

*Re-Centering Libya's History: Mediterranean Bulwark, Defender of Africa, or Bridge between Continents?**

Abstract: This paper discusses Libya's geo-historical identity from the Italian colonial period until the end of the Qaddafi regime. It specifically looks at characterizations of the country as Mediterranean or African in the different periods. By examining the historiographic discourse in Italian and Arabic as well as the political aesthetics and symbolisms connected with the colonial and the Qaddafi regimes, the article shows how varying characterizations were linked to geo-political agendas. Finally, it presents a third characterization: that of Libya as a connecting link between regions and continents, which has become prominent in more recent times.

Keywords: *Italian colonialism, Qaddafi regime, Mediterranean, Africa, historiography*

DURING A VISIT TO TRIPOLI IN 1926, Italian leader Benito Mussolini called Libya “the Mediterranean bulwark” of the Fascist empire.¹ More than five and a half decades later, at the opening ceremony of the 1982 African Cup of Nations (again in Tripoli), Libyan leader Muammar Qaddafi referred to his country not only as “the northern gateway to Africa,” but, beyond that, as “the defender of Africa.”² A third depiction has ascribed to Libya the function of

* This paper is based on parts of my dissertation; see Jakob Kraus, *Geschichte als Widerstand: Geschichtsschreibung und nation-building in Qaddāfi's Libyen* (Würzburg: Ergon, 2016), 257–412.

¹ Quoted from Pietro Silva, *Il Mediterraneo. Dall'unità di Roma all'Impero italiano* (Milan: Istituto per gli studi di politica internazionale, 1937), 491. Translations from Italian, Arabic, and French are by the author.

² Mu' ammar al-Qadhdhāfi, *Thawrat al-fātiḥ wa-Ifriqiyyā* (Tripoli: al-Markaz al-'ālamī li-dirāsāt wa-abḥāth al-Kitāb al-akhḍar, 1985), 95.

a bridge between continents.³ In this paper, I will discuss these three ideas of Libya's geographical and historical identity in their respective discursive and political contexts.

14

Mediterranean Libya

Colonial authors saw Libya almost exclusively as a Mediterranean country with strong geographical and historical ties to Italy.⁴ From the late 19th century up until the Second World War, Italian historians of the Mediterranean in general and Libya in particular stressed the predominance of their compatriots in the region, from the times of the ancient Roman *mare nostrum* to the medieval and early modern thalassocracies of Venice, Genoa, and other city-states that had broken the temporary North African preponderance:⁵ by the 11th century “the central Mediterranean, previously an Arab lake, was transformed into an Italian lake,” as Camillo Manfroni, the foremost naval historian of the colonial era put it.⁶ The subsequent trading post empires of the Italian merchant republics were presented as precursors to the

³ See also Africanus, “Geopolitica di Gheddafi: realismo travestito da stravaganza,” *Limes* 2 (1994).

⁴ For the sake of simplicity, I use the term “Libya” here for the territory of the modern nation-state throughout history (as do most of the authors I quote, in fact), although technically it applies to this territory only from 1934 on. For a geopolitical discussion of the colonial period see André Martel, *La Libye 1835-1990. Essai de géopolitique historique* (Paris: PUF, 1991), 84–113, 143–66.

⁵ See Olga Tamburini, “‘La via romana sepolta dal mare’: mito del *Mare nostrum* e ricerca di un’identità nazionale,” in *Mare nostrum. Percezione ottomana e mito mediterraneo in Italia all’alba del ’900* ed. Stefano Trinchese (Milan: Guerini, 2010); Dominique Valérian, “Lectures italiennes de l’expansion latine dans le Maghreb médiéval (première moitié du XX^e siècle),” in *Maghreb-Italie. Des passeurs médiévaux à l’orientalisme moderne (XIII^e - milieu XX^e siècle)*, ed. Benoît Grévin (Rome: École française de Rome, 2010).

⁶ Camillo Manfroni, *L’Italia nelle vicende marinare della Tripolitania* (Intra: Airoldi, 1935), 27. This work has also been translated into Arabic as *Itāliyā fī al-aḥdāth al-baḥriyya al-ṭarābulusiyya* (Tripoli: Markaz dirāsāt jihād al-lībiyyīn ḍidda al-ghazw al-iṭālī, 1988).

modern European expansion all over the world.⁷ As for Libya, it was, in Manfroni's eyes, Italy's first possession in North Africa—already at the time of the Norman King Roger II of Sicily around 1150: “Tripoli would be the first *Latin* (I could even say Italian, as the Normans were by then almost totally Italianized) colony on the African coast.”⁸

In the supposedly perennial clash of Christians and Muslims over the Mediterranean, Italian authors perceived often even the Frankish crusaders of the 12th and 13th centuries or the Spanish armadas vying for power with the Ottomans in the 16th century as depending almost entirely on the skill of “Italian” sailors.⁹ The last period acquired special importance, insofar as it witnessed four decades of European control over the Libyan coast, beginning with the landing of Spanish troops in 1510. For Italian colonialist writers, Tripoli under the rule of Spain (and then the Order of Saint John after 1530) was actually a dependency of Sicily!¹⁰

The Tripoli campaign [...] was, hence, not so much a consequence of the general movement that originated in Spain, but rather of the old but always renewed question of the security of Sicily [...]. The campaign was done, it is true, under the banner of Spain and the command of Spanish captains: but it was primarily the work of

⁷ See e.g. Camillo Manfroni, *I colonizzatori italiani durante il Medio Evo e il Rinascimento*, vol. II: *Dal secolo XIV al XVI - Con un'appendice sulle vicende delle colonie veneziane fino al secolo XVIII* (Rome: Libreria dello Stato, 1934), 212; Roberto S. Lopez, *Storia delle colonie genovesi nel Mediterraneo* (Genoa: Marietti, 1997), 40–59 (originally published in 1938); Silva, *Il Mediterraneo*, 133–39.

⁸ Camillo Manfroni, *I colonizzatori italiani*, vol. I: *Dal secolo XI al XIII*, 285.

⁹ See Camillo Manfroni, *Storia della marina italiana*, vol. I: *Dalle invasioni barbariche al trattato di Ninfèo (anni di C. 400–1261)* (Milan: Periodici Scientifici, 1970), 85–115, 159–65 (first published in 1899); Manfroni, *I colonizzatori vol. II*, 28–69, 110–42; Silva, *Il Mediterraneo*, 93–101, 128; Lopez, *Storia delle colonie genovesi*, 68–69.

¹⁰ See e.g. Giuseppe La Mantia, “La Sicilia ed il suo dominio nell’Africa settentrionale dal secolo XI al XVI,” *Archivio storico siciliano* 44 (1922), 215–28; Ettore Rossi, *Il dominio degli Spagnoli e dei Cavalieri di Malta a Tripoli (1510–1551). Con appendice di documenti dell’archivio dell’Ordine a Malta* (Intra: Airoldi, 1937), 21–33.

