

Italian colonial policy in Libya and nationalists' reactions from 1911-1943 AD

Dr. Mohamed Seridj*

Hassiba Ben Bouali University, Chlef (Algeria), m.seridj@univ-
chlef.dz

Received: 06/11/2023; Accepted: 15/07/2024; Published: 22/12/2024

Abstract:

Libya, like other Maghreb countries, has known a colonial movement manifested in the Italian occupation of 1911. The latter - Italy- applied a fierce colonial policy to the Libyan patriots, including: the confiscation of land in order to encourage the phenomenon of settlement, it also worked to burn houses, vandalize mosques and houses of worship and study and turn them into stables, monopolized trade and industry, and established agricultural institutions to exploit land with the displacement of the population, especially during the reign of Mussolini .It also fought culture by working to eliminate Arabic and teach Italian and make it official in the country and recognized in official circles, and they naturalize some Libyans with Italian citizenship, monopolized important positions, prevented the establishment of clubs and associations, tried to restrict newspapers and censored authorship and publishing. In the face of all this policy, which the Libyans were not satisfied with, they had reactions represented in the organization of the resistance by the Senussi movement, which took on itself the principle of enemy jihad led by Mohamed Idris Senussi, Omar al-Mukhtar and others, but the lack of possibilities and the strength of Italian support made the resistance weaken and did not achieve its goals.

Keywords: Libya; Italy; settlement; Omar al-Mukhtar; Senussi.

* Corresponding author.

ملخص:

عرفت ليبيا كغيرها من الدول المغاربية حركة استعمارية تجلت في الاحتلال الإيطالي عام 1911م، هذه الأخيرة. إيطاليا. طبقت سياسة استعمارية شرسة على الوطنيين الليبيين منها: مصادرة الأراضي قصد تشجيع ظاهرة الاستيطان، كما عملت على حرق المنازل وتخریب المساجد ودور العبادة والدراسة وتحويلها إلى إسطبلات واحتكرت التجارة والصناعة وأسست المؤسسات الزراعية لاستغلال الأراضي مع تهجير السكان خاصة في عهد موسوليني، وأيضا حاربت الثقافية تمثلت إذ عملت على القضاء على اللغة العربية وتعليم اللغة الإيطالية وجعلها الرسمية في البلاد والمعترف بها في الدوائر الرسمية وجنسوا بعض الليبيين بالجنسية الإيطالية واحتكروا المناصب المهمة ومنعوا تأسيس النوادي والجمعيات وحاولوا التضييق على الصحف وفرضوا رقابة على التأليف والنشر.

الكلمات المفتاحية: ليبيا، إيطاليا، الاستيطان، عمر المختار، الحركة السنوسية.

1. INTRODUCTION

By the beginning of the 20th century, Italy entered the arena of European colonial competition after achieving political unity. Libya⁽¹⁾ was one of the few Arab countries that had not yet entered the realm of colonial competition. It remained semi-independent under Ottoman rule due to the internal and external circumstances of the Ottoman state at that time. However, the Ottomans were unable to protect the Libyan people from the dangers of colonial competition, which eventually led to Libya becoming a victim of Italian colonialism in 1911. From that point on, until the mid-World War II period, the Libyan people suffered the hardships of Italian colonial policies, including land confiscation, forced displacement, oppression, killing, and marginalization, among others. Despite the initial Italian defeat in the early part of 1943 and the Libyan people's hopes for independence, they encountered another

(1) - The term "Libya" was applied by the ancient Greeks to all of North Africa, and the Italians borrowed it and applied it to the regions of Tripolitania of the West, Cyrenaica, and Fezzan. These three regions were included in an administrative unit since the sixteenth century after the control of the Ottoman Empire, and it was called the Tripolitania of the West: see: Lutsky. , Vladimir Boriovic, the Modern History of the Arab Countries, Dar Al-Taquadum, Moscow, 1971, p. 364.

European influence, specifically French and British, which extended the period of foreign control until 1952. This is when the Libyans breathed a sigh of relief and entered the ranks of independent nations.

