

CONSTRUCTIVE INSTABILITY IN OPERATION UNIFIED PROTECTOR: THE
DESTRUCTION OF THE UNITED STATES-LED WORLD-SYSTEM (1945-2024)

A Thesis
Presented to the
Faculty of
California State University,
San Bernardino

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts
in
History

by
Devin B. Gillen
August 2024

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ABSTRACT

In 2011, NATO ended the 42-year-long rule of Libya's Muammar Gaddafi, and plunged the country into over a decade of unending strife, while an arc of crisis emanating from Libya struck much of the region. This study examines the United States' geostrategic approach in the Libyan intervention to illustrate the dialectic intersectional relationships between processes of globalization, American hegemony over the world-system, and American foreign policy in the post-Cold War period (1992-2024) with consideration to world-systems analysis to characterize the United States post-Iraq warfighting strategy in Libya as an adaptation of the purposeful destabilization of Afghanistan and cultivation of an international jihadist network from 1979-1989.

In the absence of ambition or capability to secure Libya in the periphery of the United States-led world-system, the destruction and abandonment of long-term strategic goals in Libya is characterized as a pursuit of full spectrum dominance by way of destruction of emergent Libyan hegemonic capabilities and institutions as mandated by the Wolfowitz Doctrine to maintain America's slipping unipolar global hegemony. The Libyan crisis proves to be highly influential on the inauguration of a post-2011 period marked by a decline in American hegemonic capability which is in dire need of reflection, or it will prove to be a predictive microcosm of the terror and suffering a continuation of belligerent unipolar militarism will bring in a multipolar world.

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What is the reason for the invasion and destruction of Iraq and for the killing of one million Iraqis? Let our American friends answer this question: Why Iraq? What is the reason? Is Bin-Laden Iraqi? No, he is not. Were those who attacked New York Iraqis? No, they were not. Were those who attacked the Pentagon Iraqis? No, they were not. Were there WMDs [weapons of mass destruction] in Iraq? No, there were not...Along comes a foreign power, occupies an Arab country, and hangs its president, and we all sit on the sidelines, laughing...Why? Any one of you might be next. Yes. America fought alongside Saddam Hussein against Khomeini. He was their friend. Cheney was a friend of Saddam Hussein. Rumsfeld, the US Defense Secretary at the time Iraq was destroyed, was a close friend of Saddam Hussein. Ultimately, they sold him out and hanged him. You are friends of America—let's say that "we" are, not "you"—but one of these days, America may hang us.

- Muammar Gaddafi, addressing the 2008 Arab League Summit in Damascus, two years before his murder by NATO-backed jihadist-linked rebels.¹

¹ Muammar Gaddafi, "Gaddafi speech: 'America hanged Saddam and we might be next! (with English)," YouTube video, on March 30, 2011, 05:40-07:50, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VZZvPIGct_8&ab_channel=salim000001.

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About ten days after 9/11, I went through the Pentagon and I saw Secretary Rumsfeld and Deputy Secretary Wolfowitz...and one of the generals called me in. He said, "Sir, you gotta come in, you've gotta come in and talk to me a second!"...He says, "We've made the decision we're going to war with Iraq!"... I said, "We're going to war with Iraq!? Why?" He said, "I don't know. I guess they don't know what else to do." So I said, "Well did they find some information connecting Saddam to al-Qaeda?" He said, "No, no...there's nothing new that way, they just made the decision to go to war with Iraq."...So I came back to see him a few weeks later, and by that time we were bombing in Afghanistan. I said, "Are we still going to war with Iraq?" And he said, "Oh, it's worse than that!" He reached over on his desk, he picked up a piece of paper and he said, "I just got this down from upstairs," meaning the Secretary of Defense's [Donald Rumsfeld] office. He said, "This is a memo that describes how we're going to take out seven countries in five years starting with Iraq, and then Syria, Lebanon, *Libya* [emphasis added], Somalia, Sudan, and then back to Iran.

- Ranking United States and former-NATO general, Wesley Clark, addressing Amy Goodman of *Democracy Now!* on March 2, 2007.²

² Wesley Clark, "General Wesley Clark "We're going to take-out 7 countries in 5 years."[sic]," YouTube video, uploaded by Nakama, on March 6, 2019, accessed March 10, 2024, 00:02-02:05, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6Knt3rKTqCk&ab_channel=Nakama.

CHAPTER ONE:

INTRODUCTION

On March 17, 2011, the North Atlantic Treaty Association Organization's (NATO) Operation Unified Protector (OUP) was greenlit via the United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1973 to enforce a "no-fly-zone" over Libya.³ NATO weaponry was spurred into action with the invocation of the 2005 "Responsibility to Protect" (R2P); to save the lives of, presumably, thousands of civilians in the city of Benghazi—host to crowds of anti-government protesters that coalesced on February 15, 2011, at the dawn of the First Libyan Civil War of 2011.⁴ In the course of ostensibly attempting to save lives as the uprisings engulfed most of Libya, OUP unleashed a chain reaction of violence unto the world spiraling outward from Libya.⁵

³ Bukola A. Oyeniyi, *The History of Libya*, (Santa Barbra: Greenwood, 2019), 186; United Nations Security Council (UNSC) Res 1973 (March 17, 2011) UN Doc S/RES/ 1973 3, Resolution 1973 (unscr.com).

⁴ Ingvild Bode, 'Manifestly Failing' and 'Willing or Unable' as Intervention Formulas: A Critical Assessment," chapter in *Rethinking Humanitarian Intervention in the 21st Century*, ed. Aiden Warren and Damian Grenfell, (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2017), 164; Bukola A. Oyeniyi, *The History of Libya*, 179.

⁵ One can argue OUP exacerbated an existing chain reaction of violence, destabilization, political upheaval, and United States hegemonic decline kicked off by the 2003 invasion of Iraq. Some may trace NATO actions more specifically than US foreign policy, and place NATO's post-Soviet interventionism through the former-Yugoslavia in the 1990s as the start of a wider expansionist NATO project. All of these are preliminary factors and antecedents to OUP that do belong in a set of congruent series of events that chart the growing belligerence of the United States and NATO which future research will expand on.

The NATO allies lauded their humanitarianism to the United Nations (UN), before which they made the case that, as the final text UNSCR 1973 explicitly states, OUP was

not to be a regime change operation and strictly humanitarian.⁶ However, it quickly turned into just that, fairly evident when then-President of the United States of America (POTUS), Barack Obama, announced on March 27 that, “Qaddafi has not yet stepped down from power, and until he does, Libya will remain dangerous.”⁷ In hindsight, it is evident that the primary goal of the intervention was regime change. For OUP concluded only days after the longtime Libyan head of state, Muammar Gaddafi, was extrajudicially murdered by NATO backed and *al-Qaeda* (AQ) adjacent networks of rebel forces on October 20, 2011.⁸ This came months after the Gaddafi regime had been pacified, and the man was hiding away in the overwhelmingly pro-Gaddafi city of Sirte, of no threat to Libyan civilians there (who supported him and denounced the rebel forces' violence), let alone a threat to those in Benghazi.⁹

⁶ United Nations Security Council (UNSC) Res 1973 3. OUP was intended to, according to the UNSCR 1973, “protect civilians and civilian populated areas under threat of attack in the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, including Benghazi, while excluding a foreign occupation force of any form on any part of Libyan territory.”

⁷ Maximilian Forte, *Slouching Toward Sirte: NATO's War on Libya and Africa*, (Montreal: Baraka Books, 2012), 83. Or consider his statements the next day, March 28, “There is no question Libya - and the world would be better off - with Gaddafi out of power. I, along with many other world leaders, have embraced that goal.”

⁸ Maximilian Forte, *Slouching Toward Sirte: NATO's War on Libya and Africa*, 121.

⁹ Forte, *Slouching Toward Sirte*, 102. The civilians of Sirte who supported Gaddafi often became targets for direct-NATO strikes and were under constant threat and bombardment from the rebel forces.

Gaddafi's violent end was the first geopolitical shift in the wider global chain reaction of violence that OUP inaugurated and midwifed into existence. This shift bent the arc of history and irrevocably reshaped the dynamics of the contemporary world-system into a new era of chaotic instability and diminished United States') hegemony.¹⁰ Few at the time likely conceived of the potential of consequences or blowback OUP produced for Libyans and the globe. Illuminating the United States foreign policy elite's self-interested confusion on what they had wrought, *CNN* even suggested that the United States should be compensated with Libyan oil for having "liberated" the country, which Democrat Party affiliates and Center for American Progress (CAP) officials circulated in private email communications on January 24, 2012.¹¹ By 2014 and the return of open conflict in Libya, and the consolidation of AQ and ISIS (The Islamic State in

¹⁰ Jason Pack, *Libya and the Global Enduring Disorder*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2021), xxiii. This modern era of diminished United States hegemony is one which Libya-scholar and NATO/The Atlantic Council analyst, Jason Pack, describes as the titular Global Enduring Disorder.

¹¹ C. Wright Mills, *The Power Elite*, new ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 8.; Glenn Greenwald, "Leaked Emails From Pro-Clinton Group Reveal Censorship of Staff on Israel, AIPAC Pandering, Warped Militarism," *The Intercept*, November 5, 2015, <https://theintercept.com/2015/11/05/leaked-emails-from-pro-clinton-group-reveal-censorship-of-staff-on-israel-aipac-pandering-warped-militarism/>. American Political Scientist, John Mearsheimer, often uses this term, "the foreign policy elite," to describe American, and pan-European, strategic decision-makers from: elected officials, bureaucrats and appointees, to supposedly non-governmental organizations (NGOs), lobbyists, and think-tanks. The proximity to American Political Scientist, C. Wright Mills' (1916-1962) earlier formulation of "the Power Elite," is welcomed. In his 1956 book, *The Power Elite*, Mills argues that the "state and corporation and army constitute the means of power...[which are the] command posts of modern society which offers us the sociological key to an understanding of the role of the higher circles in America."

Syria) throughout the country, it became clear OUP served to turn Libya into a chaotic deadly “shit show” (the term Obama later used to describe the situation) that killed more people than it saved, and turned a previously successful and sovereign African nation into a failed-state battleground, from which it has not fully recovered from to this day.¹²

The complex web of players and events leading up to the Second Libyan Civil War (2014-2020), which exploded from the seeds of destabilization sown by OUP and the First Libyan Civil War, are abbreviated here as it is beyond the scope of this study but will establish the levels of chaos and destruction that the 2011 intervention unleashed in Libya. The General National Congress (GNC) took power on August 8, 2012, with the responsibility of transforming post-Gaddafi Libya into a liberal democratic nation within eighteen months.¹³ Though the GNC failed to do so, they organized a June 25, 2014 election, in which the Council of Deputies replaced the GNC, many members of which, displeased at their removal from power, formed the National Salvation

¹² Jeffrey Goldberg, “The Obama Doctrine,” *The Atlantic* April 2016 issue, <https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2016/04/the-obama-doctrine/471525/#8>; Campbell, *Global NATO*, 182; Moussa Ibrahim, “NATO’s Invasion of Libya: Insider Interview With Gaddafi’s Ex-Spokesman,” YouTube video, March 29, 2023, 1:00-1:18, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fIR6mZXTEWo&ab_channel=red.

Estimates for a total death toll range from 10,000 to 50,000, however it is likely, as in the case with the Iraq war, the true number will never be known and numbers forever contested. In March of 2023, Moussa Ibrahim, an ex-spokesman for Gaddafi, suggested an estimate of “over 30,00 civilians [that] were directly killed by NATO’s attacks, which were in the area of 35,000 raids, with thousands of rockets, and tens of thousands of bombs.”

¹³ Oyeniyi, *The History of Libya*, 199.

Government (NSG) in Tripoli in August.¹⁴ On November 6, 2014, the Libyan Supreme Constitutional Court ruled the June 25 elections to be unconstitutional (perhaps due to high levels of voter apathy, violent suppression, and manipulation, or perhaps due to the fact armed NSG forces surrounded the court at the time of the ruling) which led the NSG to call for the Council of Deputies to dissolve the government, which the Council refused.¹⁵ The NSG then formed a rival parliament in Tripoli, dividing the country between two competing institutions and marking the dividing line of the Second Libyan Civil War.¹⁶ The rapid breakdown of Libyan society in under two years demonstrates the problematic nature of assuming Western liberal democratic orders can be simply imposed onto others, and that once imposed the fledgling democracies will even function—let alone achieve the best possible outcomes.

The arguably democratic Council of Deputies garnered support from the NATO-allies and eastern Libyans, while the NSG was supported by Qatar, Sudan, and Turkey, as well religious extremist groups such as the Muslim Brotherhood and many of the Islamist militias, such as Libya Dawn, which fought alongside NATO in 2011.¹⁷ As African scholar Dr. Bukola A. Oyeniyi noted in his 2019 *History of Libya*, as these divisions emerged:

¹⁴ Oyeniyi, *The History of Libya*, 200.

¹⁵ Oyeniyi, *The History of Libya*, 200.

¹⁶ Oyeniyi, *The History of Libya*, 200.

¹⁷ Oyeniyi, *The History of Libya*, 200.

local militias, vigilante groups, and Islamic insurgents, including al-Qaeda and ISIS, took over most cities, towns, and villages. Military-grade weapons such as Beretta M9s, M21 sniper rifles, M1918 Browning automatic rifles, M4 carbines, mortars, ammunition boxes, and rocket-propelled grenades, which were stolen from the armories during the revolution, were sold on street corners. In this way, what began as a collective effort to rid Libya of Gaddafi degenerated into sectarian violence and a campaign of lawlessness, as one group fought the other in a bid to control Libya's mineral-rich territories and national government...it could be argued that since the killing of Gaddafi, intrigues among competing groups at the national level have led to armed insurgencies in Libya. At the local level... rebel groups, armed militias, and radical Islamic groups daily engaged one another in their efforts to gain territories, status, and power.¹⁸

While Libya descended into chaos yet again and Obama served the final year of his presidency, he soured on the United States' handling of OUP and adopted a somewhat critical tone while speaking to multiple media outlets in April of 2016—if only offering hollow criticisms in self-serving rhetoric. In one interview with *FOX News*, Obama blamed his administration's failure to prepare for “the day after [regime change, which is still] what I think was the right thing to do in intervening in Libya,” the “worst mistake” of his presidency.¹⁹ Here Obama separates the good intentions that supposedly motivated NATO's operation from the life and death material consequences of OUP with a silver tongue to smooth this set of inherently contradictory statements' edges.²⁰ Obama's later reflections

¹⁸ Oyeniyi, *The History of Libya*, 201.

¹⁹ Allie Malloy, Catherine Treyz, “Obama admits worst mistake of his presidency,” CNN.com, last updated April 11, 2016, <https://www.cnn.com/2016/04/10/politics/obama-libya-biggest-mistake/index.html>.

²⁰ Jeffrey Goldberg, “The Obama Doctrine.”

of the United States' role in OUP, found in April's 2016 issue of *The Atlantic* written by Jeffery Goldberg appear and further begs the question: what was the United States trying to achieve if, as Obama notes, the operation went about as well as it could have gone. As Goldberg notes, Obama believed that the United States had "planned the Libya operation carefully," and that the United States "actually executed this plan as well as I could have expected."²¹ Goldberg continues, "Obama says today of the intervention, 'It didn't work... The social order in Libya has broken down.'"²² How all of these statements hold logically consistent is difficult to parse, let alone why Obama (on behalf of the foreign policy elites who advised him to intervene against his better instincts) would have intervened in Libya given the "shit show" it caused was simultaneously: arrived at through the United States' supposedly stellar planning and excellent execution, which was somehow the best he could have expected and still the right thing to do, yet created the worst mistake of his presidency.²³ In other words, it sounds as if Obama more or less knew that "the social order in Libya" would break down, perhaps he expected worse from NATO's jihadist allies on the ground, which he conveniently does not mention to Goldberg.²⁴

²¹ Goldberg, "The Obama Doctrine."

²² Goldberg, "The Obama Doctrine."

²³ Goldberg, "The Obama Doctrine." Advocates for Libyan intervention in Obama's sphere were Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, Susan Rice (Ambassador to the UN), Samantha Power, Ben Rhodes, and Antony Blinken (then Vice President Joe Biden's national security advisor and now Secretary of State in the Biden Administration).

²⁴ Goldberg, "The Obama Doctrine."

Though Obama took years to come to this confounding position, just one week after Gaddafi's death Seumas Milne wrote for *The Guardian* that, "If the Libyan war was about saving lives, it was a catastrophic failure."²⁵ In one week, through a simple evenhanded evaluation based on the explicitly stated goals of OUP, one could conclude it was a failure. Other scholars and journalists came to this conclusion only months into the conflict. By April 14, 2011, Dr. Alan J. Kuperman claimed Obama "grossly exaggerated the humanitarian threat to justify military action," and that there was no evidentiary basis to believe there was any potential "genocide" to prevent as Obama claimed. He claimed, "The best evidence that Khadafy did not plan genocide in Benghazi is that he did not perpetrate it in the other cities he had recaptured either fully or partially—including Zawiya, Misurata, and Ajdabiya, which together have a population greater than Benghazi."²⁶ As such, there was not a legitimate case to be made for an extended period of conflict, Kuperman recognized that "by emboldening rebellion, US interference has prolonged Libya's civil war and the resultant suffering of innocents."²⁷ As such, there was no evidentiary basis upon

²⁵ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 18.

²⁶ Alan J. Kuperman. "False pretense for war in Libya." Boston.com. The Boston Globe, April 14, 2011. http://archive.boston.com/bostonglobe/editorial_opinion/oped/articles/2011/04/14/false_pretense_for_war_in_libya/.

²⁷ Alan J. Kuperman. "False pretense for war in Libya."

which to believe Gaddafi would maniacally hunt the residents of Benghazi, and only Benghazi, down to the last.²⁸

But this was of little consequence. NATO jets flew and bombed away toward a new Libya and a new world that Obama claimed, “There is no question” that “both would be better off with Gaddafi out of power.”²⁹ With as little thought or deliberation as was given to NATO’s post-conflict situation in Libya by the United States (which observers of the Libyan situation of all stripes and persuasions, both critics and advocates of OUP, consider to be a mistake and blunder in United States policy planning) it seems difficult to make the case that the United States foreign policy elite thought, or cared, deeply about Libya or the well-being of its people in the formulation, execution, or followthrough of OUP.

As the works of Professor of African American Studies and Political Science at Syracuse University, Dr. Horace Campbell noted (while OUP was still underway), and the analysis of Hillary Clinton and her confidant’s leaked emails demonstrate, the European NATO allies, led by France, had a deeper material interest in Libya and showed greater initiative to enact classic neocolonial and neoliberal designs on Libyan resources in the post-Gaddafi world than the United States seemingly had.³⁰ However, if the United States did share such designs, it

²⁸ Kuperman. “False pretense for war in Libya.” Kuperman notes that Obama’s only evidence of an impending “genocide” was a selectively quoted piece of Gaddafi’s March 17 speech claiming “no mercy” for those, that even the *New York Times* noted was aimed at rebels as he promised amnesty for all “who throw their weapons away.”

²⁹ Maximilian Forte, *Slouching Toward Sirte*, 83.

³⁰ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 102.

can be said in hindsight they were not acted on in a serious or coherent manner.³¹

Considering the United States' relative lack of overt classical neocolonial and neoliberal designs on post-Gaddafi Libya, and the United States' quick abdication of a post-conflict role in Libya—which predictably fell into chaos in the power vacuum capitalized on by militant rebels and jihadists the NATO allies enabled against Libyan government forces—what were the underlying motivations and factors that contoured of the United States' ostensibly contradictory approach in 2011's regime change operation in Libya? This study seeks to answer this question by considering the history of United States militarized interventionism across the globe from 1945 to the present day, and the cultivation and cooperation with international non-state client terror networks in pursuit of a “chaos strategy” of intentional destabilization and disorder.³² To interrogate these historical foreign policy developments this study adopts a materialist-driven perspective in its analysis of relevant pan-European imperialist endeavors of the nineteenth century to 2024.³³ Primary sources incorporated into

³¹ David Harvey, *A Brief History of Neoliberalism*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 6-7. The United States actions and occupation force in Iraq can be said to be an example of the United States acting to secure material interests with the Coalition Provisional Authority, led by Paul Bremmer following the United States invasion of Iraq on March 19, 2003.

³² Mark LeVine, *Why They Don't Hate Us*, (Oxford: Oneworld Publications Limited, 2005), 286. Mark LeVine expands thoroughly on a geopolitical “Chaos Theory,” or constructive instability as a policy pursuit in the United States 2003 invasion and occupation of Iraq

³³ Aaron Good, *American Exception: Empire and the Deep State*, (New York: Skyhorse Publishing, 2022), 28. Political Scientist Aaron Good notes, the social

the analysis include, but are not limited to: the spoken and written communications of Libyan civilians ranking American, Libyan, pan-European, and African leaders, along with communications of international politicians and political bodies, including non-governmental bodies such as Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch, as well as those of the International Criminal Court (ICC), and the UN's International Court of Justice (ICJ).³⁴ These sources contextualize the United States geostrategy as of variable levels of intentional chaos, termed constructive instability from here on, in a globalized world by employing analytical frameworks of world-systems analysis and international relations. While primarily focused on OUP and its aftermath, the sweeping timeframe and global scope of this study are necessary to understand and contextualize the historical precedents of the United States' strategy of constructive instability. This will not only serve to better illuminate the chaotic dynamics of OUP and its aftermath but also add to the emergent historicization

sciences drop in interest of materialist analysis by the 1990s wherein "only around 10 percent of *Diplomatic History* articles focused on economic aspects of US foreign policy... Given the explanatory power of materialist analysis in this moment of imperial decline... perhaps the decline of materialism in diplomatic history is" an example of the "winners" of the historiographical battle of ideology "getting to write the history." Instead pop-intellectual cultural theories like Francis Fukuyama's *The End of History* (1992) and Sameul P. Huntington's' *Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of the World Order* (1996) allowed the pan-European world a pat on the back and justified a new era of imperial military interventionism on an orientalist cultural basis.

³⁴ Wallerstein, *The Decline of American Power: the U.S. in a Chaotic World*, 73. Wallerstein used the term pan-European to refer to the Atlanticist powers, otherwise referred to as the Global North, or the First or Developed World. "In the pan-European world (by which term I mean western Europe plus North America and Australasia but not east-central Europe)."

and analysis of the decline of United States global hegemony in the twenty-first century.

