Freemasonry in Libya

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This study intends to investigate the events that led to the development of the Italian Freemasonry in Libya during the last century. Up to now very little research has been carried out about Freemasonry in what was at the time, an Italian colony. This is probably due to the difficulty in finding historical sources. However, the Grand Orient of Italy was present in this area thanks to the foundation of numerous lodges in Tripoli. The sequence of events concerning ‘Cinque Ottobre’ and ‘Leptis Magna’ are of particular interest, both from the history of Freemasonry point of view and also from that of the history of the Italian community in Libya. In the lodges the most important members of the Italian community lived together in harmony with men from different ethnicities, linked to each other by their common membership of Freemasonry. The historical reconstruction of the lodges’ fight against fascism is important. The latter had banned Freemasonry during those years (1925), prohibiting any activity or manifestation. This also caused repercussions in the colonies, primarily in Libya. The fight against fascism united the freemasons who were in the southern part of the Mediterranean even more. There is evidence of meetings between leading members of the Italian communities in Tunisia and Libya in Tripoli to discuss the subject.

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