To understand the dynamics of Italian colonialism and foreign intervention in Libya from 1911 to 1952, we need to explore a series of questions and shed the light on Libya's status under European control: What was the Italy's policy in Libya from 1911 to 1939? How did the Libyan people react to the Italian colonialism? What were the results of the struggle between the Axis and the Allies for the future of the Libyan people from 1939 to 1943?

2. The Arrival of the Ottomans in Libya:

Before the Ottoman arrival, Tripoli was briefly under the rule of the Hafsids, who governed it from Tunisia through a governor appointed by them. However, the Hafsids' rule weakened towards the end of their dynasty, and Tripoli fell under the influence of various local tribes. Chaos and uprisings became common, and fortresses and walls were neglected. The Spaniards seized the opportunity and entered Tripoli after a long struggle with its inhabitants in 1510. Their rule was confined within the city's walls, and continued until 1530, when they ceded it in favor of the Knights of Saint John, who ruled tyrannically out of their hatred for Islam and Muslims ⁽¹⁾.

As for the region of "Barqa⁽²⁾," it was mostly linked to Egypt throughout its history. However, this subordination was not always complete due to the frequent tribal uprisings in the eastern region and the vast desert expanse. Actual power often rested in the hands of tribal leaders. After the Ottomans annexed Egypt, they also incorporated Barqah into their dominion⁽³⁾.

(1) - Naima Abdel Salam Abu Shaqour and others, *Modern and Contemporary History of Libya*, previous reference, p. 20.

(2)- Cyrenaica refers to the area located between the Salloum Aqaba in the east and the borders of Tripoli in the west in a place called Al-Muqtaa. See: Al-Tahir Ahmed Al-Zawi, *Mu'jam Al-Buldan*, 1st edition, Al-Nour Library, Tripoli, 1968, p. 56.

(3) - Naima Abdel Salam Abu Shaqur and others, previous reference, p. 20.

As for the region of "Fuzzan," it benefited from its distance from the ambitions of opportunists due to its desert isolation. It enjoyed the rule of tribal leaders, and one of the most prominent ruling families was the "Al-Muntasir bin Mohammad" dynasty. His descendants continued to rule the "Fuzzan" region even after the Ottomans annexed Libya. This highlights that the country did not have a unified government. The Knights of Saint John committed injustices against the people of Tripoli, leading them to seek help from the Ottoman Sultan "Suleiman the Magnificent." He promptly sent an Ottoman force led by "Murad Agha." The latter militarily approached Tripoli and established it as a base for attacking the city, where the Knights of Saint John had taken refuge. Despite multiple attempts to enter the city, he failed and requested assistance from the Ottoman Sultan. The Sultan sent a fleet led by "Sinan Pasha" and his assistant "Darghout Pasha," who had been besieging the island of Malta. They directed their massive naval fleet to Tripoli, and after a prolonged siege, the Knights of Saint John⁽¹⁾ were forced to surrender the city in August 1551. "Sinan Pasha" left the city after confirming Ottoman rule, while "Murad Agha" became the governor of Tripoli. From there, they extended their rule over the rest of Libya, even if the matter was not stable for them on many occasions, as in the Fezzan region⁽²⁾.

3. Italian Unification and Its Prelude to the Occupation of Libya:

After that, it began to regain its position in light of the growing industrial revolution. Italy began to seek, like all European countries, to find areas of influence for itself, and Libya was among its strategic interests. They even called it the Italian Fourth Coast⁽³⁾. Perhaps it is useful to mention here that Italy's interest was focused in the first place. Tunisia first, then Tripoli of the West (i.e. Libya) secondly, given that Tunisia is close to it, in addition to the existence of important economic

(1) - Naima Abdel Salam Abu Shaqur and others, previous reference, p. 20

(2) - Ibid., p. 21.

(3) - Same, p. 52.

and political relations since ancient times between Carthage and Rome, but the French occupation of Tunisia in 1881 prevented this from being achieved, and the closest thing remained Libya⁽¹⁾. It began working hard to reach it, preparing its military invasion with economic, social, and cultural planning.