Why then, did the United States throw its support behind the NATO operation that destabilized not just Libya and neighboring North African nations, but the wider Middle East/West Asia and Mediterranean regions as well, in what this study will argue were entirely predictable ways? Is it simply because the United States foreign policy elite are, in the words of Colonel Lawrence Wilkerson, former Chief of Staff to former Secretary of State Colin Powell from 2001 to 2005, “stupid. I do not mean unwise or dumb, I mean they are stupid!”³⁵ As Wilkerson put it, [emphasis added] “We [the United States/ American foreign policy elite] don’t learn a lesson. If we did, we wouldn’t of gone into Iraq like we did Vietnam, we wouldn’t have done Afghanistan like Vietnam. *We wouldn’t have done Libya at all!* We would have told Hillary Clinton to *go to hell!* We should of never done Libya.”³⁶ Wilkerson singled out Clinton for damnation as her circle of aides, in league with the French, were the backseat drivers of OUP for a somewhat reluctant Obama. However, Wilkerson notes that Hillary Clinton is “one of these types who want to keep the world in turmoil so the empire has no

³⁵ James Mann, *Rise of the Vulcans: The History of Bush’s War Cabinet* (New York: Penguin Books, 2004), 266; Lawrence Wilkerson, “Empire in Decline - Colonel Lawrence Wilkerson, Alexander Mercouris and Glenn Diesen,” YouTube video, November 30, 2023, 36:50-36:57, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xcm1oWMnpS4&t=2311s&ab_channel=TheDuran. Wilkerson’s longtime boss and close confidant Colin “Powell had been the most powerful chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff in American history.”

³⁶ Lawrence Wilkerson, “Empire in Decline - Colonel Lawrence Wilkerson, Alexander Mercouris and Glenn Diesen,” 15:52-16:03.

threat to it. Where anything raises its head to say 'no' to the United States, you bash it. You bash it with hard power.”³⁷ This study reexamines the hawkish United States foreign policy tendency to “bash” any opposition with military might, to sow chaos and destruction to keep the US empire as the global hegemon, which bluntly summarizes what the 1992 redraft of the bi-annual Defense Planning Guidance would ultimately recommend.

The 1992 Defense Planning Guidance, authored by Under Secretary of Defense for Policy, Paul Wolfowitz’s office (later Rumsfeld’s Deputy Secretary of Defense in the G.W. Bush Administration), was the first overhaul of United States military strategy in the absence of The Union of Soviet Social Republics (USSR), and is often referred to as the Wolfowitz Doctrine.³⁸ The document proposed that the United States should shape “the future security environment” to keep itself as the sole superpower on Earth by “preclud[ing] any hostile power from dominating a region critical to our interests.”³⁹ In other words, to maintain military dominance and United States global hegemony, the entire planet, as well as space itself, would now be the stage upon which the United States would act to prevent the emergence of potential geopolitical rivals. This aggressive foreign policy is the

³⁷ Wilkerson, “Empire in Decline,” 37:20-37:40. Along with Hillary Clinton Wilkerson included Victoria Nuland and Madeleine Albright.

³⁸ James Mann, *Rise of the Vulcans*, 214. As veteran Washington journalist, James Mann, wrote, “The document was designed, Wolfowitz said, to explain why America needed to maintain the core of its troop deployments overseas,” despite the absence of the USSR.

³⁹ Mann, *Rise of the Vulcans*, 212-213.

key signature of the neoconservatives, of which Wolfowitz and Rumsfeld were some of the most prominent figures in the neoconservative movement.

Despite what would ultimately become a steadfast bipartisan consensus around hawkish neoconservative principles, the neocon plan to reshape the world in the image of a neoliberal capitalist liberal democracy through sheer military might, formulated in the 1990s and implemented between 2001-present, has tremendously backfired. A comprehensive and critical reevaluation of the history of United States foreign interventionism from 1945 to the present is in dire need at this critical juncture of United States imperial decline which is characterized by increasingly illegal, and untenable policy decision-making and implementation. This study offers a brief attempt at such a critical evaluation by centering OUP in Libya and the attendant destabilization of the region as the primary frame of analysis.

To locate this study's agenda, chapter one reviews relevant historical scholarship and debates on the topics of United States foreign policy, economic globalization, international Islamist terrorist organizations, neoliberal economic and IR theory, world-systems analysis, among other relevant and recent scholarship on Libya and OUP. Critical discussions of said scholarship will address conflicting viewpoints while providing and expounding on historical context, essential key terms, and frameworks for the reader. Works from Libya scholars are juxtaposed and categorized broadly as anti-interventionist (characterized by academics Horace Campbell, Maximilian Forte, and Alan J.

Kuperman), or pro-interventionist (characterized by the likes of NATO Defense College and Atlantic Council analyst, Florence Gaub, as well as scholar Dirk Vandewalle) and juxtaposed. Clearly delineating scholarship into these two orientations helps to detail the underlying ideological and political biases of each camp.⁴⁰ Ultimately, the chapter concludes that the neoliberal interventionist advocates of OUP, and their analyses, are warped by what Dr. Immanuel Wallerstein, of world-systems analysis fame, considered European Universalism: or the belief that European society and ideals are the best for all.⁴¹

Chapter two examines Libyan history from 1881 to Gaddafi's death in 2011. Particular attention is given to the Libyan population's sovereignty, historically maintained through the control of indigenous trade. Libya, long indomitable by foreigners, was the last African territory to completely fall to European colonialism under harsh Italian fascist population control in the 1930s.⁴² This provides important context for the formulation, execution, and follow-through of OUP, in which the United States approach is characterized as a policy of intentional chaos termed "constructive instability." The implementation of this policy entailed the destruction of Libyan sovereignty as state and its potential

⁴⁰ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 23. Horace Campbell describes the NATO think tank, The Atlantic Council Gaub works for and the Council on Foreign Relations as "spokespersons for Western corporations."

⁴¹ Immanuel Wallerstein, *The Decline of American Power: the U.S. in a Chaotic World* (New York: The New Press, 2003), 73; Giacomina De Bona, *Human Rights in Libya: The Impact of International Society Since 1969* (New York: Routledge Taylor & Francis Group, 2013), 153.

⁴² Oyeniyi, *The History of Libya*, 39.

as a geopolitical rival, or local hegemon, through the destruction of natural resource sovereignty and geopolitically-significant trade networks which had been historically controlled by indigenous Libyans. Unlike the European NATO allies, the United States had comparably little interest in securing material interests or creating a liberal democratic state in Libya which would be conducive to foreign investment. The United States and UK's instrumentalization of known AQ-linked jihadists as the vanguard of the anti-Gaddafi rebels, and then anti-Assadist forces in Syria, made the “cauldronization” of the region a more likely end result than democratization.⁴³

Chapter three more closely examines the United States' embrace of constructive instability in Libya, showing how and why turning Libya's productive capacity offline served United States interests, as opposed to European actors' colonial motivations. The chapter first examines historical precedents, including the colonial tirades of the British against neighboring Egypt's developmentalist Mohammad Ali in the early-1800s.⁴⁴ This is related to the pan-African institutions and policies Gaddafi advanced, such as a pan-African currency backed by

⁴³ Tom Engelhardt, “The US Military ‘Liberated’ Mosul by Destroying It,” *The Nation*, July 20, 2017, <https://www.thenation.com/article/archive/the-us-military-liberated-mosul-by-destroying-it/>. The term “cauldronization” is a play on belligerent commentary from life-long Republican operative Michael Ledeen, who advocated in the early 2000s that even if the United States sent not just Iraq, but the entire region into chaotic destabilization that it would actually serve the United States' interests as, according to Ledeen, the entire Middle East deserves to be cauldronized.

⁴⁴ William L. Cleveland, Martin Bunton, *A History of the Modern Middle East*, 6th ed. (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2017), 45.

Libyan gold, among other pan-African institutions, which threatened to diminish the pan-European powers' influence over, and exploitation of Africa at large.⁴⁵ These institutions' success threatened to transform Libya from a periphery or semi-periphery into a regional core with its own sphere of influence. Furthermore, Libya's unprecedented sovereign control of its oil also compounded the threat to the United States' petrodollar hegemony.⁴⁶ Such scenarios run counter to the pursuit of Full Spectrum Dominance articulated in the Wolfowitz Doctrine, which undergirds United States hegemony to the present. Additionally, the rising influence of post-Soviet Russia and China inside Libya as it reintegrated into the international community in the mid-2000s is also examined as another compounding motivation to destabilize the region and shut out competitors.

Chapter four details the post-OUP blowback and destabilization of, not just Libya, but the entire geopolitical order. This destabilization is manifest in the series of crises that have delegitimized NATO and harmed the hegemonic position of the United States over the global neoliberal capitalist world-system. The dual conflicts that both United States client and/or proxy states of Ukraine and Israel are engaged in at the time of writing in 2024 exemplify Wallerstein's prediction of a self-inflicted de-hegemonic feedback loop.⁴⁷ Multiple other

⁴⁵ Moussa Ibrahim, "NATO's Invasion of Libya: Insider Interview With Gaddafi's Ex-Spokesman," 3:15-5:52.

⁴⁶ LeVine, *Why They Don't Hate Us*, 71. Mark LeVine refers to an "arms-petrodollar cycle" that circulates billions of dollars "back and forth among despotic Middle Eastern (and other) regimes and US oil and arms companies."

⁴⁷ Immanuel Wallerstein, *The Decline of American Power: the U.S. in a Chaotic World*, 213.

contemporary crises have significant antecedents that trace back to the consequences of OUP as well. One such result, disastrous when compounded with the undeterred Russian gains in Ukraine and their 2015 intervention into Syria (worthy of note, on behalf of the Syrian government), is the Russian's supplantation of both the United States and French influence across several countries in the Sahel, often due to the Atlanticist powers' ostensible inability to curb the spread and influence of jihadists and militants armed and unleashed from the chaos of destabilized Libya.⁴⁸ As such, in agreement with Jason Pack's *Libya and the Global Enduring Disorder*, it is concluded the OUP and 2011 mark a distinct post-post-9/11 historical period of geopolitical chaos and that Libya proves a remarkable prism through which to understand the post-2011 world and processes of globalization.⁴⁹

As the smoke of Benghazi and Sirte cleared post-2011, and self-congratulations died down in the American quarter, the unipolar world of unquestioned American dominance grew increasingly unrecognizable. Everyday commentators, analysts, politicians, journalists, and even academics offer up any variety of bias-confirming narratives, emotionally potent oversimplifications, and shallow culture-war talking points to explain the shifting domestic and geopolitical landscape, which is systematic, dialectical, and structural in nature. Libya has often been overlooked by most analysts attempting to pinpoint where everything went wrong, which is itself a futile, a-historical attempt to formulate a palatable

⁴⁸ Ingvild Bode, 'Manifestly Failing', 177.

⁴⁹

worldview based largely in shallow monocausal analysis of events. However, OUP and the destabilization of Libya mark a clear delineation into a new distinct geopolitical era, and as an associate of NATO's Rome Defense College and The Atlantic Council, Jason Pack argues, as a microcosm of the new global era of chaos or a lens, or refracting prism, through which to view or make sense of this new era.⁵⁰

From the conflicts in Syria that began in 2011 before Gaddafi's corpse was cold, the Russian-Ukrainian War (officially starting February of 2022, though some correctly argue the 2022 Russian invasion of Ukraine was simply a new phase of war that had actually begun in early 2014), to anti-Western uprisings across Africa and rising tensions with China, to the popular ascent of the geopolitical and economic bloc BRICS, the last decade of migrant "crises" and reactionary ascendancy of xenophobic movements across the pan-European world, OUP and the destabilization of Libya are explanatory precursors to each, if not necessary prerequisites.

The post-OUP destabilization of Libya embodies the highest order of constructive instability: the purposeful destabilization and destruction of order through machinations of geopolitical powers as an end in and of itself. This is opposed to the Great Power competition of the Cold War-era that saw the Third World, or Global South, host to competition by the larger powers to replicate an

⁵⁰ Pack, *Global Enduring Disorder*, liii.

ideologically identical or subservient order.⁵¹ Arguably the highest manifestation of this chaos and destabilization both before, during, and after OUP, was the instrumentalization and the predictable subsequent rise of Islamist terrorist organizations after contingents of their ilk were armed and fought amongst the NATO coalition.⁵²

Near ancient seem the days of the late 1970s and 1980s when Jimmy Carter's National Security Advisor and mastermind of the anti-Soviet "Afghan Trap," Polish-American Zbigniew Brzezinski, dismissed the seeds of blowback and the byproduct of the United States-fostered anti-Soviet international client terror networks as a bunch of relatively unimportant "agitated Muslims."⁵³ Twenty-three years after September 11, 2001, and the author at the time of writing has only known a world and culture thoroughly defined by the United States' commanding imperative to hunt "agitated Muslims" to all ends of the globe.⁵⁴ In a post-9/11 world Brzezinski's Afghan desert speeches before his "holy warriors" are sickly ironic portents of the destruction, chaos, and destabilization these groups of international non-state client terror networks

⁵¹ LeVine, *Why They Don't Hate Us*, xi. Jason Pack, *Global Enduring Disorder*, 1. The Global South is the contemporary term for what used to be called the Third or Developing World.

⁵² Oyeniyi, *The History of Libya*, 197-213.

⁵³ Peter Dale Scott, *Road to 9/11: Wealth, Empire, and the Future of America* (Los Angeles : University of California Press, 2007), 72, 73; Patrick Vaughan, "Zbigniew Brzezinski and Afghanistan," *The Policy Makers: Shaping American Foreign Policy From 1947 to the Present*, ed. Anna Kasten Nelson, (Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2009), 123-129.

⁵⁴ Peter Dale Scott, *Road to 9/11*, 73.

wrought.⁵⁵ These networks, and their inheritors, played major roles in not just the intended destruction of the USSR and the end of the Cold War, but even more evidently decisive roles in the inauguration of the post-9/11 era (for committing the eponymous act of terrorism against the World Trade Center and Pentagon) as well as the post-2011 world. Or, these networks and their successors were at least ostensibly decisive actors since the United States foreign policy elite have justified most post-Soviet interventionism through invocations of anti-terrorism. As such, this study places heavy importance on these international Islamist terror networks' role in the GNCWS, especially as chaotic and unwieldy tools of the Atlanticist powers.

Gone too are the days when the American public, politicians, and soldiers could afford to earnestly, or delusionally, believe that their client tyrants and bombing campaigns would be welcomed as liberation. As if the Iraqis pulled from the rubble, killed or wounded “accidentally on purpose” via the depraved indifference of the bombing of populated urban centers with supposedly precise high-yield high-fragmentation *smart bombs* should be thankful for the opportunity.⁵⁶ In this new geopolitical era, marked by the rise of peer competitors

⁵⁵ Tim Beal, “Weaponizing Europe, Countering Eurasia: Mackinder, Brzezinski, Nuland and the Road to the Ukraine War,” *International Critical Thought* 13 no. 1 (March 29, 2023): 56-88, <https://doi.org/10.1080/21598282.2023.2188575>. To Brzezinski “Countries such as Afghanistan and Ukraine are pawns to be used when possible and sacrificed when necessary.”

⁵⁶ Bruce Cronin, “Reckless endangerment warfare: Civilian casualties and the collateral damage exception in international humanitarian law,” *Journal of Peace Research* 50 no. 2 (March 2013): 176; Marc W. Herold, chapter “Unworthy” Afghan Bodies: “Smarter” U.S. Weapons Kill More Innocents, in *Inventing*

in Russia and China, there is no room to further entertain the idealistic neoconservative notion that a people will happily cheerlead their destruction and destitution at the hands of the foreign power that annihilated: ways of life, people, homes, pets, eateries, water purification systems, roads, electrical grids, and—as Israel continues to methodically and systematically make crystal clear with American bombs in Gaza—hospitals.⁵⁷ As one now infamous story told by Iraq War Veteran, Mike Prysner, relays, the American invaders were, according to the Iraqi civilians made to suffer their belligerence, “worse than Saddam.”⁵⁸

In the words of David Harvey, “Freedom is only a word,” and a word with less and less meaning or significance as the living standards of a local population

Collateral Damage: Civilian Casualties, War, and Empire, ed. Stephen J. Rockel, Rick Halpern, (Ontario : Between the Lines, 2009), 311.

⁵⁷ United Nations, “Nearly 600 attacks on healthcare in Gaza and West Bank since war began,” WHO,” UN News, January 5, 2024, <https://news.un.org/en/story/2024/01/1145317>.

⁵⁸ Mike Prysner, “Mike Prysner Full Speech 2008 Winter Soldier in Maryland,” Youtube video, uploaded December 9, 2013, 6:35-7:30, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B6L9NTpkYnl&ab_channel=John. “I tried hard to be proud of my service but all I could feel was shame and racism could no longer mask the occupation. These were people. These were human beings. I’ve since been plagued by guilt anytime I see an elderly man, like the one who couldn’t walk and we rolled onto a stretcher, told the Iraqi police to take him away. I feel guilt anytime I see a mother with her children like the one who cried hysterically and screamed that we were worse than Saddam as we forced her from her home. I feel guilt anytime I see a young girl like the one I grabbed by the arm and dragged into the street. We were told we were fighting terrorists, but the real terrorist was me and the real terrorism is this occupation. Racism within the military has long been an important tool to justify the destruction and occupation of another country. It has long been used to justify the killing, subjugation, and torture of another people. Racism is a vital weapon deployed by this government.”

decline.⁵⁹ Or, in the words of “cultural critic” Mathew Arnold, quoted by Harvey, “freedom is a very good horse to ride, but to ride somewhere.”⁶⁰ With regard to Libya and OUP’s legacy, which was justified on humanitarian grounds against the Gaddafi regime’s human rights abuses (many such accusations real, and many, especially the most notable accusations leveled in early 2011 unsubstantiated if not entirely fabricated) and decades of dictatorial rule, would anyone dare to characterize post-Gaddafi Libya as free?⁶¹

Could one argue the rise of open-air slave markets in Libyan cities, under the control of AQ and ISIS by 2015, was a “very good horse to ride,” which is also representative of Libya’s free (and thus preferable) choices? To see this is not the case, one must undertake the extremely rigorous intellectual-*athlon* of assuming Libyans, Iraqis, or others outside the pan-European world, also value their lives, value their physical, financial, and emotional well-being: of which they would prefer to increase or maintain while avoiding their diminishment. Diminishment which would, ever so shockingly to the supposedly enlightened and self-ordained civilized world, cause them to feel pain and anguish comparable to the Atlanticist *Übermensch*. As will be shown in the following chapter’s historiographical review of related academic literature, even this

⁵⁹ Harvey, *A Brief History of Neoliberalism*, 6.

⁶⁰ Harvey, *A Brief History of Neoliberalism*, 6.

⁶¹ Perhaps Donald Rumsfeld would, as he reacted to the explosion of disorder in Iraq that, “Stuff happens!” and “freedom’s untidy.” Mann, *Rise of the Vulcans*, 365.

meager intellectual exercise is beyond many, including NATO officials who make up their intellectual high command.

CHAPTER TWO:

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS AND INSTITUTIONAL ACADEMIC BIASES

We have been arguing that the separate boxes of analysis - what in universities are called the disciplines - are an obstacle, not an aid, to understanding the world. We have been arguing that social reality within which we live... we call a world-system. We have been saying that this world-system has had many institutions - states, and interstate system, productive firms, households, classes, identity groups of all sorts - and that these institutions form a matrix which permits the system to operate but at the same time simulates both the conflicts and the contradictions which permeate the system.

-Immanuel Wallerstein, *World-Systems Analysis: An Introduction*, 2004.⁶²

The following chapter examines a cross-section of relevant scholarship incorporates the work of historians, as well as political scientists, economists, anthropologists, sociologists, philosophers, journalists, investigative reporters, and specialized analysts covering works that consider not just Operation Unified Protector (OUP) and Libyan history generally, but world-systems analysis, international relations, processes of economic and cultural globalization, United States foreign policy, neoliberalism, humanitarian interventionism, international terrorism, and the manipulation of humanitarian and liberal rhetoric by pan-European foreign policy elites directly relevant to the present study. Thorough consideration of these broad and interdisciplinary, (or what Wallerstein would call “unidisciplinary”) sources is necessary to properly contextualize the

⁶² Immanuel Wallerstein, *World-Systems Analysis: An Introduction* (London: Duke University Press, 2004), x.

global enormity conveyed by this study's conclusions on the inauguration of a new post-OUP historical era defined by endemic chaos and the United States' diminished hegemonic position born of a strategy of constructive instability, or the intentional destabilization of Libya.⁶³

This places the study in a lineage of Third Worldist, post-colonial, anti-interventionist, and international relations academic theory, Libyan history, and United States foreign policy analysis. The following chapter will preemptively address anticipated counterpoints (often emotionally-potent oversimplifications, thought-terminating cliches, and circular ideological tautologies) and details the ideological fault lines which divide authors on their conclusions into generally anti-interventionist and pro-interventionist camps. This offers the reader of any ideological persuasion an honest reflection of this study's reasoning, which the reader will find is beyond many of the authors referenced below and is not provided in their works. This study concludes these authors to be intentionally deceptive or unintentionally blinded by ideological universalism.⁶⁴

⁶³ Wallerstein, *World-Systems Analysis: An Introduction*, 19. Wallerstein calls such an approach unidisciplinary, and not multidisciplinary, because world-systems analysis, while drawing from diverse materials, does not "recognize the intellectual legitimacy" of the compartmentalization of the disciplines.

⁶⁴ Wallerstein, *The Decline of American Power*, 73.

Libya and World-Systems Analysis

Nestled under Europe, its North African shoreline on the Mediterranean Basin receding as Italian and Greek islands protrude south, Libya has long functioned as a historic crossroads positioned between Europe, sub-Saharan Africa, and West Asia. As such Libyan history has “intertwined for thousands of years with the social and economic transformations of Africa, Europe, and the Middle East,” and for this reason, Horace Campbell says “European powers associated control of it as vital to the security and economic well-being of Europe” since the days of the Romans.⁶⁵ Libya’s global interconnectivity also serves to explain how the ramifications, consequences, and blowback of Operation Unified Protector spread hundreds of miles in all directions for well over a decade in the modern globalized world. In his 2021 book, *Libya and the Global Enduring Disorder*, Jason Pack wrote,

Looking to Libya to explain new phenomena in the international system is not as original an approach as you might imagine. From time immemorial, Libya has been acknowledged as the birthplace of novel phenomena. In the fourth century BCE, Aristotle wrote in his *Historia Animalium* that ‘Libya always brings forth something new.’ Over its skies, the world’s first extraterritorial drone war began in April 2019.⁶⁶

According to Pack, “the closer we look at Libya” through an internationalist frame, “key features of our evolving international system” become clear in a Libya-shaped “mirror in which we can watch the forces at play in the current

⁶⁵ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 27.