Italian, or more precisely Sicilian, sailors. The base of the operation was Syracuse; food, weapons, ammunition were collected in Sicily; the viceroy of Sicily was supervising the campaign's preparation.¹¹

Like this, in Manfroni's words, Tripoli became a "rampart" (*antemurale*) for Sicily¹²—just as the "Mediterranean bulwark" (*baluardo mediterraneo*) Libya guarded Sicily, the "center" of the Fascist empire, for Mussolini.¹³ Another author derived from history and geography a natural right for Italy's biggest island, that formed "almost a bridge between the two immense continents" of Europe and Africa, to expand towards the southern shores of the Mediterranean: "To Sicily thus appertained, by virtue of natural contiguity, the dominion over the North African regions, which the still numerous and constant emigration of Sicilians and Maltese to the opposite shores of Africa proves indisputably."¹⁴

It was only a small step from such historical analyses to the political advocacy of a renewed Italian empire, of which Libya would be the cornerstone. The prominent historian Gioacchino Volpe—originally a medievalist, he eventually ventured into contemporary history with works on the Fascist movement and the invasion of Libya in 1911-12—spoke explicitly about "collecting the Venetian and Genoese heritage" in the Mediterranean for modern Italy.¹⁵ In the large settlement campaigns of 1938-39 which brought tens of thousands of Italian colonists to Libya, Venice, Genoa, and Messina were, in fact, the main points of departure, while Venetians and Sicilians provided for the majority of agricultural settlers.¹⁶

¹¹ Manfroni, *L'Italia*, 59.

¹² Camillo Manfroni, *Storia della marina italiana*, vol. III: *Dalla caduta di Costantinopoli alla battaglia di Lepanto* (Milan: Periodici Scientifici, 1970), 290 (first published in 1897).

¹³ Silva, *Il Mediterraneo*, 490-91.

¹⁴ La Mantia, "La Sicilia," 233, 246-47.

¹⁵ Gioacchino Volpe, *Italia moderna*, vol. I: *1815-1898* (Florence: Sansoni, 1958), 66.

¹⁶ Federico Cresti, *Non desiderare la terra d'altri. La colonizzazione italiana in Libia* (Rome: Carocci, 2011), 179-214.

It is noteworthy that Mussolini put Sicily and Libya at the center of the Fascist empire, thereby focusing, regardless of actual geography, exclusively on the Mediterranean. Although the Italian dictator proclaimed the new “Roman” empire only following the conquest of Ethiopia in 1936,¹⁷ the Mediterranean dimension, particularly Libya, remained in many respects more important than Italian East Africa (*Africa orientale italiana*, AOI, consisting of Eritrea, Somalia, and Ethiopia) in the Fascist imperialist imaginary. Already in 1885 Foreign Minister Pasquale Stanislao Mancini had defended the occupation of Italy’s first colony at Massawa on the Red Sea as the basis for a strong position in the Mediterranean—the actual concern of Italian imperialists, for whom East Africa was a mere sideshow.¹⁸ Symbolically, colonial planners, administrators, and experts often highlighted the Mediterranean commonalities between Italy and Libya (whereas in the case of AOI alterity dominated the image): archeologists were excavating Roman remains in Libya at the same time that ancient buildings were being restored in Rome itself.¹⁹ Architects argued that structures in Libya formed part of the same Mediterranean artistic tradition prevalent in Italy, which ultimately derived from Roman models.²⁰ In contrast to the French Maghrib, Italians did not use the Arabic term *medina* to designate the walled Arab towns of Libya, but just called them “old town” (*città vecchia*) like in Italy, so familiar could they look to a Sicilian settler.²¹ Even the

¹⁷ See Angelo Del Boca, “L’Impero,” in *I luoghi della memoria. Simboli e miti dell’Italia unita* ed. Mario Isnenghi (Rome: Laterza, 1996); Emilio Gentile, “6 maggio 1936. L’Impero torna a Roma,” in *I giorni di Roma. Nove grandi storici raccontano nove giornate cruciali per la storia di Roma e del mondo*, ed. Andrea Carandini et al. (Rome: Laterza, 2007).

¹⁸ See Mia Fuller, *Moderns Abroad: Architecture, Cities and Italian Imperialism* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2010), 44.

¹⁹ See e.g. Pietro Romanelli, *Vestigia del passato (monumenti e scavi)* (Rome: Ministero delle Colonie, Ufficio studi e propaganda, 1930). In this overview of Italian colonial archeology only one sixth is devoted to the east African colonies, while the rest presents projects in Libya.

²⁰ See Carlo Emilio Rava, “Di un’architettura coloniale moderna - Parte prima,” *Domus* 4/5 (1931).

²¹ See Mia Fuller, “Preservation and Self-Absorption: Italian Colonisation and the Walled City of Tripoli, Libya,” *The Journal of North African Studies*

conflictual tribal society described by ethnographers was sometimes likened to the medieval and early modern Italian city-states with their permanent feuds between competing families.²²

18

The shared Roman past, which extensive archeological activities made visible for everyone, helped underline the notion of a renewed Mediterranean empire under Italian domination. As the geographer Paolo Vinassa de Regny put it shortly after the war of 1911-12 in a book on Libya: “The dams, the cisterns, the wells, the forts, the castles, the cities, the towns, the fortified farmsteads, the military limes, all that demonstrates the importance and success of the Latin colonization. And that we must and can remake.”²³ Already a legitimation for the original conquest, this idea of a continuity between the Roman Empire and Italian colonialism became even more pronounced during the Fascist period:²⁴ “Italians’ colonization of Libya was justified as a return; they were merely taking back what was already theirs. [...] Thus Libya was not only seen as a territorial extension of Italy—as it would become officially in 1939—but also as an extension back into Italy’s own past.”²⁵ Especially during the tenure of Italo Balbo, the first governor of the united colony of Libya from 1934 to 1940, the Roman Empire,

5/4 (2000), 134–36.

²² See François Dumasy, “L’autre et soi même. Les usages du passé médiéval dans la Libye coloniale au miroir de la construction nationale italienne,” in *Maghreb-Italie. Des passeurs médiévaux à l’orientalisme moderne (XIII^e - milieu XX^e siècle)*, ed. Benoît Grévin (Rome: École française de Rome, 2010); Brian L. McLaren, *Architecture and Tourism in Italian Colonial Libya: An Ambivalent Modernism* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2006), 105–56; Fuller, *Moderns Abroad*, 50–54, 115–20.

²³ Paolo Vinassa de Regny, *Libya Italica. Terreni ed acque, vita e colture della nuova colonia* (Milan: Hoepli, 1913), 197.

²⁴ See Stefan Altekamp, *Rückkehr nach Afrika. Italienische Kolonialarchäologie in Libyen 1911-1943* (Cologne: Böhlau, 2000); Massimiliano Munzi, *L’epica del ritorno. Archeologia e politica nella Tripolitania italiana* (Rome: L’Erma di Bretschneider, 2001); David J. Mattingly, *Imperialism, Power, and Identity: Experiencing the Roman Empire* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2011), 43–73. The most important work on Libya’s Roman history from the colonial period is Antonio Merighi, *La Tripolitania antica. Dalle origini alla invasione degli arabi* (Verbania: Airoldi, 1940).