4.The Libyan resistance movement against Italian colonialism:

The leader of the Sanusi movement⁽²⁾, Ahmed Al-Sharif Al-Senussi⁽³⁾, took the initiative to declare jihad, and sent leaflets to all corners and asked them to heed the call, and in Barqa ⁽⁴⁾.

The Senussi prepared for jihad and engaged in battles in which the Senussi were victorious over the Italians, who numbered 36 thousand infantry and six thousand three hundred cavalry, and their soldiers - that is, the Senussi - amounted to four thousand and two

(1) - Raafat Ghoneimi Al-Sheikh, Contemporary History of the Arabs, Ain for Human and Social Studies and Research, 1996, p. 114.

(2) - The Sanusi movement is a religious call established by Muhammad bin Ali al-Senussi, who was a Jazaran by birth. He called for a return to true Islam, as it was in his first era, and people quickly joined around him, believing in his call. He studied in Fez. One of its characteristics is that it called on people to study. The Qur'an and the Sunnah. A group of men devoted themselves to preaching and working to spread it across the country. They prepared themselves to defend the country and fight for the sake of God. Sheikh al-Senussi made Barqa in Zawiyah al-Bayda a center for his preaching. Then he moved to Jaaboub, then it spread to Tripoli in During the reign of his son Muhammad al-Mahdi, he considers it to have turned to eliminating colonial injustice. It focused on military training to confront the enemy, and worked to undermine French influence as they attempted to penetrate into Africa. The Senussi were also in complete understanding with the Ottomans, and the Ottomans even encouraged the Zawiyas and granted the right to tax the Murids. In favor of Al-Senusiya, Mahmoud Al-Sayyid, History of the Maghreb State, (Libya, Tunisia, Algeria, Morocco, Mauritania), University Youth Foundation, Alexandria, 2010, pp. 61-63.

(3)- Ahmed Al-Sharif Al-Senussi was born in Al-Jaghbug in the year 1837 AD. He learned about the Zawiyat Al-Jaghbug from its sheikhs. He fought the Italians since their arrival, and after the failure of his attempts to defeat the British, he was forced to travel to Istanbul, from where he moved to Mecca, then to Medina, and there he died in the year 1351 AH - 1932 AD, and was buried in Al-Baqi'. See: Al-Tahir Ahmed Al-Zawi, Flags of Libya, 3rd edition, Dar Al-Madar Al-Islami, 2004, p. 9.

(4) - Barqa: It is called the area located between the Salloum Aqaba in the east and the borders of Tripoli in the west in a place called Al-Muqtaa. See: Al-Zawi Al-Tahir Ahmed, Dictionary of Libyan Countries, previous reference, p. 56.

hundred soldiers. Ahmed Al-Sharif assigned Al-Sayyid Omar Al-Mukhtar⁽¹⁾, the sheikh of Zawiyat Al-Qusour, to begin the attack. Defense against aggression⁽²⁾. The Ottoman Empire also kept officers to organize the resistance, most notably Nuri Bey or Anwar Pasha⁽³⁾, and appointed him as a military commander in Libya. It also assigned Jaafar Bey Al-Askari, one of the Iraqi officers, and assigned Nuri Bey to contact Mr. Ahmed Al-Sharif, at a time when he assigned Jaafar Al-Askari to contact the officers. The Egyptians who remained in Libya after the withdrawal of the Ottoman forces from there in 1912⁽⁴⁾.

Despite the bad Ottoman situation, its political confusion, and its leniency towards the Italians, its officers made a significant contribution to combating the Italians, and exposed Italy to great losses that put the Italian government in embarrassment before Parliament⁽⁵⁾.