⁶⁶ Pack, *Global Enduring Disorder*, liv.

global system reflected in real time.”⁶⁷ Pack suggests that the “international system has exited the post-Cold War period...and entered a new historical epoch...characterized by its own structures, trends, and interactions,” that he calls the Global Enduring Disorder which “remains under-researched.”⁶⁸ This study applies world-systems analysis in examination of American foreign policy, Libyan history, and international relations in this post-2011 historical epoch to elucidate the emerging structures, trends, and interactions of Pack’s Global Enduring Disorder.

World-systems analysis emerged during the early 1970s and was popularized by Immanuel Wallerstein.⁶⁹ The thrust of world-systems analysis suggests rigidly compartmentalized disciplines should be discarded, as Wallerstein notes in his 2006 *World-Systems Analysis: An Introduction*, “politics, economics, the social structure, and culture... the phenomenon dealt with in each of these separate boxes are so closely intermeshed that each presumes the other, each affects the other, each is incomprehensible without taking into account the other boxes.”⁷⁰ World-systems analysis was developed to provide a more holistic standard frame of analysis, the world-system, to substitute the

⁶⁷ Pack, *Global Enduring Disorder*, 41-42.

⁶⁸ Pack, *Global Enduring Disorder*, xxii, 211. Rather than scientific conclusions on a data-driven or experimental basis Pack says the goal of such a study is to identity patterns and trendlines which as a professional business and foreign policy analyst producing policy recommendations for pan-European institutions and governments on Libya for twelve years as of 2021, Pack has specialist expertise that legitimates his methodology.

⁶⁹ Wallerstein, *World-Systems Analysis*, 1.

⁷⁰ Wallerstein, *World-Systems Analysis*, x.

standard historical, political, economic, and sociological unit of analysis in the nation.⁷¹

In the preface to this 2006 introduction, Wallerstein wrote,

The media, and indeed the social scientists, constantly tell us that two things dominate the world we have been living in since the last decades of the twentieth century: globalization and terrorism... The U.S. government seems to be playing a central role in furthering one and fighting the other... If we look at globalization and terrorism as phenomena that are defined in limited time and scope, we tend to arrive at conclusions that are as ephemeral as the newspapers.⁷²

Globalization and terrorism are both key aspects to this study which, as Wallerstein notes of most world-systems analyses, goes against “much of the official wisdom of those in power, but also much of the conventional knowledge put forth by social scientists.”⁷³ The United States cultivation of international client-networks of non-state terrorist actors is examined as both a strategy of colonial and neocolonial imperialist domination, and these networks position in the world-system in relation to the United States hegemonic capabilities from 1945 to 2024, in which NATO’s war on Libya in 2011 provides the primary frame of reference. The conclusions reached will be less “ephemeral” than what can be found in newspapers or corporate media thanks to the sweeping geographic and temporal scope to ground findings in a sordid history of clandestine terrorism, coup d’etat, and mass murder as a geopolitical strategy pursued by the United

⁷¹ Wallerstein, *World-Systems Analysis*, 16. The “world” in world-systems implies a system in totality not that the system stretches the entire globe.

⁷² Wallerstein, *World-Systems Analysis*, x.

⁷³ Wallerstein, *World-Systems Analysis*, x.

States in service of attaining unipolar global hegemony then maintaining full spectrum dominance.⁷⁴

The Core-Periphery Relationship, Sovereignty and the Interstate System in the World-System

World-systems analysis is indebted to the “total” integrated methodology of The French Annales group Lucien Febvre, Marc Bloch, and the renowned French Historian Fernand Braudel, whose work was highly influential, most notably his concept of the *longue duree*, a structural unit of time which Wallerstein says “avoided the trap of seeming to assert timeless, eternal truths.”⁷⁵ Wallerstein synthesized Braudel with the concept of the “core-periphery” relationship, which came from Third World theorists in the 1950s who tried to illuminate the inequalities of international trade between weaker peripheries and stronger cores, inspiring the Marxist dependency theorists to “describe the results of the policies of large corporations, major states in the core zones, and interstate agencies which promotes “free trade” in the world-economy.”⁷⁶

⁷⁴ Moshe Terdiman, “The Environmental Message of Radical Islamic and Terrorist Groups,” in *Directions in International Terrorism: Theories, Trends and Trajectories*, (Singapore : Palgrave Macmillan 2021), ed. Hussein Solomon, 91. The United States’ knowing cooperation and utilization of *al-Qaeda* and ISIS adjacent terrorist organizations in Libya as a tactic of intentional destabilization and chaos, termed constructive instability, is assumed to run counter to any traditional neoliberal capitalist or (neo)colonial administrative interests, as ISIS later attacked Libyan oil fields and kidnapped foreigners working on them to “damage the energy industry in Libya” and “interrupt the energy supply to Western countries” while continuing to “destabilize and discredit” the UN recognized and Tripoli-based Libyan Government of National Accord.

⁷⁵ Wallerstein, *World-Systems Analysis*, 18.

⁷⁶ Wallerstein, *World-Systems Analysis*, 12. Historian Andre Gunder Frank called this the “development of underdevelopment.”

The core-periphery designation refers to a dynamic relationship between states or regional groupings of states inside a world-system based on respective divisions of labor and economic production processes that (can) develop and change over time. World-systems analysis expanded on the core-periphery relationship as trade was in fact, just one of the ways this dynamic between weak and strong states played out in a world-system, undergirded by the immutable interstate system which attempts to account for other forms of exploitation or abuse to variable levels through the infringement of state-sovereignty in the exploitative core-periphery relationship.⁷⁷ Wallerstein notes that sovereignty is a key defining aspect of the modern state, originally meaning “totally autonomous state power,” however total sovereignty is checked by the power dynamics of the core-periphery relationship.⁷⁸ Reinforcing this concept of sovereignty under the closely related Wilsonian-term of self-determination, the British Political Scientist Barry Buzan argued that “self-determination is a primary institution of any international system, in other words, a constitutive rule which defines both the players and the rules of the game.”⁷⁹

The 1945 Charter of the United Nations enshrines the right to self-determination in Articles 1(2), as well as Article 55 which states: “With a view to the creation of conditions of stability and well-being which are necessary for

⁷⁷ Wallerstein, *World-Systems Analysis*, 42.

⁷⁸ Wallerstein, *World-Systems Analysis*, 42.

⁷⁹ Giacomina De Bona, *Human Rights in Libya: The Impact of International Society Since 1969*, 50.

peaceful and friendly relations among nations based on respect for the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples, the United Nations shall promote ... universal respect for, and observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language or religion.”⁸⁰ The 1960 UN General Assembly Resolution 1514 (GAR 1514) titled, *The Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Territories and Peoples*, asserts foreign exploitation and subjugation of a peoples constitutes a denial of fundamental human rights, and states that “all peoples have the right to self-determination; by virtue of that right they freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development.”⁸¹

Sovereignty is variable and relational according to Wallerstein because “modern states in fact exist within a larger circle of states, what we have come to call the interstate system,” in which these states always feel their sovereignty ebb and flow against the weight of others.⁸² Gaddafi and Libyans (along with most colonized peoples) likely understood this implicitly, as Gaddafi continuously emphasized the importance of Libyan and African sovereignty and self-sufficiency from the pan-European core. As Robert Jackson proclaimed post-colonial states are “quasi” sovereign (which Gaddafi wanted to lift Libya and African states out of) since they are recognized in international society but are

⁸⁰ De Bona, *Human Rights in Libya*, 50.

⁸¹ De Bona, *Human Rights in Libya*, 50.

⁸² Wallerstein, *World-Systems Analysis*, 42.

ill-equipped to maintain an effective government.⁸³ After the formation of the African Union (AU) in 2002 Gaddafi indirectly referenced this notion of quasi-sovereignty to denote the unequal exchange and power disparities in African-European relations and that the AU could protect and assert the African periphery's sovereignty.⁸⁴

African people's experiences under European colonial administration demonstrated the severity to which sovereignty could be abrogated. Libyans subjected to Italian colonial rule from 1911 to 1943 were shut out of domestic and international trade entirely, shut out of social participation, and lost all bodily autonomy (or sovereignty) as Italians engaged in a policy of "mass killings of women and children," according to Bukola A. Oyeinyi, and hundreds of thousands were forced into concentration camps and gas chambers, where electrocutions, maiming, and dismemberment, disease, and starvation killed "55 percent" of Libyans in the camps by the end of 1930, according to the director of the Italian Army Health Services.⁸⁵ Almost every aspect of their lives came under the rule of the core due to their inability to uphold their sovereignty, which demonstrates the importance of world-systems analysis' expansion of the exploitative dimensions of the core-periphery relationship into a more totalizing

⁸³ De Bona, *Human Rights in Libya*, 49, 50.

⁸⁴ Forte, *Slouching Towards Sirte*, 154.

⁸⁵ , Oyeinyi, *The History of Libya*, 51. The Italian director of the Italian Army Health Services, Dr. Todesky, published *Cerinaica Today*.

framework beyond that of the strictly economic conceptions of earlier Third Worldist and Marxist thinkers of the 1950s.⁸⁶

The interstate system, or the larger circle of states in which states of a constituent world-system form relationships of mutual recognition and participation, was guided by one set of (*de jure* or *de facto*) rules of engagement. Powerful and highly-sovereign states will have more breathing room than the weaker peripheries, who would realistically not be able to punish the powerful cores through traditional means.⁸⁷ If members of the world-system are found to be in violation then “sovereign rights are often restrained for economic or security reasons, a situation which is frequently encountered by post-colonial states.”⁸⁸ The international sanctions the UN placed on Libya (including Resolution 748 on March 31, 1992, and Resolutions 883 on November 11, 1993, and Resolution 1192 on August 27, 1998) as retaliation for their alleged connections to a series of bombings including a 1986 discotheque attack in West Berlin and the 1988 Lockerbie Pan-Am 103 bombing demonstrate this relationship between trade, sovereignty, and the abrogation of each to force coherence with the world-system.⁸⁹

⁸⁶ Wallerstein, *World-Systems Analysis*, 12.

⁸⁷ Wallerstein, *World-Systems Analysis*, 42. Perhaps the earliest example of a *de facto* interstate system, the European Peace of Westphalia in 1648 “codified certain rules of interstate relations that set limits to as well as guarantees relative autonomy. These rules were elaborated and expanded later under the rubric of international law.”

⁸⁸ De Bona, *Human Rights in Libya: The Impact of International Society Since 1969*, 49.

⁸⁹ Oyeniyi, *The History of Libya*, 162.

Though the world-system is not inherently global, Wallerstein's *Historical Capitalism with Capitalist Civilization* (1995) details the evolution of a global capitalist world-system since the fifteenth century up to our modern predicament inside a truly global neoliberal capitalist world-system.⁹⁰ This universal global neoliberal capitalist world-system is the product of previously unimagined hegemonic capabilities of one capitalist state, the United States in the unipolar moment after the disintegration of the USSR in the early 1990s. With its brand of neoliberal capitalism characterized by International Monetary Fund (IMF) mandated structural adjustment programs, all peripheries were now functionally in service of the globalized capitalist neoliberal world-system.⁹¹ Since all the competitive core powers exploitation of the periphery drives their development it is unlikely that the next capable hegemonic successor would bring meaningful change to the interstate system due to material incentives to keep the fundamentally exploitative core-periphery relationship in place. The potential upset of this system from the threat of a regional hegemonic power from the semi-periphery gaining its own sphere of influence (to be crushed by force if necessary per the Wolfowitz Doctrine) becomes clear: as well as contesting said sphere of influence's resources, a regional periphery or semi-periphery which shifted existing dynamics of sovereignty within the world-system it could have cascading effects.

⁹⁰ Immanuel Wallerstein, *Historical Capitalism with Capitalist Civilization* (New York: Verso, 1995), 42.

⁹¹ Wallerstein, *World-Systems Analysis*, 86.

Such was the threat a successful and sovereign Libya under Gaddafi posed to the United States' unipolar hegemony over the world-system. In this case Libya would be theoretically propped up by its own sphere of influence born of its pan-African projects, such as a Libyan gold-backed pan-African currency to exorcize the United States dollar (USD) and the CFA Franc out of Africa, and a united African army to stand against foreign powers.⁹² This makes clear the dynamics inherent to the increased sovereignty of even one periphery/semi-periphery could have rippling outward de-hegemonic effects, which informs the United States' calculations and their gain in shutting Libya down, in Wilkerson's words, to "bash it with hard power" to "keep the world in turmoil so the empire has no threat to it."⁹³

Gaddafi's constant struggle to reassert Libyan sovereignty since his rise to power in 1969 through an array of developmentalist projects and armed resistance suggests that he was at least a more sophisticated or flexible thinker than the American foreign policy elite in their pursuit of full spectrum dominance

⁹² Sidney Blumenthal, email message to Hillary Clinton, "H: France's client & Q's gold. Sid," April 12, 2011, <https://www.foreignpolicyjournal.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/110402-France-client-gold-State-Dept.pdf>. Sidney Blumenthal wrote to Hillary Clinton on April 2, 2011 that according to "sources with access to advisors to Salt al-Islam Qaddafi" that the "Qaddafi's government holds 143 tons of gold and a similar amount in silver... accumulated prior to the current rebellion and was intended to be used to establish a pan-African currency based on the Libyan golden Dinar. This plan was designed to provide the Francophone African Countries with an alternative to the French franc (CFA)," and notes that they believe the gold was moved to Tripoli.

⁹³ Wilkerson, "Empire in Decline," 37:20-37:40.

through sheer military might. This pursuit has been to the detriment of the United States' population, its allies whose economic sovereignty they have relinquished to the United States to the detriment of their own people (as seen in the European powers being forced to end trade with Russia, Iran, or whoever else the United States unilaterally sanctions), and the United States' reputation and soft-power influence.⁹⁴

Furthermore, the People's Republic of China have risen through a developmentalist strategy designed to connect the peripheries into their core-periphery relationship through the construction of infrastructure that is mutually beneficial under the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI).⁹⁵ Gaddafi's pan-African projects and the Chinese BRI could be seen as two interpretations of a similar developmentalist strategy to bolster their sovereignty and regional influence through the cultivation of a less exploitative mutually-beneficial core-periphery relationship.⁹⁶ Other than privatized technological and military developments, it would seem the last time the United States embarked on such a large-scale developmentalist policy of this kind would be Dwight D. Eisenhower's

⁹⁴ LeVine, *Why They Don't Hate Us*, x.

All the way back in 2005 LeVine noted that the United States occupation of Iraq and the United States sanction on the Israeli occupation of Palestinian territories has "eroded America's global standing to an all-time low."

⁹⁵ Kieth Bradsher, "China Invested \$1 Trillion to Gain Global Influence. Can That Go On?" *The New York Times*, October 16, 2023, <https://www.nytimes.com/2023/10/16/business/chinas-belt-and-road-initiative-bri.html>.

⁹⁶ Less is the key operative word here, as many scholars including Wallerstein note they believe the exploitative nature of the core-periphery relationship to be inherent.

interstate highway system in 1956. One year later he would produce “The Eisenhower Doctrine,” which designated the Middle East as vital to United States interests against communism, and he said “the existing vacuum in the Middle East must be filled by the United States before it is filled by Russia.”⁹⁷

The NATO powers' deceit at the UN and overstepping of the UNSCR 1973 pushed both Russia and China definitively towards a more hostile and aggressive posture on the international stage.⁹⁸ In Wallersteinian terms, they felt the United States abrogation of Libyan sovereignty went too far and clarified the dynamics of the United States-led global neoliberal capitalist world-system, which was not a system of mutual relationships of push and pull but one of total domination dressed up with the facade of international law, or the agreed upon rules of engagement of the interstate system.⁹⁹ Dr. Glenn Diesen, Professor at the University of Southeast Norway, describes the way “International law has been systematically dismantled since the 1990s and replaced with the arbitrary

⁹⁷ Christopher M. Davidson, “Why Was Muammar Qadhafi Really Removed?,” 93.

⁹⁸ Aiden Warren and Damian Grenfell, introduction to *Rethinking Humanitarian Intervention*, 2; Shirley V. Scott, “Foreword” in *Rethinking Humanitarian Intervention in the 21st Century*, xiii.

⁹⁹ Glenn Diesen, “Decline of the West and the Liberal Order,” in *The Ukraine War & the Eurasian World Order* (Atlanta: Clarity Press, 2024), epub. “International law in accordance with the UN is based on the Westphalian principle of sovereign equality as ‘all states are equal.’ In contrast, the rules-based international order is a hegemonic system based on sovereign inequality, using international humanitarian law selectively to enable exceptions in international law reserved for U.S.-aligned liberal democracies. Such a system of sovereign inequality follows the principle from George Orwell’s *Animal Farm* that stipulates “all animals [states] are equal but some animals [states] are more equal than others.”

[United States-led] ‘rules-based international order’ that does not consist of any uniform rules,” in his 2024 book *The Ukraine War & the Eurasian World Order*.¹⁰⁰

In the United States-led rules-based international order principles do not exist and “human security or state security is only consistent in terms of aligning with power interests,” or, in other words, the rules apply variably depending on the friendly or enemy status of the state in question as deemed by Washington.¹⁰¹

This rules-based international order “created a two-tiered system of legitimate versus illegitimate states” in which the term is “commonly treated as a synonym of international law, or it is merely defined as international law plus humanitarian law. Yet, the rules of the rules-based international order are never explicitly stated and are nowhere to be found.”¹⁰²

Furthermore, “Humanitarian law introduces principles...enables the collective West to select the principles that correspond with their power interests,” to arbitrarily punish the United States’ enemy-states such as Libya and protect allies’ such as Israel’s exponentially more egregious crimes.¹⁰³ Expanding on this arbitrary weaponization of international law and self-determination Diesen notes,

¹⁰⁰ Glenn Diesen, “Decline of the West and the Liberal Order.” epub.

¹⁰¹ Diesen, “Decline of the West and the Liberal Order,” epub.

¹⁰² Diesen, “Decline of the West and the Liberal Order,” epub.

¹⁰³ Diesen, “Decline of the West,” epub.

Case in point, while the principles of state sovereignty and territorial integrity as enshrined in international law, the principle of self-determination is part of humanitarian law. On one hand, in Kosovo, the West promoted self-determination as a normative right of secession that had to be prioritised above territorial integrity. On the other hand, in South Ossetia and Crimea, the West insisted that the sanctity of territorial integrity as stipulated in the UN Charter must be elevated above self-determination. The term rules-based international order thus covers up the reality of the 'might is right' principle as dominant states decide which rules to apply.¹⁰⁴

Diesen continues, "Justice that is unevenly applied is not justice, instead, it is a weapon of the powerful," often justified via invocations of a pan-European liberal moral supremacy in which liberal democratic rhetoric of human and civil rights is used to whitewash violence and exploitation inherent "to the neoliberal consensus in which economic and political liberalism became a uniform solution to the world," in the post-Cold War period defined by an "excesses of liberalism."¹⁰⁵ This excess and celebration of liberalism in the United States domestic and international mythology "creates a proclivity for exceptionalism," in which:

a neoliberal economic system of unfettered markets, degraded social and political cohesion... subsequently gave rise to an authoritarian and undemocratic liberalism... [which] enabled the corruption of global civil society, and even allowed market forces to manipulate the military and policymaking. Worse, the U.S. has, to some extent, become an irrational actor as its political squabbles at the national level influence its foreign policy in a manner that undermines its security.¹⁰⁶

In the final analysis, it can be said the political squabbling between differing domestic camps inside the government and of Wall Street and "Big Oil"

¹⁰⁴ Diesen, "Decline of the West," epub.

¹⁰⁵ Diesen, "Decline of the West," epub.

¹⁰⁶ Diesen, "Decline of the West," epub.

interests which influenced the United States' planning and execution of OUP is one such example of these domestic political disputes that ultimately influence foreign policy decisions that prove detrimental to the United States' actual domestic national security interests as well as interests abroad.¹⁰⁷ Campbell details the splits between the hesitant State Departments and Pentagon, the jingoist humanitarians in Samantha Power, Hilary Clinton, Susan Rice, and the interests of Big Oil and Wall Street financial institutions throughout *Global NATO and the Catastrophic Failure in Libya*.¹⁰⁸ Ultimately, the financial powerhouses' influence over United States domestic and foreign policy overpowered the hesitation of figures such as Secretary of Defense Robert Gates, who initially opposed intervention at all as well as the later suggestion that Muammar Gaddafi a legitimate target of NATO.¹⁰⁹ These multinational financial influences corrupted beyond the national level and proved to be the driving thrust of the post-Soviet expansion of a Global NATO, which "evolved as an umbrella for the protection of Wall Street and the international economic system dominated by the U.S. oligarchy," against the wishes of wiser geostrategic thinkers such as Goerge Kennan. Invocation of the concept of an "institutional globalization of NATO "gave

¹⁰⁷ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 107. Campbell uses the term Big Oil to refer to the largest and most politically well-connected Western oil conglomerates, sometimes referred to as the "Seven Sisters," popularized by the Italian oil magnate Enrico Mattei in the mid-1900s, which is more accurately now nine sisters which Campbell lists as: "Exxon (Esso), Shell, BP, Gulf, Texaco, Mobil, Socal (Chevron), the *Compagnie Francaise des Petroles* (CFP-Total) and Eni."

¹⁰⁸ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 124-126.

¹⁰⁹ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 115,116.

justification for this expansion of NATO through the notion that “security threats to capitalism were global,” and NATO must act to secure capital investments and free markets.¹¹⁰ To examine this dynamic further the history of the differing concepts of neoliberalism and globalization, amongst other things are detailed below.

