

The history and colonization of libya and it's independence

[Politics](#)



Approximately ninety percent of Libya is roofed with desert. That desert is mostly the vast Sahara Desert; the worlds largest hot desert. Although most of the region is very barren, Libya's northern border is a stunning coastline. Its healthy, luscious fields and beautiful beaches extend along the Mediterranean Sea for approximately a thousand miles. Phoenician sailors, who are now located in the area now named Lebanon, built ports on Libya's Mediterranean coast in Tripolitania beginning in 1300 B. C.

Their vessels were constructed from cedar trees, which they used to sail across the Mediterranean transforming them into some of the greatest traders of their time. Phoenicians sailors had a different reason for establishing ports than then the usual economic gains. The reason for them establishing ports was because they wanted places along their trade route from Phoenicia to Spain where their cedar vessels could dock. Even though the Phoenicians continued doing this, they did little to take over the area. What the Phoenicians did do was establish the city of Carthage, which was in today's Tunisia.

By themselves, Carthage grew into a prosperous seaport and became an autonomous power with no help. Carthage built up a burly military force and soon Carthaginians started ruling areas like Tripolitania. Unlike the Phoenicians, the Carthaginians established numerous colonies, which they ruled with force. The Libyans disliked the Carthaginians due to the fact that the rulers stipulated that the Libyans have to give up to half of their crops each season and how the Carthaginians " sacrificed their own first-born children to their implacable gods" (Isichei 161).

The Libyans found that despicable and appalling. Carthage was getting attacked by Rome and battling went on and off for more than a hundred years. Finally, Rome defeated Carthage in 146 B. C. In 146 B. C. Romans gained control over the Carthaginian Empire. The Roman Empire used Tripolitania's coastal area as one of their main sources of grain and other provisions. The Greeks ruled Cyrenaica but it soon fell under Roman rule. The Greek stronghold was in Cyrenaica. Greek explorers and warriors constantly explored the region for centuries.

First, they tried to use the area as a route to overrun Egypt. Later, Cyrenacia became an abundant Greek fishing area. Seeing that no one had colonized the only port in North Africa the Greeks took better management of the land. Now that the Romans were in power the region continued to flourish for several hundred years, and the inhabitants escalated. When the empire was growing weaker, the Romans lost control of North Africa. The next groups in Libya were the Vandals, who came from an area that is now occupied by Germany.

Their minds were fascinated by North Africa's wealth, so they arrived in the area in about 435. Among the invaders, the Vandals made the first serious effort to settle in some of Libya's mountains and desert areas. But the nomadic people who resided in the regions often fought them off. The Vandals lost authority after about a century of decree. When the Arabs arrived in 643, they brought the new religion of Islam with them. The people in the region quickly adopted Islam but they resisted Arab political rule.

Within four hundred years most people in Libya were Muslims. The Aghlabids were amongst the most thoughtful Islamic leaders of Libya; the area was back in order, and reinstated the irrigation systems that the Romans left back, which brought opulence to the region from the surplus being produced. A minor colonization was by Spain in 1510 when they captured Tripoli but soon the Ottoman Empire took over all of Libya. Like all the other groups that had invaded Libya, the Ottomans faced the resistance of the Libyan people.

The Libyans " were proud and did not easily accept foreign rule" (Willis 50). Throughout history, groups of Libyan rebels often tried to resist the invaders. Many of the opposition leaders had ties to a religious organization called the Sanusi Brotherhood. As the Ottomans lost grip of their colony, the Italians moved in. Italy had major reasons for colonizing Libya. First of all, Italy thought that if they had control over Tripoli, they would have greater trading power in the Mediterranean Sea.

Also Italy just wanted to have the feel for having a colony in North Africa. Another major reason was the fact that the British already had control over Egypt and so Italy feared that France would seek after Libya. After months of engaging in warfare against the invading Italian forces, the Ottomans finally gave up their colonized land of Libya in 1911. When Italy decided to enter WWI on the side of the allies, this move weakened Italy's grip on Libya in 1915 because they couldn't focus against the rebellions in Libya while trying to help the Allies win WWI.

Some of the things they did to ease the rebellions was in 1917, when " Italy signed a peace agreement with the leader of the Sanusi, Idris al-Sanusi,

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recognizing him as the emir of Cyrenaica" (Miller 32-33). But when fascist dictator, Benito Mussolini's rose to power in Italy in 1922 he gave Italy its willpower to gain control over their colony once again. Libya was not finally freed from Italian rule until 1943, when Italy was crushed in WWII. After the war, the UN decided that Libya should become a constitutional monarchy and in 1951 the Kingdom of Libya was officially formed.

The national assembly elected Libya's first king, Muhammad Idris al-Sanusi, who had been a leader of the Libyan resistance movement against Italy. After decades of monarchy, Libyans are again fighting for their independence and freedom even though they became independent in 1951. They are now in an internal struggle against a tyrannical government. The country's dictator Muammar Gaddafi, once revered as a great colonel has promised not to leave his reign of terror until he dies. With the help of other countries the Libyan people are achieving the true freedom that every person in this world is entitled to.