4.1 Resistance in the Barqa Region:

After facing fierce resistance in most cities, the Italian

(1) - He is Omar bin Al-Mukhtar bin Omar bin Farhat, from the Ghaith family, from one of the branches of the Al-Munfa tribe in eastern Libya. His father was one of the most prominent men of Al-Munfa. Omar Al-Mukhtar was born in 1872 AD in Tobruk, and after the death of his father, he studied at the hands of the sheikhs of the Sufi zawiyas in Cyrenaica and Al-Jaghbug. He studied the Holy Qur'an and the Arabic language, mastered some skills and handicrafts such as carpentry, blacksmithing, construction, and agriculture, and since 1918 AD he became the first leader of the Libyan Jihad movement. See: Muhammad Mahmoud Ismail, Omar Al-Mukhtar: The Martyr of Islam and the Lion of the Desert, ed., Qur'an Library for Printing and Publishing, Cairo, ed., p. 07.

(2) - Mahmoud Al-Sayed, History of the Maghreb State, (Libya, Tunisia, Algeria, Morocco, Mauritania), University Youth Foundation, Alexandria, 2010, previous reference, pp. 66-67. - Mahmoud Al-Sayyid, History of Islamic Peoples, Alexandria, 2010, pp. 66-67.

(3) - Anwar Pasha: A Turkish politician and officer. He played an important role in the Turkish revolution against Sultan Abdul Hamid II. He has a Turanian nationalist tendency. He worked as an officer in the Libyan campaign against the Italians in 1911, and was later appointed Minister of War. He was sentenced to death. See: Abdul Wahab Al-Kilani, The Political Encyclopedia, vol. 2, ed., Arab Foundation for Studies and Publishing, Beirut, ed., p. 375.

(4) - Yahya Jalal and others, The Great Maghreb, the Contemporary Period, and the Liberation and Independence Movements, vol. 3, National Printing and Publishing House, Alexandria, Egypt, 1966, p. 846.

(5) - Mahmoud Ali Amer, previous reference, p. 200

government was compelled to issue a royal decree on September 19, 1912, dividing Libya into two provinces: Barqa and Tripolitania. Each of these provinces was to have a separate government under the supervision of a governor appointed by the Italian Ministry of Africa. The purpose of this division was to focus on eradicating the resistance in each province individually⁽¹⁾.

After the signing of the Treaty of Oshi in 1912, the state of Barqa witnessed a resistance led by Ahmed Al-Sharif Al-Senussi, who confirmed his rejection of it and declared jihad and called on fighters between 14 and 65 years of age to join the battlefields. Although the resistance suffered losses due to the lack of equal capabilities, it was determined to continue fighting. The number of volunteers increased⁽²⁾, and it moved to the Egyptian borders to secure itself well until the First world War broke out⁽³⁾. The Ottoman Empire's involvement in the war, along with the roles of the Triple Alliance (Germany, Italy, and Turkey), added to the suffering of the Libyans during a time when the world was divided. This drove the Libyans to adopt different stances than those in the Levant, primarily due to the influence of the Sanusi movement. The movement had spread inland in Barqa, reached the Kufra Oasis, and even extended into Sudanese territories⁽⁴⁾.

4.2 Resistance in the Tripolitania Region:

The struggle in Tripolitania continued, led by tribal leaders who resisted the advance of Italian forces and their terrorizing of the local population. Volunteers flocked to join the Ottoman camp, and the resistance in Tripolitania became more organized, especially when the Italians were preoccupied with World War I⁽⁵⁾. This prompted the

(1) - Muhammad Mustafa Al-Sharkasi, *Glimpses of the Economic Conditions in Libya During the Italian Era*, Arts Al-Rasam Publishing and Press Company Press, Tunisia, 1976, p. 46.

(2) - Muhammad Ali Dahesh, *Studies on National Movements and Unionist Trends in the Maghreb*, Publications of the Arab Writers Union, Damascus, 2004, pp. 98-99.

(3) - Nicolas Ziadeh, *Burqa*, Dar Al-Ilm Lil-Malayin, Beirut, 1950, p. 84.

(4) - Mahmoud Ali Amer, previous reference, p. 199.

(5) - *Ibid.*, p. 127.