Globalization, Neoliberalism, Humanitarian Interventionism, and the “Global Enduring Disorder”

Globalization as a term first appeared in the 1940s and was made ubiquitous in the 1990s as a reference to the interconnectivity of the internet age and the domination of neoliberal economic trade policies.¹¹¹ Historian and Professor of Modern Middle Eastern History at the University of California, Irvine Mark LeVine suggested that the contemporary conception of globalization first emerged in response to shifting dynamics of global capitalism in the 1970s, from a “production to consumer-driven economy” in tandem with the newfound transnational mobility of manufacturers which allowed them to game the “world’s financial systems to reap unheard-of profits, often at the expense of workers *and* shareholders.”¹¹² The transformation into a neoliberal financialized economy, according to LeVine, “can be summed by the following historical comparison: whereas almost a century ago Henry Ford paid his workers extra so that they

¹¹⁰ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 40,41.

¹¹¹ Manfred B. Steger, *Globalization: A Very Short Introduction*, (Oxford : Oxford University Press, 2013) 3rd edition, 1.

¹¹² LeVine, *Why They Don’t Hate Us*, 89.

could afford to buy his Model Ts, today Walmart pays its workers...so little they *can't afford to shop anywhere but Walmart and similar discount megastores.*"¹¹³

LeVine and Wallerstein contend that the processes of globalization have been occurring since the emergence of the modern world-system in the long-sixteenth century, or roughly 1550.¹¹⁴ To arrive at this temporal point of distinction, in his original 1985 essay "Historical Capitalism" (found inside *Historical Capitalism with Capitalist Civilization*) Wallerstein described the evolution of economic relationships, noting that between the years of 1450 and 1650 developments brought about the modern historical system of capitalism which by 1650 constituted an identifiably different system than existed in 1450.¹¹⁵

It is a shame then that, as LeVine suggested, as late as 2005 of nearly 15,000 books on the topic of globalization, most were "wildly inaccurate, deal primarily with economic globalization, or barely touch most of the countries of the MENA in a systematic way."¹¹⁶ This is not surprising given the Eurocentric legacy of academia, further exacerbated by the profit-driven neoliberal frame of reference which considers only economic aspects of globalization, incentivized

¹¹³ LeVine, *Why They Don't Hate Us*, 89.

¹¹⁴ LeVine, *Why They Don't Hate Us*, 3; Wallerstein, *World-Systems Analysis*, 23. As Mark LeVine defines globalization, "the term was coined in the 1980s as a verbal noun to refer to the expansion of multinational corporations into new markets in untapped regions of the world."

¹¹⁵ Immanuel Wallerstein, *Historical Capitalism with Capitalist Civilization*, (New York: Verso, 1995), 42.

¹¹⁶ LeVine, *Why They Don't Hate Us*, 3.

by the neoliberal business-elite that formed the early disciples of globalization.¹¹⁷

LeVine makes a strong case that resembles world-systems analysis, “globalization encompasses and impacts every sphere of life and can only be understood holistically,” and that “mainstream economists in particular distort statistics and history to justify an argument that globalization is ultimately a positive force, when the data largely suggests the opposite.”¹¹⁸

Early bestsellers on the topic such as Kenichi Ohmae’s *The End of the Nation State* (1995) and Thomas Friedman’s *The Lexus and the Olive Tree* (1999) “left their readers with the simplistic impression that globalization was an inevitable techno-economic juggernaut spreading the logic of capitalism and Western values by eradicating local traditions and national cultures.”¹¹⁹ This is a problematic and reductive view, especially without any analysis from the perspective of the Global South, which LeVine and Wallerstein expand on. LeVine thoroughly skewers globalization experts who produced lengthy reports that omitted the legacy of imperialism and blamed post-colonial states for their underdevelopment. Friedman suggested the poor of the world “just want to go to

¹¹⁷ As will be discussed shortly, many respected and serious scholars and analysts from the pan-European / Atlanticist zeitgeist keep this Eurocentric, often blatantly racist conception of the inhabitants and cultures of the MENA and the Global South in general.

¹¹⁸ LeVine, *Why They Don’t Hate Us*, 90.

¹¹⁹ Manfred B. Steger, *Globalization: A Very Short Introduction*, (Oxford : Oxford University Press, 2013) 3rd edition, 1.

Disneyland” and promoted the wonders of the digital age at a time 95 percent of the 415 million Arabs in the world did not even own a phone.¹²⁰

Other genius neoliberal policy wonks would recommend to the Arab states to just “close a growing knowledge gap” (increase spending on education) and to increase spending on health care by two percent of GDP while neither the core or peripheral entire economies grew at that rate, and told the Arab states to increase the production of food while the United States increased subsidies for its farmers and flooded the developing world with below-market value grain through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).¹²¹ This was while the Bush Administration spent \$100 billion annually in Iraq and claimed they had no money to continue funding the paltry foreign aid programs that existed.¹²² When dismal statistics were reported such as one fifth of the Arab population survived off of less than \$2 USD a day, or it would take 140 years for the average Arab to double their measly income while core nations' populations were projected to double their much higher income in under ten years, then it was their inherent backwardness or Islam that held them back from adapting to modernity.¹²³

¹²⁰ LeVine, *Why They Don't Hate Us*, 28.

¹²¹ LeVine, *Why They Don't Hate Us*, 38, 45.

¹²² LeVine, *Why They Don't Hate Us*, 38.

¹²³ LeVine, *Why They Don't Hate Us*, 27, 38, 45.

Neoliberal Economic and International Relations Theory

Globalization and neoliberalism can be invoked as meaningless buzzwords or as serious and deeply intertwined concepts. In his 2005 rebuttal to the Bush administration *Why They Don't Hate Us: Lifting the Veil on the Axis of Evil*, LeVine defines neoliberal globalization as:

the dominant ideology of the major industrial powers and international financial institutions (both 'public' institutions such as the World Bank and IMF and 'private' institutions such as international banks) that govern the international economy...the process of global economic integration based on principles of supposedly 'free' trade and markets, low tariffs and taxes, free exchange rates, and the privatization and liberalization of national economies. In the developing world, such policies are usually accomplished by the use of structural adjustment programs administered by the World Bank and IMF whose goal is to 'open' countries to private, usually Western corporate, interests... historically such policies have not led to greater global integration, distribution of wealth and/or resources, or more open migration policies. Instead they have led to greater concentration of wealth, inequality, and conflict.¹²⁴

These policies of deregulation and the privatization of state-owned enterprises (SOE's) allow the logic of the market to operate as efficiently as possible which, according to their most vocal advocates, brings with them liberal democratic individualist ideals (thus, neoliberalism: the new means of liberalism).¹²⁵

However, LeVine notes that as of 2005 it is "increasingly clear" in the post-Cold War era that "a global agenda of democratization, peace, and self-determination on the one hand, and neoliberal liberalization on the other, are incompatible.

Humanity have neoliberalism as its governing system or it can achieve peace,

¹²⁴ LeVine, *Why They Don't Hate Us*, 4.

¹²⁵ Naomi Klein, *The Shock Doctrine: The Rise of Disaster Capitalism*, (New York: Picador, 2007), 63; Harvey, *A Brief History of Neoliberalism*, 5.

democratization, and truly global integration, but not both.”¹²⁶ LeVine substantiates this through examination of data to show “the requirements of neoliberal structural adjustment programs increasingly force countries to choose between training more bankers and accountants” than invest in national development leading to “fragmented safety nets, lowering of health services and other social services” in the context of “globalized trade and cuts to aid budgets” which creates “an ever-greater chasm between the richest and poorest countries,” as neoliberal economics does on the domestic front.¹²⁷

The disparities between the rich and the poor, and neoliberal rhetoric and reality are further detailed in the research of multiple noteworthy individuals such as: award-winning journalist and *New York Times* bestselling author, professor at the University of British Columbia Naomi Klein describes in her 2007 *The Shock Doctrine*, and Distinguished Professor of Anthropology at the City University of New York David Harvey’s 2005 *A Brief History of Neoliberalism*, as well as Bevin’s *The Jakarta Method*. All of which notes these supposedly well-intended market reforms based on the notion the free market will secure individual freedoms are not what they are marketed as. As Harvey notes, in places that undertook neoliberal economic reform that “the benefits of revived capital accumulation were highly skewed under forced privatization,” with such persistently high levels of social inequality they must be “regarded as structural”

¹²⁶ LeVine, *Why They Don’t Hate Us*, 98.

¹²⁷ LeVine, *Why They Don’t Hate Us*, 105.

to neoliberalism.¹²⁸ Harvey continues, noting that neoliberalization should be viewed “as a *utopian* project to realize a theoretical design for the reorganization of international capitalism or as a *political* project to re-establish the conditions for capital accumulation and to restore the power of economic elites.”¹²⁹ It is the latter political project that uses the utopian language as a rhetorical smokescreen to consolidate class power.

Neoliberal economic theory was developed and popularized in the University of Chicago’s Economics Department, cultivated by Milton Friedman’s vision of, in Klein’s words, “pure capitalism, cleansed of all interruptions - government regulations, trade barriers, and entrenched interests,” and obsession with natural balance.¹³⁰ Friedman compared market forces to nature, like a self-regulating ecosystem, “the market, left to its own devices, would create just the right number of products at precisely the right prices, produced by workers at just the right wages to buy those products.”¹³¹ Klein compares this radical free-market fundamentalism to a faith “for its true believers, a closed loop. The starting premise is that the free market is a perfect scientific system, one in which individuals, acting on their own self-interested desires, create maximum benefits for all.”¹³² And if this utopian project started to stumble in any way, “It follows intellectually that if something is wrong within a free-market economy... it has to

¹²⁸ Harvey, *A Brief History of Neoliberalism*, 16.

¹²⁹ Harvey, *A Brief History of Neoliberalism*, 19.

¹³⁰ Naomi Klein, *The Shock Doctrine: The Rise of Disaster Capitalism*, 60.

¹³¹ Klein, *The Shock Doctrine*, 61.

¹³² Klein, *The Shock Doctrine*, 62.

be because the market is not truly free... The Chicago solution is always the same: a stricter and more complete application of the fundamentals.”¹³³

Of course, no market system on the planet functioned like this then, or now, so how did they observe data points or test hypotheses? Through computer and mathematical equations Friedman was able to advocate against the tide of Keynesianism by convincing others his positions were intellectually haughty, and not self-interested. Friedman could argue for the abolition of Keynesian policies (such as the minimum wage and corporate taxes) that were seen to have pulled the country out of The Great Depression and were “costing the corporate sector dearly,” without the rightful suspicion such suggestions invoked when coming from factory owners.¹³⁴ As Klein notes, “The enormous benefit of having corporate views funneled through academic, or quasi-academic, institutions not only kept the Chicago School flush with donations but, in short order, spawned the global network of right-wing think tanks,” and with his first book *Capitalism and Freedom* (1962), Friedman forged “the economic agenda of the neoconservative movement.”¹³⁵ This neoliberal economic agenda informed the neocons’ aggressive foreign policy in which “states that did not adhere to this mantra [neoliberalism] felt the full weight of the political and military power of the international financial oligarchy,” which as Campbell notes, was mobilized

¹³³ Klein, *The Shock Doctrine*, 62.

¹³⁴ Klein, *The Shock Doctrine*, 63.

¹³⁵ Klein, *The Shock Doctrine*, 68.

through a conception of a Global NATO that served as “transnational military force” in the post-Cold War era.¹³⁶

OUP cemented the bipartisan adoption of this neoliberal economic and foreign policy agenda, already begun by Clinton Administration’s expansions of NATO, along the dictates of the neoconservatives, as explained by Wesley Clark and featured in the front matter of this study. As noted in the introduction, the deceptive execution of OUP that blatantly exceeded the mandate of UNSCR 1973 accelerated the decline of the United States’ unipolar hegemony into an ongoing de-hegemonic cyclical feedback-loop which Wallerstein predicted and the United States now finds itself stuck in, currently thrashed between two rocks in Ukraine and the Middle East at time of writing in 2024.¹³⁷ As Glenn Diesen details this self-defeating phenomenon, “Hegemony tends to become unsustainable as the costs of an empire become unaffordable and its legitimacy collapses. The liberal hegemonic order had predictable problems. Preserving unipolarity exhausted U.S. economic resources, challenged the norms of state sovereignty, and the reliance on coercion undermined legitimacy.”¹³⁸

The ways the neoliberal economic agenda (as well as neoliberal international relations (IR) theory) fit hand-in-glove with the neoconservative’s militant interventionism will be examined below. The dictates of neoliberal IR theory should not be taken at face value, much as the previous examination of

¹³⁶ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 40.

¹³⁷ Wallerstein, *World-Systems Analysis*, 58-59.

¹³⁸ Diesen, “Decline of the West and the Liberal Order,” epub.

neoliberal economics demonstrated it should not be. However it is useful to examine the function of Euro-centric academia which offers intellectualized justifications for the abuses of the state in general rather than Libya and OUP in particular (which works on OUP and Libya specifically are examined at length below).¹³⁹ The ideological promises of democratization, liberal values, and economic gains offered by neoliberal doctrine, summarized euphemistically as ‘the freer the market the freer the people,’ cannot be taken seriously. As noted by Harvey, data driven works by Gerard Dumenil and Dominique Levy conclude neoliberalism “was from the very beginning a project to achieve the restoration of class power.”¹⁴⁰ The ideological promises instead simply serve as rhetorical justifications for whatever means necessary to achieve the restoration of elite power, and should not be mistaken as genuine motivations or intended consequences of neoliberalism.¹⁴¹ Adapting the function of Dumenil and Levy’s conception of the neoliberal economic rhetorical justification to the IR theory lends it a stricter coherence to reality.

Neoliberal IR theorists promote the liberal-democratic state as the best fundamental baseline unit of the international system, in which anarchy is

¹³⁹ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 141-153. As Horace Campbell notes, these intellectual exercises and justifications are a form of narrative control or information warfare (or even a psychological operation) intended for the pan-European audience, as Africans and the previously colonized people of the world are likely to reflexively reject these assertions on the basis of their own historical experiences.

¹⁴⁰ Harvey, *A Brief History of Neoliberalism*, 16.

¹⁴¹ Harvey, *A Brief History of Neoliberalism*, 16.

inherent and the state acts as a rational agent that maximizes its interests in the international arena- adapting the capitalist doctrine of individuals as rational self-interest maximizing agents in the marketplace to the state.¹⁴² These theorists suppose the liberal-democratic state is the most cooperative and least likely to wage war since its leaders are supposedly accountable to the population and human rights are respected.¹⁴³ It is believed that cooperation amongst states, and the creation of international institutions that foster economic interdependence (in other words, institutions that foster the processes of globalization) can replace the anarchy of the international system with order.¹⁴⁴ Thus, the spread of liberal-democracy and neoliberal economic institutions is seen as a win-win towards creating a sustained peace and mutual economic benefits according to the neoliberal IR theory.¹⁴⁵ Further highlighting an innate interventionist tendency, the neoliberal order favors a hegemonic power able to supplant the natural balance of power between competing states, like that of the United States in its pursuit of full spectrum dominance.¹⁴⁶ In such a system the paradoxical incentives for the supposedly peaceful neoliberal states to enact

¹⁴² De Bona, *Human Rights in Libya*, 7.

¹⁴³ De Bona, *Human Rights in Libya*, 7.

¹⁴⁴ De Bona, *Human Rights in Libya*, 7-11.

¹⁴⁵ De Bona, *Human Rights in Libya*, 12.

¹⁴⁶ Diesen, "Decline of the West and the Liberal Order," epub; De Bona, *Human Rights in Libya*, 9. As Diesen explains the phenomena, "The paradox of liberal internationalism is that liberal democracies often demand that they dominate international institutions in order to defend democratic values from the control of the majority."

further interventionist measures abroad to create similar neoliberal liberal-democracies is clear.

The realist school considers the balance of power between competing states as a deterrent to conflict, while the neoliberals consider the balance of power competition a hurdle to international cooperation that bolsters authoritarian regimes (ironic considering the United States' proclivity to install authoritarian client regimes across the globe).¹⁴⁷ Functionally, neoliberal IR theory greases the tracks for Western interventionist policy motivated by neoliberal economics. Synthesizing neoliberal IR theory with Harvey, Dumenil, and Levy's commentary on the function of the rhetoric of neoliberal economics, and if the given humanitarian motivations of neoliberal IR theory are assumed to be shallow rhetorical justifications for the consolidation of the economic elite's wealth and power, then neoliberal IR theory becomes ideologically coherent with reality.¹⁴⁸ In this formulation war and conflict is understood as the product and tool of neoliberal capitalist elites motivated to force states into an interlinked global network of neoliberal trade relationships. Democratic and humanitarian concerns can be waived off and the spoils of the economic system are filtered up to the elites. Once illuminated in this way, international integration into the neoliberal network of trade, or globalization, is not as benevolent a concept as the win-win economic integration the neoliberal IR theorists suggest.¹⁴⁹ Instead, the

¹⁴⁷ De Bona, *Human Rights in Libya*, 8- 9.

¹⁴⁸ Harvey, *A Brief History of Neoliberalism*, 16.

¹⁴⁹ De Bona, *Human Rights in Libya*, 12.

relationship is defined by exploitation understood in the core-periphery relationship. The 'well-intentioned' aspects of neoliberal theory function as an ideological cover, in the same fashion humanitarian rhetoric given as justification for the destruction of Libya and the launch of OUP served as a weapon, quickly cast aside when convenient.

In the words of French philosopher Jacques Derrida, commenting on globalization, but also inherently commenting on neoliberalism as well, "globalization is not taking place. It is a simulacrum, a rhetorical artifice or weapon that dissimulates a growing imbalance... a hypermediatized noncommunication and tremendous accumulation of wealth."¹⁵⁰ This growing imbalance of wealth (or, the restoration of class power), as well as the complete dissolution of humanitarian notions offered as justifications for neoliberal economic policy (the "rhetorical artifice or weapon that dissimulates a growing imbalance") is glaringly evident and inherent to the GNCWS.¹⁵¹ Economic inequality is endemic to neoliberal capitalist economies twice over, domestically a class of economic elites (comprador class) embrace repressive authoritarianism to consolidate their grip on power as they are enriched. Internationally the periphery states natural and human resources are drained Westward, while those core powers prop up their favored authoritarian figures.

¹⁵⁰ LeVine, *Why They Don't Hate Us*, 286.

¹⁵¹ LeVine, *Why They Don't Hate Us*, 286.

This dynamic of dual exploitation on the domestic and international front is exemplified by the neoliberal experiment in Chile, following the “little September 11th’ of 1973,” as Harvey calls the United States-backed military coup against the country's democratically elected leader, Salvador Allende.¹⁵² The tide of repression in the name of neoliberal capitalism against Third World Developmentalism turned not just Chile, but dozens of countries into killing fields. This was supposedly done to contain the spread of communism throughout the globe, and Allende was ostensibly the first Marxist to win in a democratic election. However, the majority of countries the United States toppled or sponsored violent opposition within were not communist, but some form of resource nationalist, developmentalist, Keynesian, or social democracy. This belligerent foreign policy, justified by anti-communism while attacking developmentalist non-free market states, aligned with the neoliberal economic theory of Friedman and the Chicago School. Their mission, according to Klein, is “stripping the market” of “interruptions so the free market could sing. For this reason, the Chicagoans did not see Marxism as their true enemy. The real source of the trouble was to be found in the ideas of the Keynesians in the United States, the social democrats in Europe, and the developmentalists in what was then called the Third World.”¹⁵³

¹⁵² Harvey, *A Brief History of Neoliberalism*, 7.

¹⁵³ Klein, *The Shock Doctrine*, 64.

On its own terms, neoliberalism would be amongst the greatest ideological failures in both the school of economics and international relations, along with the conceptualization of globalization often touted by such neoliberal advocates, as LeVine methodically proves in chapters two and three of *Why They Don't Hate Us*.¹⁵⁴ Even if the good intentions are taken at face value, and the dismal historical track record of these ideas dismissed, the coercive hard and soft power employed by the United States is regularly so destructive to civilian infrastructure, and deadly to civilians, they should prove the notions of humanitarian intervention and military operations mutually exclusive.¹⁵⁵ This logic informs arguments pertaining to the abuse of human rights and humanitarian rhetoric in OUP and Libya specifically, such as that found in the 2012 book *Human Rights in Libya: the Impact of International Society Since 1969* by Giacomina De Bona.

Humanitarian Interventionism and Warfighting Capabilities

Prior to Milton Friedman's popularization of the doctrine term neoliberal at the University of Chicago, the United States intervened to secure Iranian oil fields in 1953 and Guatemalan farmland in 1954 against the democratic will of the

¹⁵⁴ LeVine, *Why They Don't Hate Us*, 26. LeVine singles out Francis Fukuyama's *End of History*, Thomas Friedman's *The Lexus and the Olive Tree*, and Samuel Huntington's *The Clash of Civilizations* as the "sacred texts" of neoliberal globalization and "foundational texts of US foreign policy in the global era" that "exhibit an ideological passion" and contain "factual and historical inaccuracies, methodological inconsistencies, and unstated but clear political agendas."

¹⁵⁵ Paul James, "Humanitarian Intervention? Responding Ethically to Globalising Violence in the Age of Mediated Violence," in *Rethinking Humanitarian Intervention in the 21st Century*, 145-163.

people were justified by the illegitimate specter of communism, which fit rather cleanly into the neoliberal and neoconservative *modus operandi* (MO). This anti-democratic and pro-authoritarian streak characterized the United States' foreign policy through the Cold War when it favored Western market preference while the Atlanticist powers justified their existence and neocolonial interventionism based on the supposed moral superiority of their liberal democratic states. As such the United States took it upon itself "to interfere in the domestic affairs of other states under the banner of promoting democracy, to topple governments under the guise of supporting democratic revolutions, and even to invade other states under the concept of humanitarian interventionism."¹⁵⁶

However, as scholars in *Rethinking Humanitarian Intervention in the 21st Century*, and LeVine's "Chaos and Globalization in the Middle East" note, military intervention is highly unlikely to produce a society primed for liberal ideals but instead creates the conditions ripe for increased strife since, "Globalization is aberrant in its complexity, and global dynamics do not yield simple choices between binary opposites of order and disorder, control or chaos."¹⁵⁷ On that note, the following will examine key writings on the concept of humanitarian

¹⁵⁶ Diesen, "Decline of the West and the Liberal Order," epub.

¹⁵⁷ Paul Battersby, "Changing Patterns of Social Connection across Interventions: Unravelling Aberrant Globalisation," in *Rethinking Humanitarian Intervention in the 21st Century*, 95; Mark LeVine, "Chaos and Globalization in the Middle East," *Asian Journal of Social Science* 11, no. 3 (2005): 394-411.

interventionism with a focus on the inherent contradictions to using lethal force in a humanitarian way.

