

## ESTABLISHMENT OF A TROUBLED COLONY 1899-1904: ITALIANS IN SOMALIA

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**Abstract:** The Italians from the beginning of their presence in Africa, they had been going after the big prize, Ethiopia. Easy victories in the Red Sea increased the enthusiasm and appetite of the expansionists. Militarism and expansion became more attractive after the colonization of Eritrea and Somalia (1889); in the 1890s Ethiopia was surrounded, blockaded and gradually wore down by Rome's machinations. The colonization of Somalia was one step towards the grandiose aspiration of subjugating the whole of East Africa. The mismanagement and disinterest on how to administer the colony proves that Rome's only goal in the area was to surround and finally defeat Ethiopia. Due to the perilous environment and the tropical conditions only few dozens Italians settled in the county's urban centers in the 19<sup>th</sup> century; a few hundred meters towards the hinterland the Italian influence and communities were inexistent. Only after 1918 the Italian immigrants reached almost the 400.

**Keywords:** Italian colonialism; Somalia; Liberal Italy

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