Italians to recognize the Tripolitanian Republic in April 1919, which had been established in November 1918. In this republic, Suleiman Baruni, Ramadan Suwehli, Ahmed Al-Mareedi, and Abdel Nabi Bilkheir were selected as its leaders⁽¹⁾. However, tribal conflicts and the desire for leadership, as exemplified by Ramadan Al-Suwehli in Misrata and Abdel Nabi Bilkheir in Orfla⁽²⁾, pushed them to eventually acknowledge the authority of a single leader, namely Emir Idrees Al-Sanusi, in a meeting in Gharyan in 1923. They resolved to continue the struggle and resistance against the Italians, recognizing the need for religious leadership that was only found in the Sanusi movement. They resolved to pledge allegiance to Prince Senussi and pledged to unite under his banner⁽³⁾.

Italy attempted to force Sheikh Idrees Al-Sanusi to capitulate, but in the fall of 1922, they occupied Gharyan and intensified their campaigns against Tripolitania in early 1923, leading to the eventual occupation of the region by the end of the year. On March 6, they launched several attacks against the villages in Barqa. After a series of invasions, the Italians reclaimed all the Libyan cities and ended the agreements and treaties with the Libyans⁽⁴⁾.

4.3 Omar Mukhtar's Resistance 1923-1931:

With the change in Italy's government to the Fascist regime, Italy decided to assert control over Libyan territories to stabilize the situation. Previously, Italy had entered into agreements with the previous Italian government during and after World War I, which aimed to ease the pressure on the Barqawi people and establish the Republic of Tripolitania in 1918 to grant Libyans a chance for self-determination.

(1) - Raafat Ghoneimi Al-Sheikh, *The Contemporary History of the Arab Islamic Nation*, 1st edition, Dar Al-Thaqafa for Publishing and Distribution, Cairo, 1992, p. 118.

(2) - Raafat Ghoneimi Al-Sheikh, *The Development of Education in Libya in Modern Times*, Tripoli, 1972, p. 184.

(3) - Mahmoud Ali Amer, previous reference, p. 212.

(4) - Ahmed Mahmoud, *Omar Al-Mukhtar*, Issa Al-Babi Al-Halabi Press, Egypt, 1353 AH, pp. 21-22.

However, all of this was nullified when the Italian fascist ruler Poggiovanni declared the cancellation of all agreements with the Sanusi movement⁽¹⁾. This move opened the door for resistance against the Fascist Italian rule, and Libyans realized that resistance against the Italians had become a national duty. The most prominent leader of this resistance after 1923 was Sheikh Omar Mukhtar. So how did Omar Mukhtar's resistance begin, and what were the results?

After Sheikh Mohammed Idris Al-Senussi⁽²⁾ went to Egypt, leaving the field for resistance, Omar Mukhtar contacted him in March 1923 in Egypt to consult him on the matter⁽³⁾. They agreed to organize the resistance by forming camps, selecting competent leaders, and engaging in clashes with the Italians in 1924 and 1925 in the Green Mountain region. Omar Mukhtar gained notoriety through his guerrilla warfare tactics, aided by Libyan tribes in the eastern region, providing the resistance with men, equipment, and weapons⁽⁴⁾. He personally appointed the leaders of the warring factions, such as Hussein bin Miftah for the Baraasa and Darasa factions, Youssef Abu Rahil for the Msamri and Obeidat factions, and Abdulfattah and Abu Amr for the Hassiya and Obeidat factions⁽⁵⁾. While the Italians had achieved victories in various areas, including the Jaghbub Oasis in 1926⁽⁶⁾, the Libyan resistance had also achieved partial victories between Barqa and

(1) - Mahmoud Ali Amer, previous reference, p. 212.

(2) - Muhammad Idris Al-Senussi: He was born in Cyrenaica on March 12, 1890. He is from a Sanusi family from the lineage of Muhammad bin Ali Al-Senussi. He assumed the leadership of the Senussi in 1916, and was recognized by the Emir in 1920. Then he left Libya for Egypt, and had a major role in Egypt through his participation in He fought World War II on the side of the Allies, and Britain recognized him as Emir of the Cyrenaica region in 1949, and after the independence of Libya, he was appointed king in 1951. See: Abd al-Wahhab al-Kilani, *The Political Encyclopedia*, Part 2, previous reference, p. 115.