Militarized humanitarian intervention in Libya did not just fail to increase notions of liberal democracy, any existing aspects of liberal-democratic ideals sublimated into radical conservative jihadi and tribal ideology, like clouds of dry ice vaporized in the air. Associate Professor and Deputy Dean of the Global and Language Studies of the School of Global Studies at RMIT University, Melbourne, Paul Battersby notes in his chapter “Changing Patterns of Social Connection across Interventions: Unravelling Aberrant Globalisation” inside of *Rethinking Humanitarian Intervention in the 21st Century*, “international action to address selected strategic challenges, in the current global context, merely manufactures new uncertainties. There is extensive evidence that armed interventions provoke protracted asymmetric retaliation on the part of those displaced by traumatic regime change. In the interconnected contemporary global system, the effects of these displacements have regional and global ramifications.”¹⁵⁸

Historian of the Atlantic World at the University of Cambridge, Bronwen Everill’s chapter “The Evolution of Economic Interventions and the Violence of International Accountability over the longue durée,” inside of *Rethinking Humanitarian Intervention in the 21st Century*, connects these ideological strands further to the militarized logic of humanitarian intervention to the long history of

¹⁵⁸ Battersby, “Unravelling Aberrant Globalisation,” 94.

Western interventions justified by humanitarian and developmentalist rhetoric in “civilizing missions” across Africa since the 1800s.¹⁵⁹ Everill also notes the strange conflation of human rights with democracy which has allowed for regime change operations to be legitimized as humanitarian without any material evaluations of the well-being of the populace or harm that a military operation will almost inevitably bring.¹⁶⁰

Everill noted this strange conflation between human rights and democracy is a lingering aspect of, what Wallerstein would call, the pan-European world’s “diffusion” of the concept of “civilization,” which indoctrinated racist beliefs that the white pan-European world alone was host to civilization that stood opposed to the rest of the supposedly savage and primitive world.¹⁶¹ This refusal to recognize the lives and cultures of others as equally valuable, as inherently lacking the civilizational capabilities ‘we’ possess, allowed Obama to declare “There is no question Libya—and the world— would be better off with Gaddafi out of power,” due to the fantastical belief that the Libyans, or Iraqis, only need exposure to our enlightened culture, for which they will be grateful to be so graciously offered a chance at civilization which they are inherently incapable of producing.¹⁶² Only in such a delusional conception can militarized Western

¹⁵⁹ Bronwen Everill, “The Evolution of Economic Interventions and the Violence of International Accountability over the *longue durée*,” in *Rethinking Humanitarian Intervention*, 77.

¹⁶⁰ Everill, “The Evolution of Economic Interventions and the Violence of International Accountability over the *longue durée*,” 74.

¹⁶¹ Wallerstein, *World-Systems Analysis*, 66.

¹⁶² Forte, *Slouching Towards Sirte*, 83.

intervention become a virtue in the minds of these pan-European imperialists whose psyches are stained by the blood of millions of colonized people over centuries.

When considering the history of Western intervention in service of neoliberal economics the motivations in neoliberal IR theory (world peace, human rights, and democracy) are insulting when sold with the straight face and vigor of a used car salesman. Rawls, Mueller, and Fukuyama's assertions in the 1990s, that war is repulsive to liberal societies and would soon grow obsolete as a tool of international diplomacy were set alight in 1991 on the Iraqi Highway of Death.¹⁶³ The neoconservatives returned to finish off this anti-war idealism, as well as Iraq, in the Shock and Awe bombing campaigns of 2003.¹⁶⁴

Professor of Political Science and Department Chair at the Colin Powell School for Civic and Global Leadership at the City College of New York, Bruce Cronin's "Reckless endangerment warfare: Civilian casualties and the collateral damage exception in international law," details how the United States stretches the principles of just action in war and international humanitarian law (IHL) to their limit.¹⁶⁵ Cronin contextualizes policies such as the doctrine of Rapid Dominance in the Iraq War of 2003, colloquially known as "Shock and Awe," as a

¹⁶³ De Bona, *Human Rights in Libya*, 9.

¹⁶⁴ Klein, *The Shock Doctrine*, 3. According to the "Shock and Awe: Achieving Rapid Dominance" United States military doctrine for war in Iraq "Shock and Awe are actions that create fears, dangers, and destruction that are incomprehensible to the people at large."

¹⁶⁵ Bruce Cronin, "Reckless endangerment warfare: Civilian casualties and the collateral damage exception in international law," 175.

policy of terrorism, purposefully spreading “terror among the civilian population, prohibited under IHL.”¹⁶⁶ Marc W. Herold, professor at the University of New Hampshire, in his chapter “‘Unworthy’ Afghan Bodies ‘Smarter’ U.S. Weapons Kill More Innocents” (found inside the 2005 book *Inventing Collateral Damage: Civilian Casualties, War, and Empire*) considers the United States military’s habitual and willing decisions to drop high-yield explosives into populated civilian centers the act of killing civilians “deliberately by mistake.”¹⁶⁷ This act of killing civilians “deliberately by mistake” is an example of what Cronin terms “Depraved Indifference Warfare.”¹⁶⁸ In both conceptions the notion of collateral damage is a purposeful rhetorical misdirection from the fact that such actions will *necessarily* and knowingly kill civilians, implicitly making each bomb dropped in populated urban center an act of targeting a non-combatant indiscriminately. This rhetorical misdirection is a further sleight of hand that bolsters the deception of “smart” bombs and precision-guided munitions, which gives the false impression that dropping such weapons in urban centers *can* constitute discrete and targeted strikes rather than indiscriminate ones.¹⁶⁹

Furthermore, the use of advanced technology calls into question the basic principles and assumptions of warfare. Paul James, professor at the University of

¹⁶⁶ Cronin, “Reckless endangerment warfare,” 179.

¹⁶⁷ Herold, “‘Unworthy’ Afghan Bodies: ‘Smarter’ U.S. Weapons Kill More Innocents,” 308.

¹⁶⁸ Cronin, “Reckless endangerment warfare,” 176.

¹⁶⁹ Herold, “‘Unworthy’ Afghan Bodies,” 311; Cronin, “Reckless endangerment warfare,” 182.

Western Sydney and Director of the Institute for Culture and Society, chapter found in *Rethinking Humanitarian Intervention in the 21st Century*, “Humanitarian Intervention? Responding Ethically to Globalising Violence in the Age of Mediated Violence,” argues that drone warfare creates an arbitrary and detached culture of “abstracted judgment over life and death” wherein “principles of just action in war are stretched to their breaking point,” by pilots enabled by modern technology to wantonly reign unprecedented levels of destruction with unprecedented levels of ease.¹⁷⁰ From Libya, Iraq, Syria, to Kosovo “the ramifications of waging warfare from an abstract technological distance” is, in the United States, related to in “terms of military efficacy rather than on the political-cultural impacts of how such violence is enacted.”¹⁷¹

The examination of deceptive aspects of globalization, neoliberal economics, and neoliberal IR theory extolled by their advocates in juxtaposition with the material history and reality of policies informed by such up to this point provides important context in which to understand the formulation and execution of OUP as congruent with preexisting dynamics of United States foreign policy. It also provides key prerequisite context to later conceptualize the potential logic of a policy pursuit of constructive instability in the globalized world-system, which LeVine notes the United States foreign policy elite see as a “zero-sum game of

¹⁷⁰ Paul James, “Humanitarian Intervention? Responding Ethically to Globalising Violence in the Age of Mediated Violence,” in *Rethinking Humanitarian Intervention in the 21st Century*, 156.

¹⁷¹ Aiden Warren, Damian Grenfell, “Introduction,” in *Rethinking Humanitarian Intervention*, 6.

winners and losers” in which “the United States needs to be prepared to do whatever it takes to win.”¹⁷² The present study proposes the concept of constructive instability or a purposeful pursuit and instrumentalization of chaos as a geostrategic strategy designed to harm potential rivals themselves or shut out rival beneficiaries from a periphery in the context of the United States’ declining hegemony in this zero-sum game.

Part of the United States’ strategy to combat hegemonic decline has been to adapt the NATO apparatus from a regional defensive alliance to defend Western Europe into a “transnational military force” on an offensive footing designed to protect “Wall Street and the international economic system dominated by the U.S. oligarchy,” what Campbell calls “Global NATO.”¹⁷³ Gaddafi’s threatening rhetoric against civilians in Benghazi provided the public “the excuse it needed” to launch NATO in its new expanded role in 2011 while there was no appetite for an expanded imperial role” in the United States, and NATO countries were aggrieved by their perceived failure in Afghanistan.¹⁷⁴ In the wake of NATO’s belligerence and deception in service of intervention in Libya under the conception of a Global NATO designed to protect Western financial interests abroad, regional powers such as China (whose large investments in Libya by the end of 2010 Campbell, Forte, and others note OUP was in large part designed to eliminate) have emerged as powerful rivals to the United States’

¹⁷² LeVine, *Why They Don’t Hate Us*, 53.

¹⁷³ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 41.

¹⁷⁴ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 45, 46.

unipolar hegemony that are increasingly willing to stand in opposition to what they perceive as unjust manipulation of international law under the rules-based order regime.¹⁷⁵

The underhanded framing of the United States' interventionist tendencies and the rules-based order based off moral supremacy of liberal-democracies has created an interstate system wherein Diesen explains that "Compromising on liberal democratic values...is regarded as signifying a dangerous return to the era of power politics," creating a structure where rather than "resolving conflicts through diplomacy and uniform rules, there is an incentive to manipulate, moralise and propagandise as international disputes are decided by a tribunal of public opinion."¹⁷⁶ Ironically the American foreign policy elites driving Global NATO's deference to financial interests, which superseded those of geostrategic thinkers such as Secretary of Defense Robert Gates who advised against intervention in Libya, for it was not of "vital interest" or wise to attack another country while the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan had no end in sight, likely exacerbated the return of an era of power politics, which as of 2024 appear to be in full swing in Ukraine.¹⁷⁷

In 2021 Jason Pack argued that the conflicts in eastern Ukraine and Libya were "tied by perverse linkages to the world's most advanced economies...epitomized by flows of migrants, arms, aid money, corrupt funds,

¹⁷⁵ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 41.

¹⁷⁶ Diesen, "Decline of the West and the Liberal Order," epub.

¹⁷⁷ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 126.

and disinformation campaigns across borders...[which] push democratic societies to become increasingly illiberal,” while spawning unending conflicts that “major international actors refuse to work together to fix.”¹⁷⁸ Libya and Ukraine demonstrate that conflicts and in countries that may have been viewed as either a “peripheral victim” or “confined to the fringes of the Russian sphere of influence—devoid of geostrategic importance” in a previous era, “in the contemporary globalized world” Pack notes that the conflicts have “fully penetrated” the political dynamics of the “geographically isolated” global hegemon, the United States.¹⁷⁹

Libya and the “Global Enduring Disorder” and Constructive Instability

Pack wrote of Ukraine in 2021, that it is one of the “key nodes” that “produce and emit the violence, hot money, ideology, and media polarization,” and evidence that the world is becoming increasingly “Libyan-ized.”¹⁸⁰ then the less than satisfactory position of Ukrainian forces in 2024, despite masses of weaponry, munitions, explosives, tanks, aircraft, and funding the United States and NATO has provided since Russia invaded in February of 2022 should be extremely alarming, and if Pack’s theory holds provides insight into the global dynamics of the era.¹⁸¹ As of mid-2024, Russia has proven more resilient and capable than most expected, including Obama in 2016, with even greater

¹⁷⁸ Pack, *Global Enduring Disorder*, 43.

¹⁷⁹ Pack, *Global Enduring Disorder*, 43.

¹⁸⁰ Pack, *Global Enduring Disorder*, 43.

¹⁸¹ Pack, *Global Enduring Disorder*, 52.

industrial and productive capacities in the wake of American sanctions designed to smother the Russian economy.¹⁸²

If the conflict and loss of life was not sufficient for serious reflection, then the implications of Russia's economic rise on the future of the world-system should be driving policy recommendations in Washington. However, the American precedent in their foreign policy elite's reaction (or lack thereof) to enduring conflict in Syria and Libya does not provide any assurances, as Pack notes, "My interviews with policymakers involved in the events [in Libya] reveal that top Western officials- from Foreign Ministers Alain Juppe and Hillary Clinton down to the relevant Libya desk officers- were ignorant or simply ignored the implications of how these factors would inherently bear upon attempts at post-conflict reconstruction and institution-building."¹⁸³

Pack, a Libya scholar with postgraduate degree in Global and Imperial History from St. Antony's College, Oxford, and a Senior Analyst for Emerging Challenges at the NATO Defense College Foundation in Rome, is also the founder of the specialized consultancy agency Libya-Analysis LLC. Pack is also the Founder & Emeritus Director of Eye on ISIS, which hosts the Libya Security Monitor website dedicated to verified news on conflicts and armed groups inside

¹⁸² Julia Ioffe, "Stanislav Horuna is Interviewed about Fighting Russia; Biden and NATO Leaders May Meet in Person; Kharkiv Struck 65 Times in One Day," published March 15, 2022, [CNN.com](https://www.cnn.com/2022/03/15/europe/ukraine-war/index.html) - [Transcripts](#).

¹⁸³ Pack, *Global Enduring Disorder*, 44.

Libya.¹⁸⁴ His expertise and association with NATO presumably allowed Pack access to the enigmatic minds of all-time-greats like Hillary Clinton and also lends his analysis and conclusion that the world has entered a distinct, new, post-post Cold War-era defined by endemic chaos across the globe of extreme relevance to this study. Furthermore, Pack openly discusses his biases as a “New York liberal” who worked for business interests in Libya and believed what he now calls the neoliberal globalization myths and “was shocked to gradually uncover” large American corporations were not operating off of the logic of the free market and were obstructing development and political reform in post-Gaddafi Libya to preserve whatever market share they had, even if it wasn't profitable.¹⁸⁵

Many of Pack's conclusions and frameworks prove highly relevant to this study's analysis of the United States' embrace of constructive instability and the destabilization of Libya (and then the global world-system) are adopted and expounded on, adapted, or denied with foresight from 2024.¹⁸⁶ As Pack's thesis is highly relevant to this study and the concept of constructive instability put forth, which would in turn be highly relevant to the inauguration of the Global Enduring Disorder we find ourselves in. Beyond that, Pack's observation that “Self-reinforcing structural factors have been unleashed that separate our current

¹⁸⁴ Jason Pack “Libya Security Monitor,” Libya Analysis, website, <https://www.libya-analysis.com/lsm>.

¹⁸⁵ Pack, *Global Enduring Disorder*, 277.

¹⁸⁶ Pack, *Global Enduring Disorder*, 54.

era from the post-Cold War one that preceded it” is consistent with a strategy of constructive instability unleashing self-reinforcing structural factors that may cause the flames of destabilization to burn long and spread far after the initial policy thrust, as in the case of Libya and OUP.¹⁸⁷ Along with these observations and conclusions, this study adopts Pack’s notion that post-intervention Libya is the “foremost” “microcosm” of the Enduring Disorder, suggesting 2011 and OUP mark the inauguration of a new distinct “post-post-9/11 era,” which he (as should be apparent) calls the Global Enduring Disorder.¹⁸⁸ Pack contends the collapse of the Libyan state is representative of this wider breakdown of the international order, evident in the unwillingness or incapability for nations and leaders to cooperate to solve the largest crises facing the international community today, such as climate change, or the COVID-19 pandemic that ravaged the world starting in 2020, all of which, like destabilized post-Gaddafi Libya, “in a hegemonic international system prioritizing stability,” which the United States has not fostered (or even worked against), “could well have been overcome. In the context of the Enduring Disorder, Libya’s sources of conflict have been exacerbated- pushing the country and in turn the world, towards ever-more frenzied disorder.”¹⁸⁹

These symptoms of global chaos are a product of the waning hegemonic power of the United States—in decline since the invasion of Iraq in 2003 and

¹⁸⁷ Pack, *Global Enduring Disorder*, 333.

¹⁸⁸ Pack, *Global Enduring Disorder*, liii.

¹⁸⁹ Pack, *Global Enduring Disorder*, xxxix, 44, 45.

exacerbated by war on Libya in 2011—and a ubiquitous lack of trust in both the domestic and international sphere, and the consolidation of new regional hegemonic powers in the new (potentially) multipolar geopolitical landscape.¹⁹⁰ Due to these factors regional and hegemonic powers are incentivized to instrumentalize disorder to handicap competitors as an end in itself, with little to no regard or plan for the reconstruction of order or installation of a client government.¹⁹¹ This is distinct from the Cold War wherein the competing poles filled in power vacuums on the geopolitical stage to replicate a new order in their image.¹⁹² This study agrees with these conclusions and adopts them as such.

Along with key influences and frameworks adopted from Pack's 2022 study, his methodology also aligns with much of this studies' own methodology. As both studies deal heavily with the idea of systematic chaos or disorder, it is important to note, as Pack does, that "order and disorder are relative, not absolute, and qualitative and immeasurable."¹⁹³ Furthermore, Pack continues, noting he has not tried to scientifically prove anything absolutely but attempted "to present an abstract thought experiment... hoping to push the scholarship and the debate forward," as it is "impossible" for either study to "be completely scientific."¹⁹⁴ Rather than "prove" anything Pack says he attempted to "intuit

¹⁹⁰ Pack, *Global Enduring Disorder*, xxxix. Pack does not support the idea that the emerging world order is truly multipolar, discussed in the next two pages.

¹⁹¹ Pack, *Global Enduring Disorder*, 1.

¹⁹² Pack, *Global Enduring Disorder*, 1.

¹⁹³ Pack, *Global Enduring Disorder*, 334.

¹⁹⁴ Pack, *Global Enduring Disorder*, 334.

trendlines and the direction of travel,” and notes that his “contention is that study of the Libyan microcosm reveals that, over the last decade or more, new sources of systematic disorder have been unleashed and that, under the current conditions, these trends are self-reinforcing, especially in how they shape post-conflict societies in transition.”¹⁹⁵

Key aspects of Pack’s thesis and observations that this study diverge from or add further context to are informed by the additional three years of hindsight, and ideological differences from Pack’s Atlanticist zeitgeist (of which, Pack is relatively mild compared to others in the Atlanticist ecosystem who take cues from Adolf Hitler, detailed below). Pack is primarily concerned with the immediate post-Gaddafi period, and details at length the faults of the chaotic approach of the Trump Administration from 2017-2021, whereas this study is primarily focused on analyzing the behavior of the Obama Administration and NATO allies in 2011, as well as historic precedents of constructive instability in United States foreign policy from 1945 onward. However, Pack is keen to note that Trump (along with other contemporary populist and authoritarian leaders popularly subjected to hyper-individualized armchair-psychoanalysis by many Western observers, analysts, and media outfits such as: Vladimir Putin, Viktor Orban, Xi Jinping, or Jair Bolsonaro) is only a symptom of the systematic Global Enduring Disorder, rather than a root cause of chaos on the globe.¹⁹⁶

¹⁹⁵ Pack, *Global Enduring Disorder*, 334.

¹⁹⁶ Pack, *Global Enduring Disorder*, xxxix-xli.

Having presumably drafted the book in early 2021 and late 2020, as the April 2021 date left by Pack at the end of the preface suggests, the advantage of three to four years of additional hindsight through momentous shifts and upheavals in the geopolitical sphere from: the Russo-Ukrainian War, to the ascent in popularity of BRICS, the expulsion of French and American troops across several countries in Northern Africa that border Libya, China's brokering of an uneasy peace between Iran and Saudi Arabia, the unwillingness or inability of the United States to secure shipping lanes in the Red Sea against Yemen's Ansarallah (popularly known as the Houthis) operation to force Israel into a permanent ceasefire agreement ending their slaughter and siege of Gaza.¹⁹⁷ Hence, this additional hindsight allows this study to examine and update or contest certain positions taken by Pack. Chief amongst them, some of his characterizations of Russia and China, particularly relating to their inability to offer a meaningful alternative geopolitical pole capable of marshaling a new order around it - thus leading to his conclusion that rather than a multipolar world system this era of Enduring Disorder is a more aptly described as the start of a "period of interregnum," rather than "a period of incipient multipolarity at the tail end of the American-led order."¹⁹⁸ Though Pack's observations and evaluation that we are heading into an interregnum period are still insightful, as chapter four of this study and future research will expand on, this study finds it likely that we

¹⁹⁷ Pack, *Global Enduring Disorder*, lix.

¹⁹⁸ Pack, *Global Enduring Disorder*, xlii.

are heading into a period more closely resembling multipolarity wherein a competing power bloc (possibly BRICS), as well as smaller regional economic corridors and organizations, likely coalescing around Russia, China, and Iran, who have significantly increased their cooperation with each other in the economic, industrial, and military spheres in the three years since Pack published his work.¹⁹⁹

The present study's largest point of departure from Pack's work revolves around underlying assumptions on behalf of the authenticity of the United States' self-ordained moral leadership and exceptionalism. Unlike other works by Professor of Anthropology at Concordia University Maximilian Forte, Political Scientist at the University of Texas Alan J. Kuperman, and Horace Campbell, or former spokesperson for the Gaddafi regime Moussa Ibrahim (whose 2023 interview with *red.media* on March 19, 2023 provides crucial insights), Pack does not attribute the destruction of Libya to Atlanticist neocolonial design and/or malfeasance, and argues the United States' primary mistake was the abdication of their post-conflict role from 2013-2019, "ceding it [Libya] to be vehemently contested amongst Italy, France, Russia, Egypt, Turkey, the Gulf states, and the UN."²⁰⁰

¹⁹⁹ Philip Pilkington, "Everything You're Told About The Global Economy Is Wrong | Aaron Bastani Meets Philip Pilkington," YouTube video, January 21, 2024, 3:30-5:30, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7exjLSxKenE&t=3834s&ab_channel=NovaraMedia.

²⁰⁰ Pack, *Global Enduring Disorder*, xxix.