²⁵ Fuller, *Moderns Abroad*, 49.

understood as a harmonious Mediterranean community, served as a propagandistic model for the supposedly benevolent and philo-Islamic colonial administration.²⁶ During this period, archeologists restored the Roman ruins of Leptis Magna, the home of Septimius Severus, and erected a statue to this first Roman emperor of African origin in Tripoli's city center.²⁷ When he visited Libya in 1937, Mussolini not only went to see Leptis and other excavation sites, but also proclaimed himself the "protector of Islam," assuming somehow the garb of a new ecumenical Mediterranean emperor.²⁸

But the suggestive imagery of the medieval seafaring states was not lost, either, on Italian colonialists in their search for historical legitimacy and symbolism. Starting in the 1920s with the governorship of Giuseppe Volpi—a native Venetian, who liked to present himself as continuing the Mediterranean vocation of the old republic of the doges²⁹—Tripoli saw a period of large-scale urban remodeling.³⁰ Many of the new buildings constructed from now on displayed historicizing aesthetics to link Libya to an imagined Mediterranean past: the governor's palace in typically Sicilian Moorish-Norman style or the neo-Romanesque cathedral evoked Palermo, while the relief of Saint George with which the formerly Spanish fort in Tripoli harbor was adorned made reference to Genoa.³¹ Corso Sicilia, Tripoli's new main

²⁶ On Balbo see Claudio G. Segrè, *Italo Balbo: A Fascist Life* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990).

²⁷ The standard English-language reference on Septimius Severus is still Anthony R. Birley, *The African Emperor: Septimius Severus* (London: Batsford, 1988). For a Libyan perspective see Mohammed Taher Jerary, "Septimius Severus: The Roman Emperor, 193–211 AD," *Africa* 63/2 (2008).

²⁸ See the official illustrated volume *Il Duce in Libia* (Milan: Arnoldo Mondadori, 1937). For an analysis of the visit cf. also John Wright *The Emergence of Libya: Selected Historical Essays* (London: Silphium Press/The Society for Libyan Studies, 2008), 302–11.

²⁹ See Giuseppe Volpi di Misurata, *La Repubblica di Venezia e i suoi ambasciatori. Lezione tenuta alla R. Università Italiana di Perugia per Stranieri il 21 Settembre 1927* (Milan: Arnoldo Mondadori, 1928).

³⁰ On Volpi see Sergio Romano, *Giuseppe Volpi. Industria e finanza tra Giolitti e Mussolini* (Milan: Bompiani, 1979).

³¹ See McLaren, *Architecture and Tourism*, 20–41, 165–66; Fuller, *Moderns*

street, actually led into the direction of Sicily, ending in two squares which opened towards the sea. The second of these squares, Piazza Castello (at the waterfront adjacent to the fort), was actually conceived as the southern counterpart to Piazza San Marco in Venice, as Krystyna von Henneberg has convincingly argued.³²

Colonial discourse and symbolic politics anchored Libya, through all these historical and geographical convergences, firmly in the Mediterranean (and tied it equally firmly to Italy). The famous nationalist poet Gabriele D'Annunzio had encapsulated this imaginary already in 1911, when he first described Libya as Italy's "fourth shore" (*quarta sponda*, beside the Tyrrhenian, Ionian, and Adriatic ones)—a designation that became a topos in colonialist writings and beyond ever since.³³ To complete the merging, in 1939 the coastal parts of the North African colony became formally an integral part of the Kingdom of Italy as a regular region, consisting of the four new provinces of Tripoli, Misurata, Bengasi, and Derna.³⁴ Now, Libya was "separated from Italy only by the Mediterranean, just as the two parts of Rome are separated by the Tiber."³⁵

African Libya

A consequence of the colonial authors' focus on the Mediterranean

Abroad, 151–70; see also Salvatore Aurigemma, "Il Castello di Tripoli di Barberia," in *La rinascita della Tripolitania. Memorie e studi sui quattro anni di governo del Conte Giuseppe Volpi di Misurata* ed. Alessandro Piccioli (Milan: Arnoldo Mondadori, 1926), 535–63.

³² See Krystyna von Henneberg, "Tripoli: Piazza Castello and the Making of a Fascist Colonial Capital," in *Streets: Critical Perspectives on Public Space* ed. Zeynep Çelik, Diane Favro and Richard Ingersoll (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996).

³³ The term appears in his *Canzone di Mario Bianco*, originally published in the Milan daily *Il Corriere della Sera* on the occasion of Italy's invasion of Libya: Gabriele D'Annunzio, *Laudi del cielo del mare della terra e degli eroi* (Milan: Treves, 1912), 156. On the context see also Wright, *The Emergence of Libya*, 238–66.

³⁴ See Cresti, *Non desiderare la terra d'altri*, 159–78.

³⁵ Quoted from Africanus, "Geopolitica di Gheddafi," 117.

dimension of Libya's history was their all but total neglect of the country's Saharan and African connections. The naval historian Manfroni, for instance, mentioned trans-Saharan trade through Tripoli briefly, just to add that eventual trade agreements between Libyan port cities and Italian merchants looking for commodities from central Africa were more or less worthless: "But these agreements, if they existed, were short-lived because the almost continuous war with the tribes of the interior interrupted exchange with the Fezzan and the tropical region, thereby preventing the Christian ships from regularly purchasing valuable goods, such as ivory, ostrich feathers, and gold dust."³⁶ Although writers sometimes alluded to the travels of 19th-century explorers from Libya into the African interior,³⁷ the geographer Vinassa de Regny still stated that some parts of the new colony, such as the Kufra oasis, were among the points "least known in the whole of Africa."³⁸ As the terminology of Libya as a "bulwark" and "rampart" suggests, the Sahara was often perceived as insurmountable, separating a Mediterranean world that included southern Europe and North Africa from the rest of the "dark" continent. Fernand Braudel, the great French historian of the Mediterranean, saw Libya—even its Mediterranean part—as a barrier not only between North and South but also between East and West, comparing the sea between Italy and Libya to a liquid desert: "The Ionian Sea is the largest of these hostile areas, prolonging over the sea the desert of Libya and thus creating a double zone of emptiness, maritime and continental, separating East from West."³⁹

Contrary to this image of their country as a barrier, Libyan historians of the post-colonial era have stressed the African context.⁴⁰ Where colonial authors neglected the great desert as a seemingly

³⁶ Manfroni, *L'Italia*, 84.

³⁷ On these explorers see Wright, *The Emergence of Libya*, 48–61, 93–97.

³⁸ Vinassa de Regny, *Libya Italica*, 67.

³⁹ Fernand Braudel, *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II* (New York: Harper & Row, 1972), 133.

⁴⁰ See e.g. Muḥammad al-Ṭāhir al-Jarāri, "al-Irth al-tārikhī lil-šilat al-'arabiyya al-ifriqiyya - Libiyā numūdhajan," *Majallat al-buḥūth al-tārikhiyya* 26/1 (2004).

inhospitable wasteland, Libyan writers have put much emphasis on Saharan connectivity,⁴¹ a phenomenon that has led even a post-Braudelian historian of the Mediterranean like David Abulafia to reevaluate the Sahara and its “shores” (*sawāḥil*) as a space equivalent to the sea which links Europe to North Africa and the Middle East.⁴² In a curious parallel to Italian authors’ concerns with Mediterranean merchant communities, Libyan historians now dealt specifically with trading networks that stretched from the ports of Tripoli or Benghazi and the oases of Ghadames, the Fezzan, or Kufra to Lake Chad, the Niger, and the Senegal. Just like Italy (after Antiquity), Libya has never been the center of an actual political empire—as, for example, Egypt or Morocco have, with their respective military expansions into the Sudan. Instead, just as with the medieval Venetians or Genoese, it was, above all, merchants from present-day Libya who brought goods, technology, and culture to sub-Saharan Africa. The historian Idrīs al-Ḥurayr claimed that already the Ibadi imamate founded by Ibn Rustam in 777 AD had created a unified space for trade and the spread of Islam, which stretched “from Tripoli to the Takrur (Senegal) region.”⁴³ According to Limyā’ Sharaf al-Dīn, Libya was an important commercial hub from the early Arab-Islamic period until Ottoman times, not only as a

⁴¹ See e.g. Aḥmad Ilyās Husayn, “Turuq al-tijāra fi al-juz’ al-sharqī min al-Ṣaḥrā’ al-kubrā,” in *al-Ṣaḥrā’ al-kubrā: Kitāb tidhkārī yataḍamman dirāsāt mutarjama wa-aṣliyya ṣadara bi-munāsabat in’iqād al-nadwa al-’ilmiyya al-’ālemiyya lil-tijāra ‘abra al-Ṣaḥrā’, Tarābulus min 2–4 uktūbar 1979*, ed. ‘Imād al-Dīn Ghanim (Tripoli: Markaz buḥūth wa-dirāsāt al-jihād al-lībī, 1979).

