

## TRUCIAL COAST

During the Roman period, Leptis Magna developed into one of the finest examples of an African city. A key factor in its development was its location on the Mediterranean Sea, sheltered by a promontory at the mouth of the Wadi Lebda, and near the relatively well watered hinterland of Tripolitania. Leptis, over time, became much more important as a commercial center than either Oea or Sabratah. Leptis Magna is the most impressive archaeological site in Tripolitania, and in Libya as well. The Severan Arch, erected in honor of a visit from Emperor Septimius Severus in 203 C.E., and the Hadrianic Baths complex are particularly noteworthy.

Tripolitania shares a common history and close ties with the Maghrib, the western Islamic world traditionally comprising Algeria, Morocco, and Tunisia. It is a part, both geographically and culturally, of the Maghrib and is sometimes included in descriptions of that region. Libyan migration from Tripolitania to Tunisia, in particular, has been commonplace for centuries. Cross-border migration was especially heavy during the Italian occupation, which began in 1911, as many Tripolitans fled Libya to escape the Italian invaders. In consequence, many Tunisians are of Libyan descent, and related families are often found on opposite sides of the Libya-Tunisia border.

At the outset of the twentieth century, the Italian occupation of Libya stimulated political consciousness throughout Tripolitania. Consequently, it was from this region that the strongest impulses supporting unification with Cyrenaica and the Fezzan developed. The ill-fated Tripoli Republic, proclaimed in the fall of 1918, was the first republican government formally created in the Arab world. However, the creation of the Tripoli Republic, together with a declaration of independence and subsequent attempts to promote Libyan independence at the 1919 Paris Peace Conference, stirred little enthusiasm among the major powers of the world. By 1923 the Tripoli Republic had disintegrated.

Following World War II, a wide variety of political groups and parties were formed in Libya, and especially in Tripolitania. All of them favored a free and united Libya with membership in the Arab League. However, they differed widely in their choice of leadership for an independent Libya. When the

foreign powers charged with determining Libya's future were unable to reach agreement, the traditional elites in Tripolitania, together with their peers in Cyrenaica and the Fezzan, agreed in 1950 to form a federal government, known as the United Kingdom of Libya, under the leadership of King Idris I. The monarchy was later replaced by a revolutionary government headed by Muammar al-Qaddafi in September 1969.

Located on the site of the ancient city of Oea, Tripoli is the capital of Tripolitania as well as the de facto capital of Libya. The area surrounding Tripoli as far south as the Jabal Nafusa is rich agricultural land with large groves of fruit and olive trees as well as date palms. Much of Libya's food comes from this region. South of the Jabal Nafusa, the desert begins, providing spectacular scenery most of the way to the Fezzan. Tripolitania also includes limited oil reserves and scattered iron ore deposits.

*See also* LIBYA; MAGHRIB; QADDAFI, MUAMMAR AL-; TRIPOLI.

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*Colonial precursor of the United Arab Emirates.*

The Trucial Coast was known to Europeans as the Pirate Coast in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, when the powerful federation of the Qawasim, operating primarily from the port of Ra's al-Khayma, ravaged shipping in the lower Persian (Arabian) Gulf. The government of British India sent several expeditions against them, finally subduing them in 1819. In the following year, Britain through the General Treaty of Peace, imposed a truce that condemned piracy and implied Britain's obligation to maintain peace in the Gulf. Subsequent treaties (truces) made the agreements

more explicit, and the territories ruled by the shaykhs who were signatories to them became, in European usage, the Trucial Coast. The terms “Trucial States” and, confusingly, “Trucial Oman” were also used.

Fear of European rivals led Britain to establish “exclusive agreements” with these shaykhs in 1892. These engagements made Great Britain, through the colonial government in Delhi, responsible for the foreign relations of these shaykhdoms and, by implication, for their protection. The British, interested primarily in the security of the Gulf, kept their involvement on land to a minimum. Their intervention however, tended to freeze political relationships. This situation remained essentially unaltered until the interwar period, when the British government forced the rulers to deal only with prospecting oil companies of which it approved. Britain’s simultaneous establishment of an air route across the Gulf began to open the area to the outside world, especially Sharjah, where an Imperial Airways airfield was established. Moreover, oil concession agreements created the need for the novel concept of fixed borders, which the British began to establish.

After World War II, Britain was much more fully involved in the affairs of the Trucial States. After 1947, with India’s independence, the states became the responsibility of the Foreign Office in London. Britain’s representative in the Trucial States was a permanent political officer assigned to Sharjah in 1948 (upgraded to political agent in 1953), and several state institutions were established. In 1951 the Trucial Oman Levies, a small force with British officers, was created to keep order in the Trucial States. Expanded and renamed the Trucial Oman Scouts in the mid-1950s, it became the nucleus of the United Arab Emirates, armed forces in 1971. In 1952 the Trucial States Council was created; though limited to a consultative role, it provided the first forum in which the rulers of the seven shaykhdoms could discuss common concerns. From 1965 until independence a Development Office, operating under the aegis of the Council, carried out infrastructure projects financed through a development fund to which Britain, Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, and Abu Dhabi contributed; Abu Dhabi carried the lion’s share as its oil income expanded from the mid-1960s.

In December 1968, Britain’s Labor government, beset by a balance-of-payments crisis, decided to withdraw military forces and relinquish responsibilities in the Gulf by the end of 1971. Though some of the rulers viewed Britain’s withdrawal with alarm, Shaykh Zayid of Abu Dhabi and Shaykh Rashid of Dubai, the wealthiest of the seven Trucial States, agreed, as early as February 1968, to form a federation that would include Bahrain and Qatar. Despite British encouragement of this venture, it had foundered by early 1971. On 2 December 1971, a few months after Bahrain and Qatar had become separately independent, Sharjah, Umm al-Qaywayn, Ajman, and Fujayra joined Abu Dhabi and Dubai in the federation of the United Arab Emirates. In February 1972, Ra’s al-Khayma belatedly joined the United Arab Emirates.

*See also* SHARJAH; UNITED ARAB EMIRATES.

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### TRUE PATH PARTY

*A major centrist political party in Turkey from the late 1980s to the end of the 1990s.*

The True Path Party (Doğru Yol Partisi, or DYP) was founded in 1983 by former members of the Justice Party. The military’s National Security Council had banned former Justice Party chair Süleyman Demirel from active participation in politics until 1987; nevertheless, he was the behind-the-scenes driving force for the organization of the DYP. After his political activity ban had been lifted, Demirel became DYP’s chair and led it to victory in the 1991 parliamentary elections. DYP won the largest number of seats, but not an absolute majority, and so formed a coalition government with the Social Democratic Populist Party (SHP). Upon the sudden death of President Turgut Özal in 1993, the Turkish Grand National Assembly voted for Demirel to