The cooperation between the NATO forces and violent Islamist elements is both a fundamental aspect of the concept of constructive instability, and one key reason this study diverges from Pack and the notion that the destabilization of Libya constituted an entirely honest mistake from good-faith actors who slipped on their humanitarian quest, accidentally emboldening and arming associates of *al-Qaeda* (AQ).²⁰¹ After all, in a little under a year from the outbreak of violence in Libya on February 15, 2011, then-Director of Policy Planning Jacob Sullivan emailed Hillary Clinton on February 12, 2012, bluntly stating “AQ [al-Qaeda] is on our side in Syria. Otherwise, things have basically turned out as expected.”²⁰² This begs the question: to what degree was AQ and ISIS’ rise in post-OUP Libya by 2016 an intended outcome, a tertiary goal, or simply a consequence that the foreign policy elite could take or leave?

Globalized Terror Networks in the World-System

The United States and NATO allies' cooperation with *Al-Jama'a*

al-Islamiyya al-Muqatilah bi-Libya, or the Libyan Islamic Fighting Group (LIFG),

²⁰¹ Which is not to claim American foreign policy elite had actively planned and worked towards a mutually agreed upon policy of constructive instability, as will be shown in chapter three the many constituent parts that make up the United States foreign policy elite are often at odds with each other, as the splits between departments of state and defense clearly evident in the outspoken criticisms of Lawrence Wilkerson.

²⁰² Jacob Sullivan, email message to Hillary Clinton, “SPOT REPORT 02/12/11,” February 12, 2012, <https://wikileaks.org/clinton-emails/emailid/23225>. Sullivan is currently the Biden Administration’s National Security Advisor.

and other radical AQ and (soon to be) ISIS-linked Islamist militants is a key aspect of the conceptual tactic or strategy of constructive instability.²⁰³

The long history of the United States' cultivation and instrumentalization of international client networks of non-state terrorism, from AQ's mujahideen predecessor in Afghanistan to the earlier post-WWII creation of clandestine "stay-behind networks" known collectively by the Italian operation's codename Gladio, provides historical precedent to the embrace of a strategy of constructive instability in Libya, and then Syria in 2011.²⁰⁴ The Gladio precedent is further reinforced by United States anti-communist mass murder campaign in the Global South throughout the Cold War based on the successful mass-murder of at least half a million innocent Indonesians in the mid-1960s in what Vincent Bevins termed "The Jakarta Method" and describes the United States as "part and parcel of the operation at every stage," which by the end of 1975 in South America functioned in a multinational effort under the name of Operation Condor.²⁰⁵

United States Foreign Policy in The Cold War: Anti-Communist Mass Murder, Terrorism, and Secret Armies

Vincent Bevins is a former reporter who covered South America and Southeast Asia extensively at the *Financial Times*, *Los Angeles Times*, and

²⁰³ Oyeniyi, 203.

²⁰⁴ Bevins, *The Jakarta Method*, 28, 184.

²⁰⁵ Bevins, *The Jakarta Method*, 157, 206.

Washington Post, and obviously the author of *The Jakarta Method: Washington's Anticommunist Crusade & the Mass Murder Program that Shaped Our World* reinterprets United States Cold War-era foreign policy through the lens of the Third World. From the neutral perspective of the Non-Aligned Movement (the literal mission statement of which was to declare neutrality in the Cold War), sparked by the Bandung Conference of 1955, *The Jakarta Method* lays bare the institutionalized and systematic use of violence on a mass scale to bend the will of countries that dare sway out of step with Washington and Wall Street's dictates, which then took control of NATO at the dawn of the 2010s.²⁰⁶ Throughout the Cold War, the United States backed dozens of coups antithetical to any semblance of democracy, often installing authoritarian dictators of their own that systematically crushed human and civil rights, while funneling the resources of the country to the West.

Starting in 1975 Brazil, Argentina, Bolivia, Paraguay, Uruguay, Panama as well as Chile turned South America into a "game reserve for hunting down anyone these regimes thought objectionable," under the auspices of Operation Condor, as described by Jeffery Ryan in *Turning on Their Masters: State Terrorism and Unlearning Democracy in Uruguay*.²⁰⁷ Amongst this group of South

²⁰⁶ Bevins, *The Jakarta Method*, 22. Under President Harry Truman and John F. Kennedy the United States initially adopted a policy that accepted the neutrality of Third World nations, the "Jakarta Axiom" as Cold War historian Odd Arne Westad described the fledgling policy that represents the destruction of hope for a future that could have been and millions of lives.

²⁰⁷ Jeffery Ryan, "Turning on Their Masters: State Terrorism and Unlearning Democracy in Uruguay," in *When States Kill: Latin America, the U.S., and*

American nations, the name of the Indonesian capital Jakarta was invoked by leaders and the public to represent a policy of mass slaughter under President Lyndon B. Johnson based on the 1965-1966 killings of half a million to three million people suspected of nothing more than having leftwing sympathies by the Indonesian military, which was handed “kill lists” by the United States government and managers of American owned plantations.²⁰⁸ By the late 1960s, the United States supported the Indonesian military junta’s system of concentration camps that Bevins describes as “comparable to the worst years of the Soviet Union.”²⁰⁹ Howard Federspiel of the State Department later said about those killed in Indonesia that “No one cared...as long as they were communists being butchered,” which was not entirely true, as Bevins describes American officials were “almost uniformly celebratory of the massacres, even as their scope and brutality became clear.”²¹⁰

Swiss historian Dr. Daniele Ganser’s 2005 book, *NATO’s Secret Armies: Operation Gladio and Terrorism in Western Europe*, along with journalist Paul L. Williams (2018 edition) *Operation Gladio: The Unholy Alliance between The Vatican, the CIA, and the Mafia*, and FBI whistleblower Sibel Edmonds, contextualize the United States later cultivation of international non-state Islamist

Technologies of Terror, ed. Cecilia Menjivar, Nestor Rodriguez, (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2005), 298.

²⁰⁸ Bevins, *The Jakarta Method*, 165.

²⁰⁹ Bevins, *The Jakarta Method*, 185.

²¹⁰ Bevins, *The Jakarta Method*, 158, 167.

terror networks in the MENA.²¹¹ All three have used the term “Gladio II” or “Gladio B” to refer to this MENA section of the United States’ larger network of violent and unsavory non-state terrorist clientele.²¹² The original Operation Gladio refers to the European contingent of anti-Soviet fascistic forces, Operation Condor to the South American network, and The Jakarta Method across most of the Global South. As Williams notes, “Gladio II has produced the war on terror, the mad scramble for control of Central Asia, false flag attacks against Saddam Hussein and Muammar Gaddafi, and the rise of the *mujahideen*.”²¹³ It becomes clear that the rise of Islamist groups in post-Gaddafi Libya was not just predictable, but essentially a policy pursuit demonstrated by the continued cultivation of jihadist forces who ultimately killed the American Ambassador to Libya, Christopher Stevens, in Benghazi on September 11, 2012, which was only slowly revealed to the public as several layers of lies were peeled away in the

²¹¹ Sibel Edmonds is a Turkish-speaking former-FBI whistleblower who tried to alert her superiors of nefarious cover ups in the wake of 9/11, however they were uncooperative and Edmonds was later censored by a court order to prevent her from speaking publicly on the matter.

²¹² Daniele Ganser, “Dr. Daniele Ganser Interview : NATO’s Secret Armies - Operation GLADIO,” YouTube video, February 3, 2015, 1:02:20-1:04:17, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=colJWITJWCs&t=3034s&ab_channel=TheMindRenewed; Paul L. Williams, *Operation Gladio: The Unholy Alliance between The Vatican, the CIA, and the Mafia*, 273, 291. Daniele Ganser notes he is familiar with the exchangeable term “Gladio B,” and Sibel Edmonds use of it in interview available on YouTube.

²¹³ It is worth noting Williams also considers the Mexican cartels an aspect of Gladio II. Paul L. Williams, *Operation Gladio: The Unholy Alliance between The Vatican, the CIA, and the Mafia*, 291.

much publicized Benghazi hearings that Republican lawmakers tried to wield a blunt weapon against the Obama administration and Hillary Clinton.²¹⁴

Political Scientist at Boston College, Lindsey A. O'Rourke's 2018 *Covert Regime Change: America's Secret Cold War*, Bevins, and Ganser note Operation Gladio and the United States' secret cultivation of many previously fascistic Nazi actors on the sole basis they were sufficiently anti-communist.²¹⁵ Ganser says "Tragically the secret warriors linked up with right-wing terrorists, a combination that led—in some countries including at least Belgium, Italy, France, Portugal, Spain, Greece, and Turkey—to massacres, torture, coup d'états and other violent acts," with the violence and proliferation of these non-state terror networks often bubbling out of control.²¹⁶ Ganser continues, making observations that seem shockingly applicable to the GWOT, as the international United States and NATO-backed Gladio networks of non-state terrorists "served as a tool to spread fear amongst the population also in the absence of an invasion. The secret armies...functioned as an almost perfect manipulation system that transported the fears of high-ranking military officers in the Pentagon and NATO to the populations."²¹⁷

²¹⁴ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 215.

²¹⁵ Lindsey A. O'Rourke, *Covert Regime Change: America's Secret Cold War*, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press: 2018), 126-134.

²¹⁶ Ganser, *NATO's Secret Armies*, 246.

²¹⁷ Ganser, *NATO's Secret Armies*, 247. Not to invoke any form of conspiracism, but rather it is undeniable that along with the United States, many other regional actors have used the War on Terror and attendant fear that jetliners colliding with skyscrapers evoke as a justification of repressive or aggressive policies internationally and domestically they already planned to enact.

Understanding the aggression against Libya in the context of United States Cold War-era foreign policy and the systematic and methodical employment of mass violence on the global stage contextualizes the contemporary United States' foreign policy of constructive instability by means of overwhelming force and violence in systematically destabilizing and chaotic ways. Furthermore, analyzing the United States' foreign policy during the Cold War also holistically contextualizes NATO's 2011 Libyan intervention away from compartmentalized analysis of limited scope temporally or geographically. Understanding the Cold War in the context of the Third World as an economically motivated project against basic developmentalist policies, rather than an ideological conflict, exposes the underlying continuity of a neoliberal agenda and United States foreign policy from the Cold War to the present. As Ganser, amongst many others, notes, "In the West the 'evil Communist' of the Cold War era has swiftly been replaced with the 'evil Islamist'" of the GWOT to the present day.²¹⁸

It is in the context of this history of clandestine interventions, coup d'etat, mass-murder, and cultivation of terrorist forces, that Forte and Campbell condemn NATO's role in Libya as an imperial saboteur remarkably quickly, their works published in 2012 and 2013, respectively. Their quick publication demonstrates that it is not only with great hindsight that OUP could be soberly examined and be identified, as not just a failure of policy, but an act of

²¹⁸ Ganser, *NATO's Secret Armies*, 248.

self-interested aggression. However, most observers hailed the intervention as a successful example of the progressive forces for good promised by neoliberal and humanitarian rhetoric as enshrined in the UN's Responsibility to Protect (R2P). The NATO allies failed to evenhandedly adjudicate and enact R2P while states and leaders aligned against Libya, such as Sudan's Omar Bashir, previously indicted at the International Criminal Court, were forgiven for their crimes, and the failure actually execute a militarized humanitarian intervention (an oxymoron in itself) to any degree of efficacy ultimately delegitimized the United States, NATO, R2P and the humanitarian interventionist framework entirely.²¹⁹

As late as 2017 even critics of the OUP maintain the position that NATO's war on Libya was fundamentally just, if flawed in execution and follow through, as seen in the chapters inside 2017's *Rethinking Humanitarian Intervention in the 21st Century*. Those scholars that did comment on Libya directly, while less celebratory than the pro-interventionists watching Gaddafi's brutal murder, still demonstrate an acquiescence to the general Western narrative, and do not problematize the underlying shaky evidence the intervention was built upon. For example, Professor and Director at University of Southern Denmark's Center for War Studies, Ingvild Bode, claims in her chapter inside *Rethinking Humanitarian*

²¹⁹ See chapter four to read of the 2023-2024 pan-European campaign to bring international law as a concept to its knees and the irreconcilable contradictions between the reactions to Gaddafi's supposed murder of civilians in 2011 and Israel's documented 2023-2024 slaughter in Gaza.

Intervention in the 21st Century, “‘Manifestly Failing’ and ‘Unwilling or Unable’ as Intervention Formulas: A Critical Assessment,” that Gaddafi ordered airstrikes on civilians, a claim that has been widely contested if not debunked entirely by no less than the Secretary of State and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.²²⁰ Besides that, it is universal among the pro-interventionist camp’s accounts to be extremely light on detail or omit the role of Islamist groups in Libyan history generally and in 2011.²²¹

Constructive Instability and Terror in the post-Cold War Global World-System

Jason Pack notes that many often mistakenly assume that jihadi currents were already powerful in Iraq, Syria, and Libya and caused the failure of Western policy in each country however, “In Libya, as in Iraq after the United States invasion of 2003 or Syria after 2011, state implosion,” which the jihadists could not bring about themselves and were largely defeated by the security apparatus

²²⁰ Ingvild Bode, ‘Manifestly Failing’,” 169; Campbell, *Global NATO*, 125.

²²¹ Alison Pargeter, *Libya: The Rise and Fall of Qaddafi* (London: Yale University Press, 2012), x; Pack, *Global Enduring Disorder*, 121; Dirk Vandewalle, *Libya Since Independence: Oil and Statebuilding* (London: Cornell University Press, 1998), xvii; Vandewalle, *Modern Libya*, 201. Vandewalle’s *A History of Modern Libya* only briefly mentions Islamist opposition and gives no names of organizations, and only identifies Ibn al-Shaykh al-Libi by name. In Vandewalle’s older 1998 work *Libya Since Independence: Oil and Statebuilding* he thanks Tariq Yousef for “an invitation to the national conference of the National Front for the Salvation of Libya in Atlanta in April 1995,” which he later noted receives support in carrying out armed resistance in Libya from the United States. Alison Pargeter’s *Libya: The Rise and Fall of Qaddafi* does give important historical context on Gaddafi’s long-standing opposition to Islamist groups since the 1980s but thanks “Noman Ben Othman,” as does Pack thank “Noman Benotman,” a former member of the LIFG ostensibly reformed.

of each state, “allowed jihadism to spread, not the reverse.”²²² Pack describes ISIS as a “highly specific version of a Sunni jihadi organization perfectly mutated to propagate within, and then further promote, the prevailing conditions of the Enduring Disorder.”²²³ After ISIS initially took hold in the chaos of post-Gaddafi Libya in 2012 they spread and consolidated power while many of the rebel militia groups that previously enjoyed positive coverage in Western media pledged allegiance to AQ and/or ISIS, took complete control of most cities and transformed Libya into the largest Islamist base of operations outside of Iraq and Syria- where their interests aligned with the United States. By 2015 ISIS operated out of Sirte where 90,000 residents fled the frequent beheadings, torture, and crucifixions ISIS put on display, and UN Special Envoy Martin Kobler remarked, according to Pack, that “ISIS had the most well-developed governance model of any group in Libya,” while many of its members were on state payrolls due to their initial allegiance to Islamist anti-Gaddafi rebel groups.²²⁴

Many still in denial until only recently or up to the present, despite Forte, Campbell, and Kuperman’s works quickly identified and detailed the role of AQ, and adjacent Islamist groups, amongst the NTC rebels.²²⁵ Scholarly articles such

²²² Pack, *Global Enduring Disorder*, 115, 119.

²²³ Pack, *Global Enduring Disorder*, 114.

²²⁴ Pack, *Global Enduring Disorder*, 138-142.

²²⁵ Ana Kasparian, Cenk Uygur, “No Al Qaeda In Libya - U.S. Intelligence Community,” YouTube video, March 29, 2010, 0:50-1:25, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=la4HdC11eSw&ab_channel=TheYoungTurks. Republican lawmakers that were warning of AQ presence in the Libyan uprisings, while correct, only cared about trying to win political points against the Obama

as Geir Ulfstein and Hege Christiansen's 2013 "The Legality of the NATO Bombing Campaign in Libya" or 2015's "NATO's Libya Campaign 2011: Just or Unjust to what Degree?" by Andrew Wedgwood and A. Walter Dorn, ignore this jihadi aspect to come to their moderately positive evaluations of OUP. Their finding is qualified by a recognition that the destabilization of Libya was an unintended consequence or a series of events that don't change the deontological evaluation that intervention was "just" without the foresight offered by post-hoc evaluations.²²⁶ Even many of the critics of OUP omitted the details of jihadi cooperation in their analysis, as seen in the tepid criticism by various authors compiled in 2017's *Rethinking Humanitarian Intervention in the 21st Century*. In these interpretations NATO's role in Libya's destabilization is characterized as a well-intended but unfortunate mistake. To come to these conclusions, the subject of Western collusion with jihadi elements is ignored entirely, much like Obama's confounding and contradictory tepid-criticism of OUP in 2016 simply ignored these factors, covered in the introduction of this study.

Administration. In the inverse, Cenk Uygur relies on the word of the intelligence community as if it were gospel to defend his 'team.'

²²⁶ Geir Ulfstein, Hege Christiansen, "The Legality of the NATO bombing in Libya," *The International and Comparative Law Quarterly* 62, no. 1 (February 9, 2013): 159-171, http://journals.cambridge.org/abstract_S0020589312000565; Andrew Wedgwood, A. Walter Dorn, "NATO's Libya Campaign 2011: Just or Unjust to What Degree?" *Diplomacy & Statecraft* 26, no. 2 (2015): 357, DOI: 10.1080/09592296.2015.1034573.

As Obama and many Western pundits, politicians, and think tank analysts do, some academics also ignored or expunged the Gaddafi regime's troubled history with the Libyan Islamic Fighting Group (LIFG) and the LIFG's *al-Qaeda* connections to make the *realpolitik* of American foreign policy more palatable. Members of the LIFG were even previously hosted in the UK and used in a similarly doomed Bay of Pigs styled attempt to overthrow Gaddafi in March 1996, long before OUP put him and tens of thousands of Libyans in the ground.²²⁷ Considering the Atlanticist's past collusion of the LIFG directly, and the general arc of international Islamist forces (ala the anti-Soviet mujahideen fostered by Brzezinski in Afghanistan), the chain of events that led to post-2011 Libya's transformation into a base of international Islamist terrorist operations should not be easily dismissed as an unforeseen consequence of the 2011 intervention. Furthermore, as Kuperman notes, the Islamist groups were amongst the most experienced and capable fighters in the anti-Gaddafi rebel's midst, and thus instrumental and not coincidental to the wider NATO operation.²²⁸

Christopher M. Davidson's 2016 *Shadow Wars: The Secret Struggle for the Middle East* and 2017 article "Why Was Muammar Qadhafi Really Removed?", along with professor at UC Berkeley Peter Dale Scott's 2007 *The Road to 9/11: Wealth, Empire and the Future of America*, all detail the long

²²⁷ Forte, *Slouching Towards Sirte*, 79.

²²⁸ Alan J. Kuperman, "Obama's Libya Debacle: How a Well-Meaning Intervention Ended in Failure," *Foreign Affairs* 94, no.2 (March/April 2015): 72. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/24483483>.

history of the Western powers fostering Islamist forces from the nineteenth century British colonial endeavors to the rise of ISIS in the twenty first century. From the British instrumentalization of Turkmen tribes against a fledgling USSR in the early nineteen-hundreds, the United States cultivation of the Mujahideen against the Soviets during the Cold War, to their fight alongside NATO in Bosnia (including LIFG members specifically) through the 1990s, these groups represent a globalized jihadism enabled by state actors.²²⁹ Pan-European industrialized core states, in league with periphery states from Pakistan, Egypt, and Saudi Arabia (amongst others), formed semi-institutionalized global networks, without which the jihadist forces' ability to recruit, their operational capacity, organization, and freedom from persecution would be *severely* curtailed.²³⁰ This unsavory history of cooperation, coupled with statements from senior United States officials regarding their cooperation with AQ forces in the rolling destabilization efforts in Syria, transporting fighters with gold and advanced weapons, such as MANPAD missile systems, pillaged from the remains of the Libyan state in tow, make up a core aspect of the proposed theory of constructive instability and that jihadist

²²⁹ *Al Jazeera English*, " NTC military chief defends his past," *Al Jazeera English*, YouTube video, September 3, 2011, 1:25-1:30, https://www.youtube.com/watch?reload=9&v=QZR0oDcPT9k&ab_channel=AlJazeeraEnglish. One fighter interviewed after Abdulhakim Belhadj, leader or former leader of the LIFG, says "I personally fought in Bosnia in 1995."

²³⁰ Peter Dale Scott, *Road to 9/11*, 120.

forces are essentially a Western export and a key feature of post-Cold War globalization.²³¹

LeVine argues that the positive economic outcomes from globalization have not reached the Middle East and other peripheries due to the fundamentally exploitative nature of the core-periphery relationship.²³² Indigenous people's grief is exacerbated by the homogenization of traditional cultural ways of life, which the processes of neoliberal globalization bring about and encourage a reactionary embrace of the most radically-fundamentalist interpretations and aspects of their cultural and religious traditions.²³³ Deprived of the economic development that serves as the sugar for the medicinal erosion of their culture in service of neoliberalization, Western standards are rejected by a large swathe of Middle Easterners out of rational material self-interest rather than as the result of some intractably backward element inherent to their culture, biology, or religion.²³⁴

²³¹ Kuperman, "Obama's Libya Debacle: How a Well-Meaning Intervention Ended in Failure," 73.

²³² LeVine, *Why They Don't Hate Us*, 221, 222.

²³³ LeVine, *Why They Don't Hate Us*, 30. A similar phenomenon has also swept up a reactionary response from a similar demographic of heavily alienated young to middle aged adult men in the United States that have been spurned by neoliberal de-industrialization and globalization, as noted by Thomas Frank, cited by LeVine.

²³⁴ This rationale coheres with De Bona's analysis on the failure of Libyan authorities to meaningfully instill Western ideals into the population despite the authorities de jure acceptance of them. Prior to the economic sanctions that ravaged Libya through the 1990s, the Libyan regime signaled a willingness to accept the Western standards to be integrated into that world-system. After sanctions crippled the Libyan economy, Gaddafi pandered to local tribal and religious leaders to bolster support for his regime. De Bona concludes that the

LeVine and Wallerstein contend that exploitation is the fundamental essence of the core-periphery relationship of the interstate system, and is likely immutable.²³⁵ LeVine, along with Wallerstein's commentary on anti-systemic movements in *Decline of American Empire*, assert that the embrace of traditional Islamic values is a reactionary move against the totalizing homogenization that neoliberal globalization threatens to bring about due to the unequal and exploitative nature of exchange between industrial-core powers and servile peripheries.²³⁶ This analysis tempers the emphasis this study places on the United States' various policies designed to foster Islamist fighters by reaffirming the agency of indigenous people and individuals to act in ways contingent with their lived experience, even if this lived experience is intersected with and dialectically shaped by the whims of the United States foreign policy elite. Though the whims and callous designs of pan-European powers may shape the lives of people in the Arab and Islamic world, their people—as the ferocity and diversity of the indigenous Libyan anti-colonial resistance movements demonstrated—are not simple and pliable monoliths bent to Western will.²³⁷ Nor

economic sanctions placed on Libya actually deterred the acceptance of Western values and ultimately empowered the most traditional and Islamist points of view at the local level, further emphasizing the regressive and counterproductive effects of instrumentalizing material deprivation in attempts to force humanitarian reform.