⁴² See David Abulafia, “Mediterraneans,” in *Rethinking the Mediterranean*, ed. William V. Harris (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 75. From the growing literature on Saharan connectivity see also Ralph A. Austen, *Trans-Saharan Africa in World History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005); Ali Abdullatif Ahmida, ed., *Bridges across the Sahara: Social, Economic and Cultural Impact of the Trans-Sahara Trade during the 19th and 20th Centuries* (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars, 2011); James McDougall, “Frontiers, Borderlands, and Saharan/World History,” in *Saharan Frontiers: Space and Mobility in Northwest Africa*, ed. James McDougall & Judith Scheele (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2012).

⁴³ Idrīs Ṣāliḥ al-Ḥurayr, “al-’Alāqāt al-iqtisādiyya wal-thaqāfiyya bayna al-dawla al-rustamiyya wa-buldān janūb al-Ṣaḥrā’ al-kubrā wa-atharuhā fi nashar al-islām hunāk,” *Majallat al-buḥūth al-tārīkhīyya* 5/1 (1983), 85.

transit route, but equally as an importer of raw materials that were then further processed and as an exporter of own agricultural and artisanal produce to the South.⁴⁴ Other authors emphasize the role of “Libyan” traders in the political, social, and cultural life of sub-Saharan states: Ghadamsi merchants, for instance, had not only their own quarter, or “colony” (*jāliya*), in a major Sudanic center like Timbuktu, they were also influential at courts from Songhai to Wadai where they promoted the Islamic religion alongside new fiscal and administrative methods.⁴⁵ Hurayr presented the impact of these trading networks reaching south from what is now Libya as having ushered in a completely new era in African history:

The most important results of these economic, political, and cultural connections between the Maghreb and the peoples and countries south of the Sahara were, from the Arab conquest on, the spread of Islam and Islamic civilization on a scale that led finally to the establishment of Islamic states and empires, such as Ghana, Mali, Songhai, and Kanem-Bornu. These states then, in turn, spread Islam among African peoples and there developed centers of Islamic learning in many towns, the most important being Timbuktu and Kano, where Islamic institutions and mosques sprang up.⁴⁶

The Mediterranean community, ultimately derived from the Roman Empire, which Italian authors from the colonial era had posited, gave way in the writings of Libyan historians from the Qaddafi period to a vast African space united by the Islamic faith. Where colonialists

⁴⁴ See Limyā' Sharaf al-Dīn, “Tijārat Ṭarābulus ma'a bilād mā warā'a al-Ṣaḥrā' fi al-'aṣr al-wasīṭ,” *Majallat al-buḥūth al-tārikhiyya* 23/2 (2001).

⁴⁵ See e.g. Aḥmad al-Faytūrī, “al-Jāliyāt al-'arabiyya al-mubakkira fi bilād al-Sūdān: Dirāsa awwaliyya wa-ba'd al-mulāḥazāt,” *Majallat al-buḥūth al-tārikhiyya*, 3/2 (1981); 'Abd al-Mawla Ṣāliḥ al-Ḥurayr, “al-Islām wa-atharuhu 'alā al-taṭawwūrāt al-siyāsiyya wal-fikriyya wal-iqtisādiyya fi Ifriqiya janūb al-Ṣaḥrā',” *Majallat al-buḥūth al-tārikhiyya* 11/1 (1989). On Ghadamsi traders, in particular, see also Ulrich Haarmann, “The Dead Ostrich: Life and Trade in Ghadames (Libya) in the Nineteenth Century,” *Die Welt des Islams* 38/1 (1998).

⁴⁶ Hurayr, “al-'Alāqāt al-iqtisādiyya wal-thaqāfiyya,” 87.

had tried to incorporate Mediterranean Libya into Italy, now the commonalities between the Saharan regions and peoples of Libya and its southern neighbors moved to the core of the country's geo-historical identity. From the 1970s on, the regime also tried to develop the desert territories with ambitious urbanization and irrigation schemes, thus shifting the country's center of gravity from the densely populated coastal regions to the south.⁴⁷ Through this southward orientation, Libya claimed in some ways the heritage of the trans-Saharan networks of the Sanusiyya brotherhood, which had dominated the regions from the Cyrenaican mountains and the Libyan Desert down to Lake Chad and into the present-day Republic of Sudan during the 19th and early 20th century⁴⁸—although the role of this Sufi brotherhood was usually marginalized in Qaddafi-era historiography.⁴⁹ “At the heart of the unitary Sahel-Saharan mystique, taken up by Colonel Qaddafi today, is the old desire to integrate the area of spatial extension of the Sanusiyya, which is constitutive for Libyan identity, even if the Leader cannot explicitly pick up the Sanusi legacy for himself, of which King Idris (whom he ousted in 1969) was the heir.”⁵⁰

Especially pertinent was the case of Chad, with authors stressing the strong ties of Tubu, Kel Tamasheq (Tuareg) and Arab populations across the border as well as the shared history of anti-colonial resistance in the early 20th century.⁵¹ Again, it is evident

⁴⁷ See Olivier Pliez, *Villes du Sahara. Urbanisation et urbanité dans le Fezzan libyen* (Paris: Karthala, 2003).

⁴⁸ The classical English-language reference for the trans-Saharan Sanusiyya network is still Dennis D. Cordell, “Eastern Libya, Wadai and the Sanūsīya: A Ṭarīqa and a Trade Route,” *Journal of African History* 18/1 (1977). See also Martel, *La Libye*, 46–82.

⁴⁹ In Libyan writings from the period, the Sanusiyya is often only mentioned briefly, if at all: cf. e.g. al-Jarāri, “al-Irth al-tārikhi,” 17–19.

⁵⁰ Karine Bennafla, “De la guerre à la coopération : les dangereuses liaisons tchado-libyennes,” in *La nouvelle Libye. Sociétés, espaces et géopolitique au lendemain de l'embarco* ed. Olivier Pliez (Paris: Karthala, 2004), 113. On the Sanusi monarchy see also Martel, *La Libye*, 167–90.