(3) - Muhammad Ali Al-Sallabi, *Omar Al-Mukhtar: His upbringing, deeds, and martyrdom*, Al-Maktabah Al-Asriyah, Beirut, Lebanon, p. 18.

(4) - Muhammad Fouad Shukri, *Sanusiyya, Religion and State*, former source, p. 293.

(5) - Nicholas Ziadeh, *Libya from Italian Colonialism to Independence*, Institute of Arab Studies, 1985, p. 71.

(6) - A small oasis located south of Tobruk, adjacent to the Egyptian border, surrounded by barren desert to the north. See: Taher Ahmed Zawi, *Mu'jam al-Buldan*, op. cit., p. 102.

Tripolitania for some time, most notably in the famous Rahbiya battle⁽¹⁾.

5. Italian Policy in Libya 1911-1939:

5.1 Italian Policy in Libya from 1911 to 1922:

Italian colonial policy in Libya did not significantly differ from other European colonial policies. After occupying Libya, Italy immediately pursued a settler colonial policy that included burning houses, destroying mosques and places of worship, and transforming them into stables for animals, similar to what France did in Algeria⁽²⁾. Italy monopolized trade and industry and established agricultural institutions to exploit Libyan lands, coupled with the displacement of the local population⁽³⁾.

However, the Italian colonial policy became harsher after World War I. Italy were exhausted by the war and facing internal economic, social, and political turmoil, witnessed the spread of socialist and communist ideas. This made Italy a theater of contradictions, which ultimately led to a more aggressive colonial policy in Libya. After World War I, Italy faced difficulties in implementing its policies and was obliged to negotiate with the Sanusi movement in Akramah near Tobruk at the beginning of 1917. This resulted in a truce in April of the same year. Subsequently, there were several meetings and negotiations between the two sides, from the Rejmah Agreement on October 25, 1920, To the Bou Mariam Agreement on November 11, 1921, where the Italy implicitly recognized the sovereignty of Barqa except for its cities, which remained under the control of the Sanusi leadership, led by Sheikh Mohammed Idris Al-Senussi⁽⁴⁾. In Tripolitania, on November 16, 1918, the formation of a government in Tripoli was declared, and

(1) - Muhammad Ali Al-Sallabi, previous reference, pp. 23-24.

(2) - Muhammad Abdullah Odeh, Ibrahim Yassin Al-Khatib, The New History of the Arabs, ed., Al-Ahlia Publishing and Distribution, Amman, 1989, p. 102.

(3) - Nicolas Ziadeh, Lectures on the History of Libya from the Italian Occupation to Independence, Dr., Institute of Higher Arab Studies, League of Arab States, 1958. Previous reference, p. 117.

(4) - Namir Taha Yassin, previous reference, 2010, p. 197.

Italy was forced to enter into negotiations with it in March 1919. The two sides reached an agreement known as the "Beni Adam" agreement on April 21, 1919, in which Italy recognized the Tripolitanian government. However, this agreement did not last long due to Italy's procrastination in implementing the fundamental law issued in 1919. To resolve the issue, the leaders of the national movement held a conference in Gharyan in November 1920, leading to a decision to form a government in Tripoli to resolve the dispute between Barqa and Tripolitania.

In 1921, two delegations representing both regions met in Al-Kufra and agreed on a comprehensive agreement. This agreement, known as the "Sirt Agreement," aimed to open a new chapter in the relations between Barqa and Tripolitania, including the unification of the country's leadership and the election of a leader approved by the people, which ultimately led to the nomination of Mohammed Idris as the leader of both regions⁽¹⁾.

5.2 Italian policy in Libya from 1922-1938:

"Benito Mussolini⁽²⁾," who founded the Fascist⁽³⁾ Party in 1919, quickly gained popularity across the country. This led the Italian king to appoint Mussolini as the head of the government in late 1922.

(1) - Ahmed Mahmoud, previous reference, pp. 15-20 and 96-100.