²³⁵ Wallerstein, *World-Systems Analysis*, 56.

²³⁶ Immanuel Wallerstein, *Decline of American Empire*, 107-111; LeVine, *Why They Don't Hate Us*. Mark LeVine thoroughly expands on the phenomena of Islamist ideology as an anti-systemic movement throughout his 2005 book.

²³⁷ Oyeniyi, *The History of Libya*, 46.

should the notation that real and material Western interference dictated the arc of millions of lives (which the 1953 removal of Iranian Prime Minister, Mohamed Mossadegh, and installation of the authoritarian Shah in Iran, and cultivation of a bloodthirsty Gestapo by the CIA—SAVAK—demonstrates clearly the ways these policies shape and end lives) be dismissed as another Euro-centric interpretation of historical cannon that strips agency from indigenous populations.²³⁸

It is clear that particular dynamics inherent to the GNCWS, and the processes employed to forge this world-system fostered an environment that produced this reactionary movement which Wallerstein termed anti-systemic sentiment.²³⁹ From the British campaigns against Ali's developmentalist Egypt, their bolstering of Saudi's own fundamentalist Wahhabism at the dawn of the twentieth century, their colonial designs in league with the French (such as the Sykes-Picot Agreement of 1916), out of which Israel later ripped itself into existence in 1948 (through these designs the regional Islamic seat of hegemony was dismembered with the Ottoman empire), to the destruction of secular nationalist movements (such as Iranian Mohammad Mossadegh's and Egyptian Gamal Abdel Nasser's) throughout the Cold War, the true will of the Islamic world was routinely subverted to construct the GNCWS that, by and large, does not

²³⁸ Braedon McGhee "The Double-Edged Sword: Examining the Contradictory Nature of SAVAK and The U.S.-Iran Clidency Relationship," *History in the Making*, Volume 16, 2023.

²³⁹ Wallerstein, *Decline of American Empire*, 107-111.

serve their interests.²⁴⁰ If the United States were to lose its unipolar position and true multipolarity gave rise to a regional Islamic hegemon inside a continuous global neoliberal capitalist world-system, the potential to redirect the gains of neoliberalism back into the region could temper the appeal of Islamist movements, a description that could aptly fit Gaddafi's Libya.

Constructive Instability

Pack's overarching thesis of a new age of disorder being observable through the recent history of Libya is borrowed but adapted where it seems Pack, and most other observers, see the chaotic dynamics of post-intervention Libya as part of an unintended, or unforeseeable failure of United States policy.²⁴¹ This research asserts that the chaotic and destabilizing effects of United States foreign policy is not an unintended consequence or afterthought, but a primary and inherent feature of a set of policies that can be collectively called a "chaos strategy," constructive instability, or "creative destruction" as expressed by longtime Republican neoconservative agent, and signatory to PNAC's 1997 "Statement of Principles," Michael Ledeen.²⁴²

Though Mark LeVine appears to be the leading, and one of the only strictly scholarly sources on expounding on a United States geostrategy of

²⁴⁰ It could be argued that this system serves the interests of certain ruling classes of certain Western client or Western oriented states.

²⁴¹ Pack, *Global Enduring Disorder*, 1, 2.

²⁴² Michael Ledeen, "Creative Destruction" *American Enterprise Institute*, September 20, 2001, <https://www.aei.org/articles/creative-destruction-2/>.

intentional chaos, with his aforementioned 2005 book, *Why They Don't Hate Us: Lifting the Veil on the Axis of Evil*, along with multiple other publications on the topic in academic journals, such as the *Asian Journal of Social Science*.²⁴³ Other reputable individuals such as Dr. Robert Satloff, (credentialed from Harvard and Oxford, Segal Executive Director of the Washington Institute, as well as its Howard P. Berkowitz Chair in U.S. Middle East Policy, and one of the only non-Arabs to host a program on an Arab satellite channel), has written on the topic. Satloff's 2005 "Assessing the Bush Administration's Policy of 'Constructive Instability'," published online by The Washington Institute, is a reformulation on Ledeen's quip of creative destruction, also employed by journalist Walid Charara in the French outlet *Le Monde Diplomatique* in their 2005 article simply titled "Constructive Instability."²⁴⁴

Many of the core tenets of the concept of constructive instability have also been referred to by a number of similar (in name and/or meaning) terms. American journalist and Editor in Chief of *The Atlantic* Jeffrey Goldberg's 2008 article, "After Iraq," terms similar policy pushed by the neoconservatives

²⁴³ LeVine, *Why They Don't Hate Us*; Mark LeVine, "Chaos and Globalization in the Middle East," *Asian Journal of Social Science* 11, no. 3 (2005): 394-411.

²⁴⁴ Robert Satloff, "Assessing Bush Administration's Policy of 'Constructive Instability': Lebanon and Syria," *The Washington Institute for Near East Policy*, March 15, 2005, <https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/assessing-bush-administrations-policy-constructive-instability-part-i-lebanon-and-syria>; Walid Charara, "Constructive Instability," *Le Monde Diplomatique*, July, 2005, <https://archive.globalpolicy.org/empire/intervention/2005/072005instability.htm>.

“constructive volatility.”²⁴⁵ Tom Engelhardt (graduate of Yale and Harvard, editor at Pantheon Books and Metropolitan Books, and journalist that previously taught at the Graduate School of Journalism at the University of California, Berkeley), in a 2017 article for *The Nation*, referred to the “rubblization of the Greater Middle East,” in the aptly titled article, “The US Military ‘Liberated’ Mosul - by Destroying It.”²⁴⁶ Engelhardt notes the supposed liberation of Mosul, Fallujah, and Ramadi in Iraq, Raqqa, Aleppo, and Homs in Syria, and Sirte in Libya, were costly-victories better labeled defeat, out of which increased sectarian strife and future conflict will likely grow, exacerbated in Syria (and Libya) in the wake of the Iraq (2003) and Afghanistan (2001) wars the GWOT wrought, which soured American voters and pushed similar reconstruction efforts off the table.²⁴⁷ This “rubblization of the Greater Middle East” should be understood as a policy pursuit of chaos, what Dan Sanchez, an independent libertarian journalist, puts forth as “The Cauldron Doctrine,” in a 2014 article of the same name referring to Michael Ledeen’s 2002 comment, “One can only hope that we turn the region into a cauldron, and faster, please. If ever there were a region that richly deserved being cauldronized, it is the Middle East today.”²⁴⁸

²⁴⁵ Jeffrey Goldberg, “After Iraq” *The Atlantic*, January/ February 2008 issue, <https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2008/01/after-iraq/306577/>.

²⁴⁶ Engelhardt, “The US Military ‘Liberated’ Mosul - by Destroying It.”

²⁴⁷ Engelhardt, “The US Military ‘Liberated’ Mosul - by Destroying It.”

²⁴⁸ Dan Sanchez “The Cauldron Doctrine,” *Medium*, June 29, 2014, <https://medium.com/dan-sanchez/the-cauldron-doctrine-931bf65bd5e9>; Michael Ledeen.

Writing in praise of this cauldronization, conservative commentator and No. 1 *New York Times* bestseller Jonah Goldberg coined the “Ledeen Doctrine” in his 2002 *National Review* article “Baghdad Delenda Est, Part Two.”²⁴⁹ The Ledeen Doctrine’s core tenant, aptly explained in Ledeen’s words from a speech given at the American Enterprise Institute, as paraphrased by Goldberg, “Every ten years or so, the United States needs to pick up some small crappy little country and throw it against the wall, just to show the world we mean business.”²⁵⁰

An offensive geostrategic pursuit of constructive instability (or a chaos theory, or cauldronization, “rubbleization,” constructive volatility, creative destruction, which are generally all highly interchangeable in casual writings on the topic) is the purposeful destruction of order to attain desired outcomes, or to damage the interests of a rival power. This study contends that the United States approach in NATO’s 2011 Libyan incursion embodies the highest form of constructive instability, heavy-constructive instability wherein the total destabilization of the country was achieved as an end in and of itself, as the United States did not meaningfully attempt to secure material interests or political order in the wake of Gaddafi’s murder. The destabilization of Libya shut down a potential regional hegemon in Libya itself and the sovereign economic engine

²⁴⁹ Jonah Goldberg, “Baghdad Delenda Est, Part Two,” *National Review*, April 23, 2002, <https://www.nationalreview.com/2002/04/baghdad-delenda-est-part-two-jonah-goldberg/>.

²⁵⁰ Jonah Goldberg, “Baghdad Delenda Est, Part Two.”

and political capital that drove for pan-African sovereignty in opposition to the United States-led international institutions. This also served to shut out rival regional powers from integrating the productive capacity, reaping material benefit, or cultivating strategic geopolitical positions and relations, which in conjunction with a zero-sum mercantilist perspective with concern to global hegemony and not national security (as per the Wolfowitz Doctrine), the others loss becomes your gain. That the United States pursued a strategy of constructive instability in Libya is evidenced in its continued efforts to cultivate and weaponize jihadist Islamist elements to fight against Assad in Syria, complete lack of investment in post-Gaddafi security forces or political reform. In 2005 Mark LeVine already described the logic of constructive instability through logical materialist analysis,

Entropy; chaos; anarchy – whatever we call it, such a scenario demands we ask some hard questions: What will the United States do to protect its privileged position in a world where oil production is approaching and will soon pass its peak? What role would “sponsored chaos” play in its strategy? What countries would benefit or be threatened from such policies, and so would work either with (the UK, Russia) or against (China, Iran) US geostrategic objectives?

It will take years to answer fully these important questions. What is almost certain from the events of 2001 to 2005 is that the United States...would see its interests centered on securing access to existing major petroleum reserves while controlling and where necessary even limiting direct access to them by allies and rivals (especially China)...

It is therefore not farfetched to assume the US...would consider it preferable from a geostrategic point of view for countries or regions like Iraq, the Sudan (with who China has recently negotiated oil agreements), or even Iran, to fall into increasing anarchy or chaos, or find themselves in the midst of Western-sponsored regime change. Rather this than to have stable governments that provide China, America's chief economic competitor today, with the fuel it needs to threaten America's dominance of the world economy.²⁵¹

While this argument may come off as preposterous or radical, as Connor Friedersdorf wrote for *The Atlantic* memorializing the tenth anniversary of the Iraq War, on the eve of the invasion of Iraq had someone said the United States was “on a crusade of Christian conquest, designed to turn the Middle East into a cauldron, eliminate nation states on a whim, and start wars for no other reason that we need to kick someone around, he or she would've been widely condemned as a hyperbolic, hateful, America-hating moonbat,” but, Friedersdorf continues, “in *National Review*, writers were earnestly calling for all those things.”²⁵² Beyond writing, LeVine details how according to influential forces in the creation of United States foreign policy like “Ledeer, Perle, Frum, Feith, and Wolfowitz, the invasion and occupation of Iraq was supposed to create a domino effect that would weaken local states,” and “open up their economies to Western corporations by establishing market economies, and at the same time lead to a much-needed ‘reformation’ or ‘modernization’ of Islam.”²⁵³ It turns out LeVine

²⁵¹ LeVine, *Why They Don't Hate Us*, 304-305.

²⁵² Connor Friedersdorf, “The Real Radicals of the Iraq War: Its Proponents,” *The Atlantic*, March 6, 2013, <https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2013/03/the-real-radicals-of-the-iraq-war-its-proponents/273751/>.

²⁵³ LeVine, *Why They Don't Hate Us*, 295-296.

and, as Friedersdorf puts it, the anti-war "'dirty hippies' sitting around a drum circle" with their "Bush = Hitler" signs were more correct than all the "publishing professionals in bow ties" who laundered actual radical Christian extremism as the moderate position (much like they did for Islamic jihadists once it became useful to label them moderate in Libya and Syria).²⁵⁴

European Universalism / Atlanticist Zeitgeist or Colonial Bias

"It's one thing for sarin gas to be used on people in far away Syria, who are Muslim and who are of a different culture. What is Europe gonna do when it's on European soil, done to Europeans?"

-Julia Ioffe on *CNN*, March 17, 2022.²⁵⁵

The following cross-examination of relevant works and the underlying assumptions and ideological convictions of the authors demonstrate the major fault lines upon which the advocates and critics of OUP divide. Advocates of the intervention and the removal of Gaddafi fall into a neoliberal pro-interventionist camp, while the detractors are generally less hawkish and suspicious of United States hegemony and neoliberal economics.

Shortly after taking power in 1969 Gaddafi expelled both Western powers, and according to Campbell, "The United States has been scheming for a way

²⁵⁴ Conor Friedersdorf, "The Real Radicals of the Iraq War: Its Proponents."

²⁵⁵ Julia Ioffe, "Stanislav Horuna is Interviewed about Fighting Russia; Biden and NATO Leaders May Meet in Person; Kharkiv Struck 65 Times in One Day," published March 15, 2022, <https://transcripts.cnn.com/show/nday/date/2022-03-15/segment/06>.

back into Libya ever since.”²⁵⁶ This long-standing desire to control the region, deep-seated Orientalist tendencies amongst the pan-European powers, and a reactionary distaste for post-colonial people asserting their humanity, likely explain the negative perception of Libya (and much of the Global South) in the eyes of most Western observers and academics.²⁵⁷ This Western colonialist attitude is still evident in contemporary analysis, from unintended and subconscious orientalist attitudes of honest observers to the thoughtless vanguards of the West and subliminal white supremacists (often one and the same). In one such prominent example, the commentary found in the works of Florence Gaub, the director of research of the NATO Defense College, and previously of the Middle East and North Africa programme at the European Union Institute for Security Studies, ranges from subliminally to explicitly racist.

Wallerstein notes that this white supremacy which inundates the pan-European world is “a hostility that institutionalized as racism,” that comes from core powers’ drive to secure nationalist sentiment through “hostility to enemies...with some neighbor, on some ground or other.”²⁵⁸ But the

²⁵⁶ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 38.

²⁵⁷ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 142; Bevin, *The Jakarta Method*, 154-155. Campbell notes that even after a concerted effort to appeal to pan-European leaders and cooperate with their corporate interests, as well as the War on Terror, Libya and Gaddafi “remained a place for the mirth and mockery of the Western media,” which was typical of the average American who perceived most of humanity as “primitive, backward, and violent people” and stories of “inexplicable, vaguely tribal violence” were, as Bevin’s puts it, “so easy for American readers to digest.”

²⁵⁸ Wallerstein, *World-Systems Analysis*, 66.

circumstances of the pan-Europeans' repeated colonial endeavors across the globe cultivated a uniquely racist white supremacism. As Wallerstein put it, the roots of this bigotry were:

located in the diffusion of the concept of 'civilization'—in the singular, as opposed to the plural. The pan-European world, dominating the world-system economically and politically, defined itself as the heart, the culmination, of a civilizational process which it traced back to Europe's presumed roots in Antiquity. Given the state of its civilization and its technology in the nineteenth century, the pan-European world claimed duty to impose itself, culturally as well as politically, on everyone else—Kipling's "White man's burden," the "manifest destiny" of the United States, France's mission civilisatrice.²⁵⁹

An official mouth of the NATO apparatus, Gaub illustrates this colonial mindset of the pan-European / Atlanticist camp clearly. Her 2012 NATO Defense College research report, "Six Strategic Lessons learned from NATO's Operation Unified Protector," as well as her 2013 report for the Strategic Studies Institute U.S. Army War College, "The North Atlantic Treaty Organization and Libya: Reviewing Operation Unified Protector," both consider OUP a military victory qualified by the uncertainty of Libya's future.²⁶⁰ Her concerns for Libya's future do not stem from any humanitarian notion, it is NATO's reputation "at stake in

²⁵⁹ Wallerstein, *World-Systems Analysis*, 66.

²⁶⁰ Florence Gaub, "Six Strategic Lessons learned from NATO's Operation Unified Protector," Research Division NATO Defense College (March 2012), 6, https://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/140743/29mar12_GaubRepUnifiedProt.pdf; Florence Gaub, "The North Atlantic Treaty Organization and Libya: Reviewing Operation Unified Protector," (Strategic Studies Institute U.S. Army War College, Carlisle, PA, 2013), ix, <https://permanent.fdlp.gov/websites/ssi.armywarcollege.edu/pubs/download.cfm-q=1161.pdf>.

Libya's long reconstruction process" that is the real priority.²⁶¹ When Libyans make it into Gaub's analysis the bodies of children, "supposedly killed in NATO air strikes," are not cause for reflection on NATO's bombing campaign, but lamentation that the BBC broadcast of the images from a Libyan hospital constitutes more "creative" and "resilient" forms of "strategic communication" than NATO was prepared to counter.²⁶²

With the Russian invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 Gaub massaged the pan-European white-supremacist psyche on live television broadcast via the virtues of race science that ensured the designated enemies are, in fact, subhuman:

We should not forget, even if Russians look European, they are not European in a cultural sense. They think differently about violence or death... They have no concept of a liberal, post-modern life. A concept of life that each individual can choose. Instead, life simply can end early with death. Russian life-expectancy is quite low, you know. It's 70 for men. That's why they treat death differently, that people simply die.²⁶³

Equating the value of life to European and liberal individualistic values, as well as the arbitrary material conditions that inform life expectancy, is a manifestation of the often subliminal dehumanization of African and formerly-colonized people found in Atlanticist attitude, aimed at the white-skinned Russian Mongol hordes in

²⁶¹ Gaub, "Six Strategic Lessons learned from NATO's Operation Unified Protector," 6.

²⁶² Gaub, "The North Atlantic Treaty Organization and Libya: Reviewing Operation Unified Protector," ix.

²⁶³ Ben Norton, "German EU official uses racist rhetoric claiming Russians don't value life," *geopolitical economy report*, April 15, 2022, <https://geopoliticeconomy.com/2022/04/15/german-eu-official-russians-dont-value-life/>.

this case. A prime example of the Atlanticist colonial bias Wallerstein denounced as “European universalism.”²⁶⁴ This state of mind generally underpins both the neoconservatives and liberal interventionists’ worldview and hegemonic logic of “diplomacy of the hegemon [which] organises states into a subject-object / teacher-student relationship in which the superior West must socialise the inferior other. Rather than being labelled dominating or oppressive, the hegemon can claim benevolence and virtue by portraying its actions as selflessly taking on the responsibility of civilising the other,” as Diesen notes.²⁶⁵

Gaub’s fellow analyst at NATO Defense College, Jason Pack, demonstrates that the Atlanticist zeitgeist can be turned down from ‘Hitlerian’ to manageable levels.²⁶⁶ While toned down, this Atlanticist bias operates from the baseline assumption that Western core-powers intentions are good hearted, the same rhetorical sleight of hand Obama used in his reevaluation of OUP in 2016 (covered in the introduction). If Gaub and Associate Professor of Government at Dartmouth University, Dirk Vandewalle, can be said to be emblematic of the

²⁶⁴ De Bona, *Human Rights in Libya*, 153. Wallerstein criticized Western intellectuals and policy makers that demonstrated this unsophisticated, ahistorical, conception of democracy for their failure to consider that democracy “must mature internally from within different countries and regions.”

²⁶⁵ Diesen, “Decline of the West and the Liberal Order,” epub.

²⁶⁶ Pack, *Enduring Global Disorder*, 61, 116. Pack recounts “rubbing elbows” with Gaub and she compared the Libyan militias to “little furry Mogwai in the *Gremlins* movie. They start off nice and cuddly, and serve a useful purpose during the daytime” but at night “their inner demons came out.” Pack noted that comparing Middle Eastern societies to a powder keg was “fairly offensive,” but this seems much more so.

advocates of OUP, then Horace Campbell, Bukola A. Oyeniyi, Alan J. Kuperman, and Giacomina De Bona are representative of OUP's detractors in academia.

In his 2013 book, *Global NATO and the Catastrophic Failure in Libya: Lessons for Africa in the Forging of African Unity*, Horace Campbell condemns Western intellectuals and cheerleaders of the NATO intervention, or intellectuals who paved the way for the opening of Libya's economy to Western corporations in the early 2000s who then quickly abandoned the supposedly reformed Gaddafi in 2011 which includes: Joseph Nye, Anthony Giddens, and Lisa Anderson, among other international relations experts' paternalistic dismissal of the African Union before and during the intervention.²⁶⁷ Highlighting the flexible morality of the liberal interventionist, Campbell notes their puzzling "silence when African migrant workers in Libya were being butchered by elements from the National Transition Council," compared to their lightspeed fervor for war against Gaddafi.²⁶⁸

Discarding the humanitarian concerns Campbell dismisses as insincere, *Global NATO* details connections and material interests left unspoken by the NATO allies, as does Maximilian Forte's 2012 *Slouching Toward Sirte: NATO's War on Libya and Africa*. Campbell even name-drops Forte as a fellow critic and collaborator at the time of OUP, and his work documents the humanitarian cost and devastation to Libyan civilians and infrastructure, as well as the glaring

²⁶⁷ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 24-25, 32, 133.

²⁶⁸ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 32.

hypocrisies and double standards and misinterpretations to outright fabrications on behalf of the NATO allies and their media outlets.²⁶⁹ Forte methodically exposes the hypocrisy of the liberal internationalists and the Western mainstream news outlets for routinely ignoring atrocities caused by NATO bombing, the unofficial and illegal proxy forces on the ground, as well as crimes committed by the anti-Gaddafi rebels.²⁷⁰ Even when *The New York Times* or *The Telegraph* reported on the crimes of the NATO-allied NTC forces, it made little difference.²⁷¹ Akin to the aforementioned aversion to condemn-with-equal-vigor the NTC's slaughter of sub-Saharan Africans that Campbell noted, to maintain the Western Atlanticist's ideological and operational coherence unsavory pieces of information are simply ignored.²⁷²

Vandewalle has been a leading academic on Libya for decades, after he started researching Libya in 1986, in his own words "I've been there every single year, several times a year, since," and "the only researcher" in Libya for fifteen years.²⁷³ His previous publications include *Libya Since Independence: Oil and State Building* (1998), and edited *North Africa: Development and Reform in a Changing Global Economy* (1996), and *Qadhafi's Libya: 1969-1994* (1995). The second edition of his 2006 *A History of Modern Libya*, was written and published

²⁶⁹ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 12; Forte, *Slouching Towards Sirte*, 12.