⁵¹ The most comprehensive example is Sa'īd 'Abd al-Rahmān al-Ḥandīrī, *al-Ālāqāt al-libiyya al-tashādiyya 1842-1975m* (Tripoli: Markaz dirāsāt jihād al-libiyyīn ḍidda al-ghazw al-iṭālī, 1983).

that these historiographic interpretations were also expressions of a specific political context: during the Aouzou Strip dispute and the Libyan military involvement in Chad, that lasted almost twenty years, beginning in 1973, an emphasis on Libyan-Chadian entanglements acquired obvious political implications in a similar way Italian Mediterraneanism had half a century earlier. In fact, Libyan leader Muammar Qaddafi and Chadian president Goukouni Oueddeï in 1981 even agreed on a formal merger between their two states under Libya's *jamāhīriyya* system.⁵²

But Qaddafi's African policies went well beyond the neighboring state. The formation of the African Union (AU) in his home town Sirt in 1999 was but the most visible instance of Libya's professed pan-Africanism at the time. Despite its original Arab nationalist ideology, the regime in Tripoli had been actively engaged on the continent from its early days as a self-proclaimed "defender of Africa" (*al-mudāfi' a 'an Ifriqiyyā*),⁵³ supporting independence movements in southern Africa and even intervening directly in several countries (apart from Chad also in Uganda and the Central African Republic). On the African continent, the Libyan regime maybe came closest to the international standing it aspired to. In fact, the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and its successor, the AU, supported Qaddafi in several instances, calling for an end to the United Nations sanctions in the 1990s and trying to mediate during the 2011 uprising and war—whereas the Arab League took the side of the regime's opponents both times. On the occasion of the South African president's visit in 1997 Qaddafi recalled his long-standing support for anti-imperialism on the continent and refuted accusations that he was, in fact, furthering terrorism:

Mandela is a global leader who is received everywhere with respect, Robert Mugabe is one of Africa's rulers, Sam

⁵² From the vast literature on Libyan-Chadian relations see in particular John Wright, *Libya, Chad and the Central Sahara* (London: Hurst, 1989); Bennafla, "De la guerre à la coopération."; Judith Scheele, "The Libyan Connection: Settlement, War, and other Entanglements in Northern Chad," *Journal of African History* 57/1 (2016).

⁵³ Qadhdhāfi, *Thawrat al-fātih*, 95. Of the many biographies of the Libyan leader the best is probably Angelo Del Boca, *Gheddafi. Una sfida dal deserto* (Rome: Laterza, 2010).

Nujoma is one of Africa's rulers and leaders ... Zenawi is now the head of Ethiopia's government, he who was called a terrorist, Afewerki who was called a terrorist is now president of the Republic of Eritrea, Museveni who was called a terrorist, Kabila and his leadership were here in the tent and received the support of Libya. Mobutu was an agent of Zionism and an agent of imperialism then, and they said Libya harbored terrorists ...⁵⁴

Apparently picking up on the historiographical image of Libyans as bringers of culture and religion, the Libyan Islamic Call Society (*jam'iyyat al-da'wa al-islāmiyya*) became active in many sub-Saharan countries. After the oil boom of the 1970s, the Society built mosques and ran schools or hospitals all over Africa, also in an attempt to counter the influence of conservative Arab states like Morocco or Saudi Arabia.⁵⁵ The inter-governmental organization Community of Sahel-Saharan States (CEN-SAD), founded at Tripoli in 1998 to promote infrastructures and communications across the desert, represented another Libyan initiative which symbolically tied in with the historic trans-Saharan networks and demonstrated that the country's vocation lay beyond the Arab, let alone the Mediterranean, world.⁵⁶ As Qaddafi had summed up his vision at the opening of the African Soccer Cup in 1982:

I welcome you on Libyan soil, African brothers [...] Libya the defender of Africa, the propagator of the mottoes 'Africa to the Africans' and 'there is no ally for Africa

⁵⁴ Quoted from Sālim Ḥusayn 'Umar al-Barnāwī, "al-'Arab wal-qaḍāyā al-ifriqiyya al-mu'āšira," *Majallat al-buḥūth al-tārīkhīyya* 26/1 (2004), 173.

⁵⁵ See Hanspeter Mattes, *Die innere und äußere islamische Mission Libyens. Historisch-politischer Kontext, innere Struktur, regionale Ausprägung am Beispiel Afrikas* (Mainz: Grünewald/Kaiser, 1986).

⁵⁶ On Qaddafi's African policies see Asteris Huliaras & Konstantinos Magliveras, "The End of an Affair? Libya and Sub-Saharan Africa," *The Journal of North African Studies* 16/2 (2011); George Joffé, "Libya's Saharan Destiny," *The Journal of North African Studies*, 10/3-4 (2005); Yehudit Ronen, *Qaddafi's Libya in World Politics* (Boulder: Rienner, 2008), 145-99; Martel, *La Libye*, 200-11 and the programmatic speeches in Qadhdhāfi, *Thawrat al-fātih*.

except itself', Libya that fights imperialism and racism in the defense of Africa ... Libya the guarantor of peace in Chad ... Libya that struggles side by side with the African forces of liberation against the organizations of racist discrimination and against new colonialism [...].⁵⁷

Connecting Libya

As Amal Obeidi has shown in an empirical study, in the Libyan population at large identification with the Arab world prevailed and Qaddafi's pan-Africanism remained rather unpopular, even during its supposed heyday in the 1990s.⁵⁸ Apart from that, the growing influx of sub-Saharan African migrants also led to conflicts and instances of racism in Libya.⁵⁹ Despite all the insistence on the country's African character, Libya remained unmistakably also Arab and Mediterranean. This leads to a third interpretation of Libya's geo-historical situation, namely its function as a bridge between regions and continents. A focus on the history of trans-Saharan trade already hints at transregional networks that go beyond the ties between northern and sub-Saharan Africa:

In the southern ports of the Mediterranean, such as Algiers, Tunis, or Tripoli, ships from Spanish or Italian cities like Barcelona, Marseilles, Genoa, Pisa, Naples, Bari, or Venice loaded the goods which had come across the Sahara and the Atlas Mountains and shipped them to northern Mediterranean ports where goods had to be unloaded, taxed, and reloaded again, this time onto

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 95.

⁵⁸ Amal Obeidi, *Political Culture in Libya* (London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2001), 105–06, 202–09.

⁵⁹ See e.g. Chris Dunton, "Black Africans in Libya and Libyan Images of Black Africa," in *The Green and the Black: Qadhafi's Policies in Africa*, ed. René Lemarchand (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1988); Ines Kohl, "Nationale Identität, tribale Zugehörigkeit und lokale Konzeptionen im Fezzän, Libyen. Eine Farbenlehre," in *Veränderung und Stabilität. Normen und Werte in islamischen Gesellschaften* ed. Johann Heiss (Vienna: Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2005).

horses, donkeys, and ox carts, and, at least on the Rhone and Rhine, onto riverboats and barges. Goods which went even further north, from Venice via Passau, Linz, Regensburg, or Nuremberg to Prague and Görlitz, eventually reached the southern ports of the Baltic Sea, such as Lübeck, Rostock, or Wismar, where they were reloaded into ships that crossed the Baltic to final destinations in Scandinavia. In contrast, goods that had been unloaded in Timbuktu in the south continued their journey on boats on the Niger and eventually reached destinations on the upper or lower Niger, where they had to be reloaded onto smaller boats or (mostly) donkey and oxen caravans, to be transported into the tropical forests of the Guinea coast, where goods from the north were exchanged for the major product of the south: gold.⁶⁰

In this vein, Nora Lafi has insisted that, up until the 19th century, both “sea and desert were the bases for Tripoli’s economic life,” while John Wright has called the Libyan capital an “entrepot serving three continents.”⁶¹

Libyan historians, too, have not just presented the African dimension of their country’s history, but also linked this back to its Arab and Mediterranean roots and even to Europe. Authors repeatedly claimed that different locations, for instance the town of Ghadames or the region of Fezzan, have been “gateways to the Sahara” and Ḥabīb al-Ḥasnāwī even defined Libya as a whole as “Europe’s gateway to Africa.”⁶² But apart from constituting “the link between the center of

⁶⁰ Roman Loimeier, *Muslim Societies in Africa: A Historical Anthropology* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2013), 58.

