case of tomato paste					135	
Green tea (25 ounces)			20		500	
Black tea (8 ounces)			20		175	
Denk Kings Tea (box)					383	
Al Arneb tea (11 boxes)			108		1188	

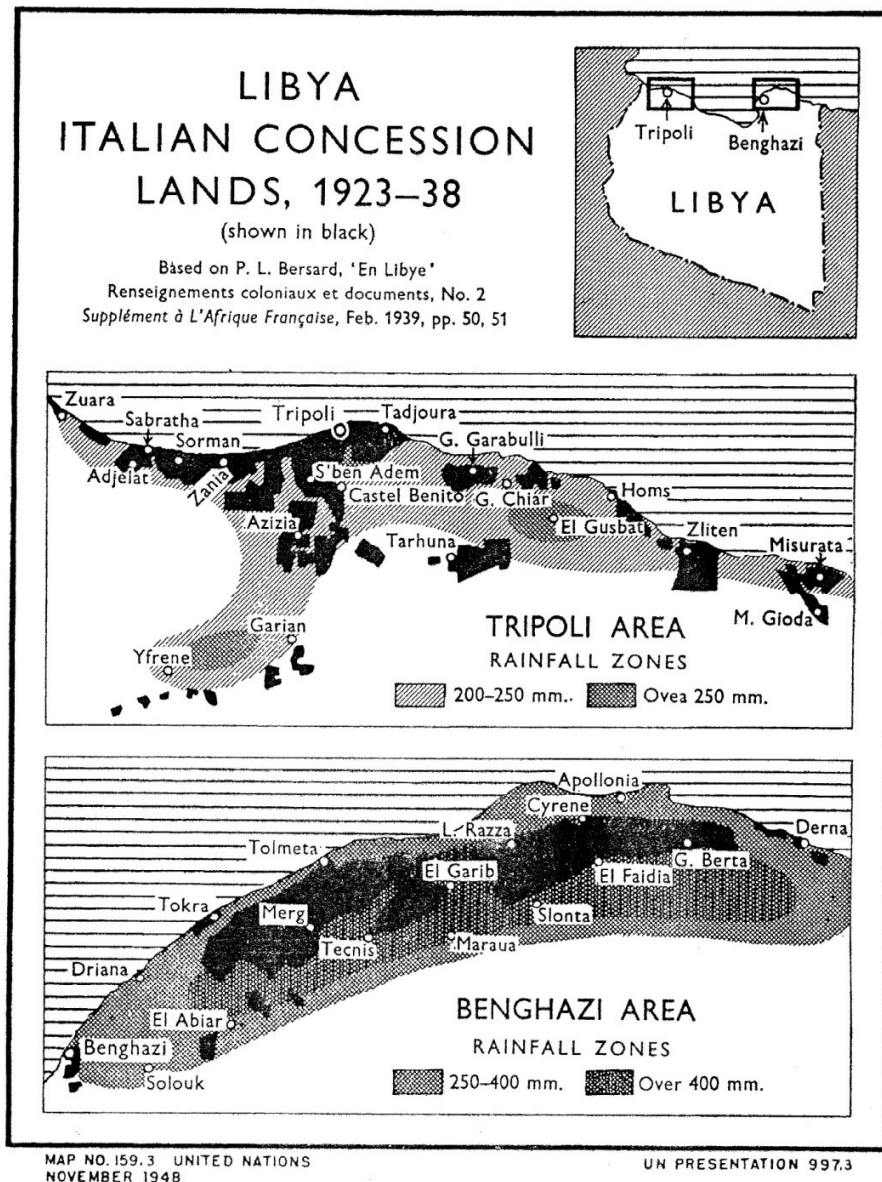
Source: Mahkamit Shamal Benghazi, *Sijil al-Mahkama al-Shar'ia*, 1936-1956, no. 55, pp. 31, 32

**Appendix 17: Inventory of textile merchant
Ismail Ben Saleh al-Misteri**

Type of product	No.	Franc
Piece of Shertle (1)	6	900
Piece of Mahmodi (2)	2	280
Piece of Pullman (3)	6	700
Reda (4)	34	600
Muthqal Reda (5)		600
Scarves (dozen)	20	1000
Zafear (6)		1000
Gauze		200
Shamlah (7)	5	100
Dook (8)		500
Small aridas	16	240
Qitah (9)		500
Shamha (10), caps, and scarves		375
Benzoic		400
Soap		50
Arida of gauze	10	200
Takaka (11)		40
Thread		250