(2) - Benito Mussolini was born in 1883 AD from a humble family. He had a blacksmith father and a teacher mother. He practiced his studies until he took up the teaching profession. He traveled to Switzerland and worked there as a construction worker. He made several disturbances that resulted in him being imprisoned. After his release, he traveled to France to be expelled from it and return to Italy. He joined the army, then soon worked in journalism. He objected to Italy entering the war against Turkey in 1911 in Libya. The first step after his founding of a party beginning in 1919 was to form groups of members who hated extremist socialist and communist thought. See: Abdel Azim Ramadan, History of Europe and the World in Modern Times, vol. 3, Egyptian General Book Authority, Egypt, 1997, p. 75.

(3) - Fascism: A political term of Italian origin, meaning a bundle of bars as a symbol of unity and strength. It was named after the group that separated from the Italian Socialist Party after World War I, led by Mussolini, who advocated fascism, which is based on dictatorship or the absolute power of one party. See: Hayel Abdul Mawla, The Modern Encyclopedia, Political and Economic Terms, 1st edition, Al-Hamid Library House, Amman, 2012, p. 170.

Mussolini's government aimed to control the nation, eliminate chaos, restrict public freedoms, glorify the state, and enforce strict judgments⁽¹⁾. This decision came after Italy's hope of acquiring colonies was shattered, and the nation faced significant post-World War I economic, social, and political challenges.

Mussolini saw that the war in Libya must be resumed, it must be controlled permanently, and Italy's capabilities must be demonstrated to the European powers⁽²⁾. Accordingly, Italy relied on a fascist policy in Libya, which was as follows:

Settlement and land confiscation:

Italy worked on huge plans for displacement and resettlement, known as comprehensive reclamation. It mapped out all its programs and details in advance and prepared maps and drawings for hundreds of villages for the colonizers before they left the motherland⁽³⁾. In 1939, Mussolini issued a decision stipulating the annexation of Libya with its four states (Tripoli, Misrata, and Benghazi and Derna) to Italy⁽⁴⁾. It also worked on a settlement policy by displacing the local population and facilitating Italian immigration to this country. The first large group was brought to Libya, including 20,000 in 1938, and half of them entered Barqa and arrived. The number of Italians in Libya in 1939 was about 75,000 people⁽⁵⁾. Some other references mention the presence of more than 100,000 settlers⁽⁶⁾, and some define it at about 110,000 settlers. The plan followed was to bring 40,000 settlers as farmers in the Green Mountain over a period of ten years, but World War II prevented this

(1) - Helmy Mahrous Ismail, *Modern and Contemporary History of Africa*, vol. 1, 1st edition, University Youth Foundation, Alexandria, 2004, p. 284.

(2)- Bashir Al-Saadawi, *The Atrocities of Fascist Italian Colonialism in Tripoli and Cyrenaica* (Society for the Defense of Tripoli), Cyrenaica, pp. 25-26.

(3) - - Gamal Hamdan, *The Great Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya* (a study in political geography), Madbouly Library, Cairo, 1996, p. 59.

(4) - Salah Al-Akkad, *Contemporary Libya*, Modern Art Press, Cairo 1970, pp. 39-40.

(5) - Nicholas Ziadeh, *Lectures on the History of Libya*, previous source, p. 115.

(6) - Abdul Malik Tamimi, *Foreign Settlement in the Arab World*, The World of Knowledge, Kuwait, 1983, p. 56.

goal from being achieved⁽¹⁾.