⁶¹ Nora Lafi, *Une ville du Maghreb entre ancien régime et réformes ottomanes. Genèse des institutions municipales à Tripoli de Barbarie (1795–1911)* (Paris: L’Harmattan, 2002), 53; Wright, *The Emergence of Libya*, 130.

⁶² E.g. Sharaf al-Din, “Tijārat Tarābulus,” 150; Imḥammad Sa’id al-Tawil, “al-Ṣirā’ al-duwali ‘alā madīnat Ghadāmis khilāla al-niṣf al-thānī min al-qarn al-tāsi’ ‘ashar wa-in’ikāsātuḥu ‘alā tijāratihā,” in *A’māl al-nadwa al-‘ilmiyya al-tārikhiyya ḥawla tārikh Ghadāmis min khilālī kitābāt al-rahḥāla wal-mu’arrikhīn*, ed. Nūr al-Din Muṣṭafa al-Thinnī (Tripoli: Markaz jihād al-libiyyīn lil-dirāsāt al-tārikhiyya, 2003), 202; Ḥabīb Wada’a al-Ḥasnāwī, “Libiyā fi faḍā’ay al-Baḥr al-mutawassiṭ wa-Ifriqiya wa-‘alāqatuhā ma’a Firansā,” *Majal-*

Africa and the outside world”, it was equally “the bridge that connects East and West of the Arab homeland.”⁶³ The Iraqi art historian Ṣabā Qays al-Yāsirī in a contribution to Libya’s major historical journal argued that the country had functioned as a link between geographical regions from Antiquity to the present. Although she mentioned the ancient Phoenicians as well as medieval Muslim scholars, the main argument was apparently, once again, Libya’s role as a commercial hub:

Tripoli is characterized by its strategic maritime position which made it over the centuries, faster than the other commercial centers, into a link between the countries of southern Europe and the Arab Maghreb. The trading caravans across the Sahara brought all sorts of goods that were known at the time from the sub-Saharan regions, and also from the Arab Mashreq, to Tripoli. Tripoli had always been a city of extensive commerce, its only competitor being Alexandria, and ships from Malta, Venice, and Sicily used to dock in its port to engage perpetually in trade. Apart from that, it is known that Libya was, and still is, the region that connects East and West of the Islamic world.⁶⁴

Emerging at the center of multiple connections, Libya’s history, thus understood, presented various overlapping dimensions that historians have defined as Mediterranean, Arab, African, Maghribi, Ottoman, and Southern.⁶⁵

lat al-buḥūth al-tārikhiyya 30/1 (2008), 19.

⁶³ Muḥammad ‘Ali Abū Shārib, “Tijārat al-qawāfil wa-‘alāqatuhā bi-wāḥat Awjila,” in *Awjila bayna al-māḍī wal-ḥādīr (1550-1951m): A’māl al-nad-wa al-‘ilmiyya al-sābi’a allatī ‘uqīdat bi-madīnat Awjila (17-20/9/2000)* ed. Muḥammad Bashir Suwaysi (Tripoli: Markaz jihād al-lībiyyīn lil-dirāsāt al-tārikhiyya, 2007), 131.

⁶⁴ Ṣabā Qays al-Yāsirī, “Dawr wa-ahammiyyat Lībiyā ka-ḥalqat waṣl bayna al-sharq wal-gharb fi al-tārikh,” *Majallat al-buḥūth al-tārikhiyya* 30/1 (2008), 99.

⁶⁵ See Ḥasnāwī, “Lībiyā fi faḍā’ay al-Baḥr al-mutawassiṭ wa-Ifriqiya.”; Jāsīm Muḥammad Shaṭṭ al-‘Ubaydi, “al-Tijāra al-ṣaḥrāwiyya wal-mas’ala al-sharqiyya fi al-qarn al-tāsi’ ‘ashar wa-maṭla’a al-qarn al-‘ishrīn,” *Majallat al-buḥūth al-tārikhiyya* 30/1 (2008). On the overlapping and competing identifications see also Martel, *La Libye*, 15–42.

Again, it might not be a coincidence that the idea of Libya as a connecting link (*halqat wasl*) has become particularly prominent since about the year 2000.⁶⁶ In fact, the last phase of the Qaddafi regime from 1998 to 2010 was characterized by a rapprochement with the West in foreign policy and a liberalization of the economy. Apart from that, Libya had become an important region of transit but also a destination for migrants from sub-Saharan Africa from the 1990s onward.⁶⁷ Both trade deals—regarding oil, in particular—and agreements on migration control with the European Union as a whole and single countries north of the Mediterranean actually contributed a lot to the diffusion of the notion of Libya as a bridge between regions and continents. With the uncertainty about the country's future following instability and civil war since 2011, the question of Libya's geopolitical orientation—Mediterranean, African, or connecting—remains as significant and as open as ever.

⁶⁶ But see also already Africanus, "Geopolitica di Gheddafi."

⁶⁷ See e.g. Ronen, *Qaddafi's Libya*, 54–75; Sara Hamood, "EU-Libya Cooperation on Migration: A Raw Deal for Refugees and Migrants?" *Journal of Refugee Studies* 21/1 (2008); Derek Lutterbeck, "Migrants, Weapons and Oil: Europe and Libya after the Sanctions," *The Journal of North African Studies* 14/2 (2009); Amir M. Kamel, "Trade and Peace: The EU and Qaddafi's Final Decade," *International Affairs* 92/3 (2016).