Source: Mahkamit Shamal Benghazi, *Sijil al-Mahkama al-Shar'ia*, 1921-1925, no. 92, p. 175

Appendix 18: Italian Farming Settlements in Libya 1923-1938



Source: Chia-Lin Pan, 'The Population of Libya', *Population Studies*, Vol. 3, No. 1, (Oxfordshire, June 1949)

Appendix 19: State of Cyrenaica Muslim Public Schools, School Year 1931-1932

School Type	Elementary	Specialised	Total
Number of Classes	52	20	72
Number of Students	1,434	365	1,799
Males	1,434	77	1,511
Females	-	288	288
Libyans	1,434	235	1,669
Italians	-	124	124
Others	-	6	6
Muslims	1,434	212	1,646
Christians	-	124	124
Jewish	-	29	29

Source: Ministero della Colonie (MC), *Annuario delle scuole colonial Anno scolastico 1931-1932*, Angelo signor elle Editore (Roma, 1932)

Appendix 20: State of Cyrenaica Christian Public Schools, School Year 1931-1932

School Type	Kindergarten	Elementary	Middle	Total
Number of Classes	8	51	14	73
Number of Students	479	1,521	174	2,174
Males	231	788	111	1,130
Females	248	733	63	1,044
Libyans	50	317	14	381
Italians	428	1,180	157	1,765
Others	1	15	3	19
Muslims	4	23	2	29
Christians	426	1,138	158	1,722
Jewish	49	360	14	423

Source: Ministero della Colonie (MC), *Annuario delle scuole colonial Anno scolastico 1931-1932*, Angelo signor elle Editore (Roma, 1932)

Appendix 21: State of Cyrenaica Private Schools, School Year 1931-1932

School Type	Muslim	Christian	Jewish	Total
Number of Classes	15	17	8	40
Number of students	368	500	183	1,051
Males	368	228	-	779
Females	-	272	-	272
Libyans	368	177	183	728
Italians	-	295	-	295
Others	-	28	-	28
Muslims	368	9	-	377
Christians	-	480	-	480
Jewish	-	11	183	194

Source: Ministero della Colonie (MC), *Annuario delle scuole colonial Anno scolastico 1931-1932*, Angelo signor elle Editore (Roma, 1932)

Appendix 22: State of Cyrenaica Muslim Public Schools, School Year 1933-1934

School Type	Elementary	Specialized	Total
Number of Classes	76	20	96
Number of Students	3,055	346	3,401
Males	3,035	105	3,140
Females	20	241	261
Libyans	3,022	196	3,218
Italians	29	148	177
Others	4	2	6
Muslims	3,020	187	3,207
Christians	29	152	181
Jewish	6	7	13

Source: Ministero della Colonie (MC), *Annuario delle scuole colonial Anno scolastico 1933-1934*, Angelo signor elle Editore (Roma, 1934)

Appendix 23: State of Cyrenaica Christian Public Schools, School Year 1933-1934

School Type	Kindergarten	Elementary	Middle	Total
Number of Classes	14	53	15	82
Number of Students	440	1,783	257	2,480
Males	225	909	162	1,296
Females	215	874	95	1,184
Libyans	28	386	15	429
Italians	412	1,347	238	1,997
Others	1	50	4	55
Muslims	8	12	3	23
Christians	412	1,355	240	2,007
Jewish	20	416	14	430

Source: Ministero della Colonie (MC), *Annuario delle scuole colonial Anno scolastico 1933-1934*, Angelo signor elle Editore (Roma, 1934)

Appendix 24: State of Cyrenaica Private Schools, School Year 1933-1934

School Type	Muslim	Christian	Jewish	Total
Number of Classes	12	18	8	38
Number of students	335	578	143	1,056
Males	335	262	-	740
Females	-	316	-	316
Libyans	335	24	143	502
Italians	-	541	-	541
Others	-	13	-	13
Muslims	335	10	-	345
Christians	-	555	-	555
Jewish	-	13	143	156

Source: Ministero della Colonie (MC), *Annuario delle scuole colonial Anno scolastico 1933-1934*, Angelo signor elle Editore (Roma, 1934)

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- Court records no. 56, 1924-1925.
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