It also monopolized the agricultural resources of raw materials to become a market for manufactured products and all the industrial capabilities and tourism movement so as to supply (the mother) Italy and established Italian agricultural institutions to exploit Libyan lands.⁽²⁾

The policy of oppression, arson and sabotage:

Italy was seeking to find colonies to which Italians would move to live a stable life, so Benito Mussolini issued a presidential decree on 01/09/1939 according to which Libya was annexed to the motherland, "Italy," and he appointed "Udolpho Graziani" as Commander-in-Chief of the Italian forces in Barqa , whom tried to eliminate the Libyan resistance with all brutality. He prevented the arrival of supplies from the country's population to the mujahideen and set up a barrier between Barqa and Egypt to prevent the arrival of supplies and aid from them. He also established a flying court whose members would travel by plane to try the mujahideen and citizens who were found to have helped the Libyan mujahideen. They were subjected to arbitrary and unjust sentences, and anyone who doubted their affairs was doomed to death. They also organized camps for the Sunnis who frequented the zawiyas in detention centers and placed a number of livestock with them without water. Epidemics spread and deaths increased⁽³⁾. It also resorted to burning houses, vandalizing mosques and turning them into stables for animals⁽⁴⁾, and establishing collective camps in various regions of Libya and barbed wire to suppress the revolutions and isolate Libyan citizens, in addition to setting fire to agricultural crops, placing poisons in drinking water, and imprisonment. Arrest, deportation and mass execution⁽⁵⁾.

(1)-Jamal Hamdan, previous reference, p. 60.

(2)- Muhammad Abdullah Odeh and Ibrahim Yassin, previous reference, p. 102.

(3)- Zahia Qaddoura, previous source, p. 440.

(4)- Muhammad Abdullah Odeh, Ibrahim Yassin Al-Khatib, previous reference, p.102.

(5) - Ahmed Ismail Rashid, previous reference, p. 53.

The policy of discrimination and ignorance:

The Italian language was considered the official language in the country and recognized in official circles. They granted some Libyans Italian citizenship, monopolized important positions, prevented the establishment of clubs and associations, tried to restrict newspapers, imposed censorship on writing and publishing⁽¹⁾, they worked to teach the Italian language, eliminate Arab and Islamic culture, give the Italian character to education, close all zawiyas, and confiscate their property. Schools were also closed after the primary stage⁽²⁾. and considering that the Libyan people were of Italian nationality, deprived of their right to hold civil positions, to vote, and to submit petitions and complaints to the Italian Parliament. They were even prevented from issuing newspapers⁽³⁾. They also had a racist policy towards Libyans by preventing them from going to Italian cafes and riding in cars driven by Italians, preventing the establishment of clubs and newspapers, and changing the names of streets and cities with Italian names⁽⁴⁾. In addition to that, they granted the Jews of Libya privileges. It resembled the privileges of the Italian settlers, all to create strife and division among the people of one people, regardless of belief. It brought this group closer to it and granted it political, economic, and religious rights. It even enjoyed self-rule and a system of its own⁽⁵⁾. In short, it wanted to liquidate the Arab element and to make Libya an Italian territory by the time⁽⁶⁾.

7. Conclusion:

The Libyan cause finally triumphed thanks to the combined efforts of loyal Libyans and peace-loving countries in the United Nations, and it gained its independence after forty years of occupation

(1) - Namir Taha Yassin, previous reference, p. 198.

(2) - Ahmed Ismail Rashid, previous reference, p. 53.

(3) - Ali Al-Muhafiz, The Position of France, Germany, and Italy on Arab Unity 1919-1945, Center for Arab Unity Studies, Beirut, Lebanon, 1985, p. 447.

(4) - Muhammad Abdullah Odeh and Ibrahim Yassin, previous reference, p. 102

(5) Ali Al-Muhafiz, previous reference, p. 448.

(6) - Zahia Qaddoura, previous source, p. 441.

during which it experienced the woes and bitterness of backwardness, oppression and other practices of humanity by the Italians in particular, especially after the fascists took control of the country. The country suffered from oppression, killing, displacement, arrest, and racism. with clear support for the settlement policy, and the accompanying displacement of the population, and the usurpation of lands, and the restrictions imposed on them by the French and the British during and after World War II. After Libya was the scene of hostilities against the Axis, hoping Of them in obtaining the independence that had previously been promised to them by the major powers, and the dangers of division that Libya was on the verge of becoming a victim of, but after the political efforts that Libyan politicians followed after World War II and their establishment of parties and associations that express The unity of the nation and inclusion under the banner of the Senussi Emirate ultimately crowned efforts with success in gaining.

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