Bibliography

- Abulafia, David. "Mediterraneans." In *Rethinking the Mediterranean*, ed. W. V. Harris, 64–93. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005.
- Abū Shārib, Muḥammad ‘Alī. "Tijārat al-qawāfil wa-‘alāqatuhā bi-wāḥat Awjila." In *Awjila bayna al-māḍī wal-ḥādir (1550-1951m): ‘Āmāl al-nadwa al-‘ilmiyya al-sābi‘a allatī ‘uqidat bi-madīnat Awjila (17-20/9/2000)*, ed. M. B. Suwaysi, 131–144. Tripoli: Markaz jihād al-libiyyīn lil-dirāsāt al-tārikhiyya, 2007.
- Africanus, "Geopolitica di Gheddafi: realismo travestito da stravaganza." *Limes* 2 (1994), 107–117.
- Ahmida, Ali Abdullatif, ed. *Bridges across the Sahara: Social, Economic and Cultural Impact of the Trans-Sahara Trade during the 19th and 20th Centuries*. Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars, 2011.
- Altekamp, Stefan. *Rückkehr nach Afrika. Italienische Kolonialarchäologie in Libyen 1911-1943*. Cologne: Böhlau, 2000.
- Aurigemma, Salvatore. "Il Castello di Tripoli di Barberia." In *La rinascita della Tripolitania. Memorie e studi sui quattro anni di governo del Conte Giuseppe Volpi di Misurata*, ed. A. Piccioli, 535–563. Milan: Arnoldo Mondadori, 1926.
- Austen, Ralph A. *Trans-Saharan Africa in World History*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2010.
- al-Barnāwī, Sālim Husayn. "al-‘Arab wal-qadāyā al-ifriqiyya al-mu‘āšira." *Majallat al-buḥūth al-tārikhiyya* 26/1 (2004): 155–214.
- Bennafla, Karine. "De la guerre à la coopération : les dangereuses liaisons tchado-libyennes." In *La nouvelle Libye. Sociétés, espaces et géopolitique au lendemain de l'embargo*, ed. O. Pliez, 111–137. Paris: Karthala, 2004.
- Birley, Anthony R. *The African Emperor: Septimius Severus*. London: Batsford, 1988.
- Braudel, Fernand. *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II*, trans. S. Reynolds. New York: Harper & Row, 1972.
- Cordell, Dennis D. "Eastern Libya, Wadai and the Sanūsiya: A Ṭarīqa and a Trade Route." *Journal of African History* 18/1 (1977): 21–36.
- Cresti, Federico. *Non desiderare la terra d'altri. La colonizzazione italiana in Libia*. Rome: Carocci, 2011.
- D'Annunzio, Gabriele. *Laudi del cielo del mare della terra e degli eroi*. Milan: Treves, 1912.
- Del Boca, Angelo. *Gheddafi. Una sfida dal deserto*. Rome: Laterza, 2010.
- Del Boca, Angelo. "L'Impero." In *I luoghi della memoria. Simboli e miti*

- dell'Italia unita*, ed. M. Isnenghi. Rome: Laterza, 1996.
- Dumasy, François. "L'autre et soi même. Les usages du passé médiéval dans la Libye coloniale au miroir de la construction nationale italienne." In *Maghreb-Italie. Des passeurs médiévaux à l'orientalisme moderne (XIII^e - milieu XX^e siècle)*, ed. B. Grévin, 373–395. Rome: École française de Rome, 2010.
- Dunton, Chris. "Black Africans in Libya and Libyan Images of Black Africa." In *The Green and the Black: Qadhafi's Policies in Africa*, ed. R. Lemarchand, 150–166. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1988.
- al-Faytūrī, Aḥmad. "al-Jāliyāt al-'arabiyya al-mubakkira fi bilād al-Sūdān: Dirāsa awwaliyya wa-ba'd al-mulāḥazāt." *Majallat al-buḥūth al-tārikhiyya* 3/2 (1981), 245–252.
- Fuller, Mia. "Preservation and Self-Absorption: Italian Colonisation and the Walled City of Tripoli, Libya." *The Journal of North African Studies* 5/4 (2000), 121–154.
- Fuller, Mia. *Moderns Abroad: Architecture, Cities and Italian Imperialism*. Abingdon: Routledge, 2010.
- Gentile, Emilio. "6 maggio 1936. L'Impero torna a Roma." In *I giorni di Roma. Nove grandi storici raccontano nove giornate cruciali per la storia di Roma e del mondo*, ed. A. Carandini et al., 239–270. Rome: Laterza, 2007.
- Haarmann, Ulrich. "The Dead Ostrich: Life and Trade in Ghadames (Libya) in the Nineteenth Century." *Die Welt des Islams* 38/1 (1998), 9–94.
- Hamood, Sara. "EU-Libya Cooperation on Migration: A Raw Deal for Refugees and Migrants?" *Journal of Refugee Studies* 21/1 (2008), 19–42.
- al-Ḥandīrī, Sa'īd 'A. *al-'Alāqāt al-libiyya al-tašādiyya 1842-1975m*. Tripoli: Markaz dirāsat jihād al-libiyyīn dīdda al-ghazw al-iṭālī, 1983.
- al-Ḥasnāwī, Ḥabīb Wadā'a. "Libiyā fi faḍā'y al-Baḥr al-mutawassīṭ wa-Ifriqiyyā wa-'alāqatuhā ma'a Firansā." *Majallat al-buḥūth al-tārikhiyya* 30/1 (2008), 17–55.
- von Henneberg, Krystyna. "Tripoli: Piazza Castello and the Making of a Fascist Colonial Capital." In *Streets: Critical Perspectives on Public Space*, eds. Z. Çelik, D. Favro & R. Ingersoll, 136–150. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996.
- Huliaras, Asteris & Magliveras, Konstantinos. "The End of an Affair? Libya and Sub-Saharan Africa." *The Journal of North African Studies* 16/2 (2011), 167–181.

- al-Ḥurayr, 'Abd al-Mawlā Ṣāliḥ. "al-Islām wa-atharuhu 'alā al-tatawwurāt al-siyāsiyya wal-fikriyya wal-iqtisādiyya fī Ifrīqiyyā janūb al-Ṣaḥrā'." *Majallat al-buḥūth al-tārikhiyya* 11/2 (1989), 97–136.
- al-Ḥurayr, Idrīs Ṣāliḥ. "al-'Alāqāt al-iqtisādiyya wal-thaqāfiyya bayna al-dawla al-rustamiyya wa-buldān janūb al-Ṣaḥrā' al-kubrā wa-atharuhā fī nashar al-islām hunāk." *Majallat al-buḥūth al-tārikhiyya* 5/1 (1983), 75–87.
- Ḥusayn, Aḥmad Ilyās. "Ṭuruq al-tijāra fī al-juz' al-sharqī min al-Ṣaḥrā' al-kubrā." In *al-Ṣaḥrā' al-kubrā: Kitāb tidhkāri yataḍamman dirāsāt mutarjama wa-aṣliyya ṣadara bi-munāsabat in'iqād al-nadwa al-'ilmiyya al-'ālemiyya lil-tijāra 'abra al-Ṣaḥrā', Ṭarābulus min 2-4 uktūbar 1979*, ed. 'I. Ghanim, 111–115. Tripoli: Markaz buḥūth wa-dirāsāt al-jihād al-libī, 1979.
- al-Jarārī, Muḥammad al-Tāhir. "al-Irth al-tārikhī lil-ṣilāt al-'arabiyya al-ifrīqiyya - Libiyā numūdhajan." *Majallat al-buḥūth al-tārikhiyya* 26/1 (2004), 11–28.
- Jerary, Mohammed Taher. "Septimius Severus: The Roman Emperor, 193-211 AD." *Africa* 63/2 (2008), 173–185.
- Joffé, George. "Libya's Saharan Destiny." *The Journal of North African Studies* 10/3-4 (2005), 605–617.
- Kamel, Amir Mohammed. "Trade and Peace: The EU and Qaddafi's Final Decade." *International Affairs* 92/3 (2016), 683–702.
- Kohl, Ines. "Nationale Identität, tribale Zugehörigkeit und lokale Konzeptionen im Fezzān, Libyen. Eine Farbenlehre." In *Veränderung und Stabilität. Normen und Werte in islamischen Gesellschaften*, ed. J. Heiss, 137–168. Vienna: Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2005.
- Krais, Jakob. *Geschichte als Widerstand. Geschichtsschreibung und nation-building in Qaddāfīs Libyen*. Würzburg: Ergon, 2016.
- Lafi, Nora. *Une ville du Maghreb entre ancien régime et réformes ottomanes. Genèse des institutions municipales à Tripoli de Barbarie (1795-1911)*. Paris: L'Harmattan, 2002.
- La Mantia, Giuseppe. "La Sicilia ed il suo dominio nell'Africa settentrionale dal secolo XI al XVI." *Archivio storico siciliano* 44 (1922), 154–265.
- Loimeier, Roman. *Muslim Societies in Africa: A Historical Anthropology*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2013.
- Lopez, Roberto S. *Storia delle colonie genovesi nel Mediterraneo*. Genoa: Marietti, 1997.

- Lutterbeck, Derek. "Migrants, Weapons and Oil: Europe and Libya after the Sanctions." *The Journal of North African Studies* 14/2 (2009), 169–184.
- Manfroni, Camillo. *I colonizzatori italiani durante il Medio Evo e il Rinascimento*, vol. I: *Dal secolo XI al XIII*; vol. II: *Dal secolo XIV al XVI - Con un'appendice sulle vicende delle colonie veneziane fino al secolo XVIII*. Rome: Libreria dello Stato, 1934.
- Manfroni, Camillo. *L'Italia nelle vicende marinare della Tripolitania*. Intra: Airoldi, 1935.
- Manfroni, Camillo. *Storia della marina italiana*, vol. I: *Dalle invasioni barbariche al trattato di Ninfeo (anni di C. 400-1261)*; vol. III: *Dalla caduta di Costantinopoli alla battaglia di Lepanto*. Milan: Periodici Scientifici, 1970.
- Martel, André. *La Libye 1835-1990. Essai de géopolitique historique*. Paris: PUF, 1991.
- Mattes, Hanspeter. *Die innere und äußere islamische Mission Libyens. Historisch-politischer Kontext, innere Struktur, regionale Ausprägung am Beispiel Afrikas*. Mainz: Grünewald/Kaiser, 1986.
- Mattingly, David J. *Imperialism, Power, and Identity: Experiencing the Roman Empire*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2011.
- McDougall, James. "Frontiers, Borderlands, and Saharan/World History." In *Saharan Frontiers: Space and Mobility in Northwest Africa*, ed. J. McDougall & J. Scheele, 73–91. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2012.
- McLaren, Brian L. *Architecture and Tourism in Italian Colonial Libya: An Ambivalent Modernism*. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2006.
- Merighi, Antonio. *La Tripolitania antica. Dalle origini alla invasione degli arabi*. Verbania: Airoldi, 1940.
- Munzi, Massimiliano. *L'epica del ritorno. Archeologia e politica nella Tripolitania italiana*. Rome: L'Erma di Bretschneider, 2001.
- Obeidi, Amal. *Political Culture in Libya*. London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2001.
- Pliez, Olivier. *Villes du Sahara. Urbanisation et urbanité dans le Fezzan libyen*. Paris: Karthala, 2003.
- al-Qadhdhāfi, Mu'ammār. *Thawrat al-fātiḥ wa-Ifriqiyyā*. Tripoli: al-Markaz al-'ālamī li-dirāsāt wa-abḥāth al-Kitāb al-akhḍar, 1985.
- Rava, Carlo Emilio. "Di un'architettura coloniale moderna - Parte prima." *Domus* 4/5 (1931), 39–43.
- Romanelli, Pietro. *Vestigia del passato (monumenti e scavi)*. Rome: Ministero delle Colonie, Ufficio studi e propaganda, 1930.

- Romano, Sergio. *Giuseppe Volpi. Industria e finanza tra Giolitti e Mussolini*. Milan: Bompiani, 1979.
- Ronen, Yehudit. *Qaddafi's Libya in World Politics*. Boulder: Rienner, 2008.
- Rossi, Ettore. *Il dominio degli Spagnoli e dei Cavalieri di Malta a Tripoli (1510-1551). Con appendice di documenti dell'archivio dell'Ordine a Malta*. Intra: Airoldi, 1937.
- Scheele, Judith. "The Libyan Connection: Settlement, War, and other Entanglements in Northern Chad." *Journal of African History* 57/1 (2016), 115–134.
- Segrè, Claudio G. *Italo Balbo: A Fascist Life*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990.
- Sharaf al-Dīn, Limyā'. "Tijārat Tarābulus ma'a bilād mā warā'a al-Ṣaḥrā' fi al-'aṣr al-wasīṭ." *Majallat al-buḥūth al-tārīkhīyya* 23/2 (2001), 141–159.
- Shaṭb al-'Ubaydi, Jāsīm Muḥammad. "al-Tijāra al-ṣaḥrāwīyya wal-mas'ala al-sharqīyya fi al-qarn al-tāsi' 'ashar wa-maṭla'a al-qarn al-'ishrīn." *Majallat al-buḥūth al-tārīkhīyya* 30/1 (2008), 117–155.
- Silva, Pietro. *Il Mediterraneo. Dall'unità di Roma all'Impero italiano*. Milan: Istituto per gli studi di politica internazionale, 1937.
- Tamburini, Olga. "La via romana sepolta dal mare': mito del *Mare nostrum* e ricerca di un'identità nazionale." In *Mare nostrum. Percezione ottomana e mito mediterraneo in Italia all'alba del '900*, ed. S. Trinchese, 41–95. Milan: Guerini, 2005.
- al-Tawīl, Imḥammad Sa'īd. "al-Ṣirā' al-duwali 'alā madīnat Ghadāmis khilāla al-niṣf al-thānī min al-qarn al-tāsi' 'ashar wa-in'ikāsātuḥu 'alā tijāratihā." In *A'māl al-nadwa al-'ilmīyya al-tārīkhīyya ḥawla tārīkh Ghadāmis min khilālī kitābāt al-rahḥāla wal-mu'arrikhīn*, ed. N. M. al-Thinnī, 195–215. Tripoli: Markaz jihād al-lībiyyīn lil-dirāsāt al-tārīkhīyya, 2003.
- Valérian, Dominique. "Lectures italiennes de l'expansion latine dans le Maghreb médiéval (première moitié du XX^e siècle)." In *Maghreb-Italie. Des passeurs médiévaux à l'orientalisme moderne (XIII^e - milieu XX^e siècle)*, ed. B. Grévin, 343–356. Rome: École française de Rome, 2010.
- Vinassa de Regny, Paolo. *Libya Italica. Terreni ed acque, vita e colture della nuova colonia*. Milan: Hoepli, 1913.
- Volpe, Gioacchino. *Italia moderna*, vol. I: 1815–1898. Florence: Sansoni, 1958.
- Volpi di Misurata, Giuseppe. *La Repubblica di Venezia e i suoi*

ambasciatori. Lezione tenuta alla R. Università Italiana di Perugia per Stranieri il 21 Settembre 1927. Milan: Arnoldo Mondadori, 1928.

36

Wright, John. *The Emergence of Libya: Selected Historical Essays.* London: Silphium Press/The Society for Libyan Studies, 2008.

Wright, John. *Libya, Chad and the Central Sahara.* London: Hurst, 1989.

al-Yāsiri, Šabā Qays. “Dawr wa-ahammiyyat Lībiyā ka-ḥalqat waṣl bayna al-sharq wal-gharb fi al-tārīkh.” *Majallat al-buḥūth al-tārīkhīyya* 30/1 (2008), 95–115.