²⁷⁰ Forte, *Slouching Towards Sirte*, 12.

²⁷¹ Forte, *Slouching Towards Sirte*, 33, 34.

²⁷² Campbell, *Global NATO*, 32.

²⁷³ Coleman E. Shear, "Interview With Dirk Vandewalle," *The Dartmouth Review*, published October 11, 2012, <https://dartreview.com/interview-with-dirk-vandewalle/>.

in the immediate aftermath of OUP in 2012. Based on original research and interviews conducted over several visits to Libya since the 1970s, *A History of Modern Libya*, presents the eponymous history from the early-twentieth century to its point of publication. However, according to Vandewalle, “it can perhaps more accurately be described as a social and political economy study of the country. Many of its organizing ideas derive from the institutional literature that sociologists, economists, and political scientists have used since the mid-1980s,” which should be taken as a disclaimer or warning, as we will find.²⁷⁴ Throughout, a generally condemnatory tone of Gaddafi’s government is maintained. Vandewalle ponders in the end of the second edition of his 2012 text that “The major question...is whether Libya’s current and future rulers, now facing the enormous tasks of state and nation building, will do better.”²⁷⁵ With the title of his later 2012 article, “After Qaddafi: The Surprising Success of the New Libya,” Vandewalle answers the “major question” he put forth and rules the removal of Gaddafi a “Surprising Success.”²⁷⁶

Professor of History at Missouri State University, Bukola A. Oyeniyi’s 2019 *The History of Libya*, provides an account of Libyan history from the first traces of human activity in the region to the rise of ISIS and rule-by-militia in the post-Gaddafi years, throughout which Oyeniyi holds a more balanced view of Libya and Gaddafi. It is not simply the benefit of hindsight that informs Oyeniyi’s

²⁷⁴ Vandewalle, *A History of Modern Libya*, 9.

²⁷⁵ Vandewalle, *A History of Modern Libya*, x.

²⁷⁶ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 30.

less condemnatory tone. Maximilian Forte's 2012 *Slouching Towards Sirte* had the foresight to predict the fledgling Libyan government would not do better for the Libyan people than the Gaddafi's regime, though it was published the same year as Vandewalle's second edition. Campbell's *Global NATO*, which was published the next year in 2013, along with Kuperman's contemporaneous publications, having called out Obama even earlier by April 14, 2011, for having "grossly exaggerated the humanitarian threat to justify military action in Libya," while scholars such as Vandewalle hailed it a success.²⁷⁷

Neoliberalism and Human Rights in Libya

The pro-interventionist camp and anti-interventionist camp are most divided in their analysis of the stewardship of the economy and the Gaddafi regime's investment priorities. Libyan investments into the African Union, anti-imperialist revolutionary forces, and infrastructure projects (such as The Great Manmade River Project)—that Campbell, Forte, and Oyeniyi hold up as commendable—Vandewalle condemns as a waste of Libyan oil money, "in pursuit of a number of visions that to most Western observers looked quixotic, if not incomprehensible."²⁷⁸ Henry Clement Moore of the University of Texas and Robert Springborg of the Naval Postgraduate School's 2010, *Globalization and the Politics of Development in the Middle East*, shares Vandewalle's critique and

²⁷⁷ Kuperman. "False pretense for war in Libya."

²⁷⁸ Vandewalle, *A History of Modern Libya*, x.

asserts that Libya squandered the economic potential of oil booms.²⁷⁹ In Vandewalle's analysis, the oil revenue that did get redirected into the Libyan economy bought off the population in a social contract that "relied overwhelmingly on distributive largesse rather than on perfecting the state."²⁸⁰ In other words, Vandewalle views Libyan developmental and public investments, which consequently raised the standard of living for Libyans, as some kind of corrupt scheme to garner public support.²⁸¹

Vandewalle's analysis condemns resource nationalism on technical, rather than ideological grounds. However, Vandewalle's ideological biases are readily apparent. Vandewalle's dismissal of redistributive policies (which he labels as "quixotic. . . incomprehensible. . . distributive largesse") is coherent with neoliberal free-market fundamentals and critiques leveled against state interference in the economy.²⁸² In Vandewalle's neoliberal interpretation, due to state control of Libyan oil production and revenue, the Libyan state floundered in desperation, exasperated without the guiding hand of the free market. In Vandewalle's words:

²⁷⁹ Henry Clement Moore, Robert Springborg, *Globalization and the Politics of Development in the Middle East*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 319.

²⁸⁰ Vandewalle, *A History of Modern Libya*, 211.

²⁸¹ Moore, Springborg, *Globalization and the Politics of Development in the Middle East*, 319. Moore and Springborg make similar conclusions about the oil producers in the region at large, noting the oil revenues bolstered authoritarian regimes.

²⁸² Vandewalle, *A History of Modern Libya*, x.

As opposed to non-oil economies where over time the state develops and finetunes a set of regulatory, extractive, and distributive mechanisms to calibrate the interactions between the state and local society, in Libya this evolutionary process of state and institution building was curtailed and abandoned... State institutions under Qadhafi became intricate channels for economic largesse and distributive purposes, while their regulatory and legal capacities.... tended to remain inefficient and underdeveloped.... Decisions concerning economic policies, distribution, and investments were traditionally kept to the purview of small coalitions rather than assigned to the market.²⁸³

Vandewalle's false dichotomy between a cabal (or "small coalition") directing all economic choices or the rule of the market demonstrates a lack of political imagination, defined by European Universalism.²⁸⁴ Vandewalle's characterization of state institutions' regulatory and legal capacities as weak interestingly ignores Libya's rather unique capability to force foreign oil companies into compliance with regulation—a laudatory achievement considering the record of oil companies undermining the national sovereignty of their host country. It seems Vandewalle's neoliberal biases prevented him from conceiving the state as anything but the kind of very specific vehicle for neoliberal capitalist development in the form of liberal democracy. Reading further with a critical analytic eye to dissect Vandewalle's words it quickly becomes apparent they were written hoping no one would critically examine what these words mean. This becomes obvious after deducing the target audience, Western business school students and businessmen, one of the "spokespersons for Western corporations from universities and organizations such as the Atlantic

²⁸³ Vandewalle, *A History of Modern Libya*, 212-213.

²⁸⁴ De Bona, *Human Rights in Libya*, 153.

Council or the Council on Foreign Relations in the United States,” Campbell critiques.²⁸⁵

Mr. Diederik Vandewalle’s page hosted by the Tuck School of Business is revealing, insofar as the only course that he teaches as an “Associate Professor of Government at Dartmouth College,” (all that is noted in *A History of Modern Libya*) is “Doing Business in the Arab Gulf States,” and his areas of expertise include: “Islamic finance; commodity booms, institutional development, and economic reform in the Arab Gulf states and North Africa; sovereign wealth funds in Arab Gulf states.”²⁸⁶ It is clear Vandewalle was one of the pan-European intellectuals and area experts whose interest in the region is motivated to secure business interests and scholars Campbell warns European language speakers of these intellectual agents of imperial power and capitalist interests.²⁸⁷ A description typical of the first waves of American and British oil men of the early 1900s, who established relations with many of the oil producing states prior to WWII, and which could also aptly describe the mid-twentieth century men who made up the CIA.²⁸⁸ French-American Philosopher Gabriel Rockhill, who studied under Jacques Derrida, has written and spoken on the connections between American and British intelligence agencies and the university, through which they

²⁸⁵ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 23.

²⁸⁶ Coleman E. Shear, “Interview With Dirk Vandewalle.”

²⁸⁷ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 26.

²⁸⁸ Bevins, *The Jakarta Method*, 27.

launder a plethora of information.²⁸⁹ This is not to suggest that Vandewalle is associated with the CIA or any intelligence communities, but when asked if he was working with the State Department in an October 11, 2012 interview he noted that he was “senior political advisor to the Carter Center” and provided “political advice” during elections.²⁹⁰

Vandewalle gives life to Campbell’s writing, the embodiment of the “worn-out intellectual apparatus of the West,” who tries to pass off cartoonishly biased writing as a matter of fact.²⁹¹ Vandewalle repeatedly describes Muammar Gaddafi’s Libya as an “experiment in statelessness,” while decrying the state as too interventionist in the holy free market in a variety of ways.²⁹² Obviously, it follows that there was a state then, one that Vandewalle disliked but that existed. So either he says it does not exist in a simply childish propaganda or is so indoctrinated he literally does not recognize anything but the specific neoliberal liberal democratic institutions and processes as a state, both of which reek of modernization theory of the kind Wallerstein denounces as a fundamentally racist and exploitative tool of neocolonial imperialist powers.

Like American diplomats who tripped over themselves trying to frame all they wrote on African Union and Gaddafi negatively, Vandewalle bends over

²⁸⁹ Gabriel Rockhill, “How the ‘Compatible Left’ Upholds Imperialism - Gabriel Rockhill Compilation,” June 25, 2024, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2zo5iAn7pkA&ab_channel=CriticalTheoryWorkshop.

²⁹⁰ Shear, “Interview With Dirk Vandewalle.”

²⁹¹ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 23.

²⁹² Campbell, *Global NATO*, 23; Vandewalle, *A History of Modern Libya*, 173.

backward when he writes “Economic growth could, during prolonged periods, simply be ‘bought’ by increasing the sale of revenue-gathering resource,” seemingly frustrated by the fact that resources can be sold for money, trying as hard as he can to characterize the sale of goods and services as insidious.²⁹³ Made all the more treacherous when this wealth then funds “Distributive policies” which “become the most common method to meet social contracts, to stimulate domestic economic sectors, and to keep citizens voiceless.”²⁹⁴ Perhaps Vandewalle is so disorientated because fair exchange between the core and periphery is not supposed to happen. This is the Professor of Doing Business in the Arab Gulf States, (the Gulf states which viewed Gaddafi with antipathy and funded the Sunni Wahhabist strains of Islamism that he long opposed) what is not to trust?

The publication date of this second edition, 2012, presumably in the early months, as Vandewalle dates the preface as October 28, 2011, eight days after Gaddafi died, combined with the blatant neoliberal bias on display is rather suspect.²⁹⁵ Though Vandewalle notes that his editor suggested a second edition, it seems this text was intended to obscure the perception of the periphery in the eyes of the pan-European world to “monopolize the interpretation of the political processes in Libya,” which Campbell notes maintained the image of “Tribal Libya, rogue state, terrorist state, and radical Islamist,” at a critical moment when the

²⁹³ Vandewalle, *A History of Modern Libya*, 212.

²⁹⁴ Vandewalle, *A History of Modern Libya*, 212.

²⁹⁵ Vandewalle, *A History of Modern Libya*, xi.

English speaking world paid inordinate attention to Libya,²⁹⁶ In this same interview, nine days before Gaddafi was murdered, Vandewalle described the “protest that we’ve seen in Benghazi are an indication that people are very clearly saying, ‘Look, we don’t want any radical version of Islam’... its very clear to me that they will not come to dominate the political landscape...the radical Islamists really are a fringe.”²⁹⁷ While the rebel forces and NATO pulverized Sirte in October, Vandewalle spoke of the Benghazi protests of mid-February, dismissed the notion of AQ-linked militia groups almost entirely, and mentions Islamic radical opposition groups in passing in *A History of Modern Libya*, but the LIFG is not mentioned by name, the 1996 British backed LIFG assassination attempt on Gaddafi is not even mentioned at all. For all of Vandewalle’s multiple trips to Libya per year since 1986, he either intentionally controlled the narrative and sanitized the rebels and NATO’s image or did so through ignorance and ideological blinders, but is representative of a large swath of the English-speaking, generally pro-NATO, sources on Libya.

Furthermore, Vandewalle’s biases against “internationalism, pan-Arabism, and pan-Africanism” are apparent in his characterization of them as an antagonism to the West, which “Libyans will undoubtedly want to jettison.”²⁹⁸ The notion of a nation straying from the West’s preordained neoliberal designs aimed

²⁹⁶ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 26. Especially swaths of mid-level managerial class representatives of corporate interests that initially flooded into Libya before the reality of the situation, and the identity of some of the rebels, became clear.

²⁹⁷ Shear, “Interview With Dirk Vandewalle.”

²⁹⁸ Vandewalle, *A History of Modern Libya*, 213.

exclusively at pan-European capitalist profit (in this case, investment in developmentalist and revolutionary policies designed to bolster African sovereignty) is so infantile to be “quixotic[ly]” hopeless, if not “incomprehensible,” to the Western neoliberal mind.²⁹⁹ Vandewalle's work and biases are generally characteristic of the analysis of periphery states produced from inside the industrialized core. By reflexively contrasting Libyan economics negatively to the contemporary Western neoliberal sphere, rather than comparing them to Libya's history of colonial domination and material deprivation, demonstrates the Western tendency to evaluate foreign nations against their own societies' attendant ideological assumptions in an ahistorical manner. One which ever so conveniently brushes over the pan-European history of colonial exploitation of the periphery.

Critics of European Universalism and Operation Unified Protector, Views from the Global South

In August of 2011, as Tripoli was under siege, Campbell, a Jamaican scholar and advocate of African liberation struggles, who previously taught at the University of Dar es Salaam in Tanzania, lectured on the dangers of NATO interventionism at China's Tsinghua University.³⁰⁰ Oyeniyi earned his bachelor's as well as his master's degrees from the University of Ibadan in his native country of Nigeria, making both Campbell and Oyeniyi leading African scholars

²⁹⁹ Vandewalle, *A History of Modern Libya*, x.

³⁰⁰ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 11.

on the subject of Africa. The emphasis on non-Western points of view and heritage is intended to cut against Western biases and should not be mistaken as reinforcement of any innate orientalist, East versus West, South versus North tropes based on identity. Forte is Canadian, and Italian Giacomina De Bona, from the old colonial master of Libya, offers a powerful defense against justifications for violent interventions due to a perceived lack of political and human rights as observed in the West.³⁰¹ This is not to allege that the regime's faults and failures are glossed over, Campbell himself was critical of Gaddafi, considering him an obstacle to African unity following Gaddafi's suggested division of Nigeria between Christians and Muslims in 2010.³⁰² However, this does not discount the fact that, as Campbell notes, humanitarianism became "cover for the new military management of the international system, as human rights was used as a pretext to sell war."³⁰³

This assertion is supported by nuanced theoretical and legal interpretations of international law, sovereignty, and human rights provided by Giacomina De Bona in her 2013 book, *Human Rights in Libya: The Impact of International Society Since 1969*, which illuminates specific mechanics at work behind the Atlanticist point of view. While critics, including authors in *Rethinking Humanitarian Intervention for the 21st Century*, critique United States foreign policy and OUP based on the disastrous consequences of intervention after the

³⁰¹ De Bona, *Human Rights in Libya*, 47-61.

³⁰² Campbell, *Global NATO*, 10.

³⁰³ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 43.

fact, De Bona critiques the fundamental assumptions and building blocks of United States foreign policy and OUP. Using standard interpretations of sovereignty, international law, and the UN charter, De Bona argues for a more nuanced and historical conception of human rights than is observed in the West. In her words, “There is a case for arguing that the expansion of Western-defined human rights further divides and breaks down the periphery into a zone of conflict and ultimately harms the advancement of the “western” moral community.”³⁰⁴

Key to her argument, and the major differential from Vandewalle and neoliberal analysts, is the fact that Western ideals are not universal and timeless Platonic ideals (which debases European or American Universalism completely).³⁰⁵ De Bona instead places the Western conception of human rights in its proper historical context as a product of (or one fundamentally altered by) Cold War tensions, noting that, “human rights become a powerful weapon for influencing the internal affairs of periphery states...often used as a way to influence and to undermine the political elites by having the potential to bring the country to the verge of civil war.”³⁰⁶ These considerations neutralize many routine thought-terminating cliches, and emotionally potent oversimplifications leveled

³⁰⁴ De Bona, *Human Rights in Libya*, 152.

³⁰⁵ De Bona, *Human Rights in Libya*, 153.

³⁰⁶ De Bona, *Human Rights in Libya*, 153.

against critiques of United States interventionism as apologia for authoritarian violence.³⁰⁷

As De Bona notes, the international system during the Cold War consisted of two competing nuclei of power in the capitalist First World and communist/socialist Second World that held differing interpretations of human rights.³⁰⁸ However, both were derived from similar internationally recognized, and supposedly equitable, legal frameworks. In the industrialized Western core liberal individualistic, democratic, and political rights, as expressed in the 1966 International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, were prioritized.³⁰⁹ Conversely, the Eastern bloc conceptualized human rights in the context of socio-economic rights and the struggle for freedom from colonialism and capitalist imperialism, as expressed in the 1966 International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights.³¹⁰ The Eastern conception emphasized the importance of self-determination, sovereignty from colonial rule and coercion, and the lifting of people's material conditions.³¹¹ De Bona's analysis of two international systems with competing understandings of human rights during the Cold War synthesizes well with conceptions from the school of world-systems

³⁰⁷ Shane Croucher, "Tulsi Gabbard Responds to Kamala Harris' 'Assad Apologist' Comment, Says She'll Meet Dictators to Protect Americans: 'I Will Never Apologize'," *Newsweek*, August 1, 2019, <https://www.newsweek.com/tulsi-gabbard-kamala-harris-assad-apologist-cnn-debate-1452049>.

³⁰⁸ De Bona, *Human Rights in Libya*, 54.

³⁰⁹ De Bona, *Human Rights in Libya*, 54.

³¹⁰ De Bona, *Human Rights in Libya*, 54.

³¹¹ De Bona, *Human Rights in Libya*, 54.

analysis, which De Bona often employs by invoking, most often, Buzan's conception of the core-periphery framework.³¹² In the context of the Eastern bloc conception, human rights in Libya were meaningfully advanced under Gaddafi, as the next chapter will detail.³¹³

Despite the associations with the USSR the name evokes, the Libyan conceptions of human rights stemmed from Libyan's experiences with colonial rule and oppression by Western powers. Though the Gaddafi regime's track record was lacking in the human and political rights that the West understood, the Libyan authorities made considerable material improvements in quality of life for their people as seen in rapid increase in literacy rates and standards of living, and asserted their right to self-determination and sovereignty from colonial rule and neocolonial designs. Both can be observed in the management of Libyan oil production, sovereign control over its profit enabled the government to pursue developmentalist policies and material improvements for the Libyan people. This highlights and contours the fundamental divide between the pro-interventionists and anti-interventionists in significant ways. The Gaddafi regime's developmentalist economic policies aimed at the retention of Libyan sovereignty (that the neoliberal-leaning Vandewalle dismisses out of hand as the source of Libya's turmoil and Campbell praises) are the policies that should be viewed, with consideration to the UN Charter and 1966 International Covenant on Economic,

³¹² De Bona, *Human Rights in Libya*, 24-38, 50, 91, 147, 151-154.

³¹³ De Bona, *Human Rights in Libya*, 45.

Social, and Cultural Rights, as a pursuit of fundamental human rights.³¹⁴ In other words, advocates of neoliberal economics such as Vandewalle are essentially opposed to the pursuit of human rights in Libya, in this formulation.

Considering the two opposing camps' convictions in light of De Bona's crucial arguments, a chain of ideological assumptions begins to make themselves clear in the intersection of sovereignty and Libyan economic developmentalism. In a neoliberal ouroboros of justification: the lack of liberal political rights as understood in the West combined with their aversion to developmentalist resource nationalism (itself often conflated with authoritarianism) is contextualized in juxtaposition to the contemporary industrialized-core and not the developing world's experience under colonialism. A nation's present should be compared with their own history and attendant standards. As such, Libya's developmentalist achievements should be weighed against the context of its historical colonial deprivation.

It is here where Campbell and Oyeniya's backgrounds as African scholars shine, and their analysis should be given an extra layer of consideration compared to the likes of Vandewalle, Gaub, or Jason Pack. Their perspectives based outside of the colonial/pam-European industrialized core essentially preclude the ability of their analysis to so confidently shrug off the history of

³¹⁴ De Bona, *Human Rights in Libya*, 50.

colonial exploitation as the primary frame of reference of comparison, as many in the West do.³¹⁵

Conclusion

Of the most significant elements intended to grace the reader of this chapter are two. One: the United States' embrace of constructive instability, or a chaotic geostrategy of destabilization, is coherent with the United States' Cold War and contemporary history of foreign entanglements. The historical context of the Western and Eastern European Operation Gladio networks, the South American Operation Condor networks, and The Jakarta Method, Washington's patchwork network of anticommunist mass murder programs that stretched across the remainder of the globe, all temper the potentially radical argument.³¹⁶ These historical instances of Gladio, Condor, and Jakarta demonstrate that the United States is neither afraid of killing innocent civilians, destabilizing foreign nations—often democracies themselves, which the United States usually replaced with a servile dictator—and cultivating international terror networks of non-state actors as muscle for their dirty work.³¹⁷ After decades of using such a strategy across the globe, and considering Walter Lippmann's 1947 "Critique of Containment," (which foreshadowed the unreliable bedfellows the United States may be forced to make, manifest decades later in the anti-Soviet mujahideen

³¹⁵ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 146.

³¹⁶ Bevins, *The Jakarta Method*, 184, 206, 223.

³¹⁷ Bevins, *The Jakarta Method*, 157, 205. "Terrorism had to be unleashed on the population."

terror networks the United States, amongst others, cultivated in Afghanistan through the late-1970s and 1980s), and the rise of Islamist terror groups such as the LIFG, AQ, and ISIS in post-OUP Libya after contingents of each were armed, and organized, by NATO allies against the Gaddafi regime (as NATO's "boots on the ground," which UNSCR 1973 explicitly forbade), these terror networks' foothold in Libya, and the surrounding region post-OUP should have been an immediately obvious risk to any of the Atlanticist foreign policy elite.³¹⁸

As for the second point, the chapter intended to thoroughly problematize any of the most common media and foreign policy elite talking points, which likely are born out of, and comprise the ideological water in which Western and pan-European readers came up in. These include the reactionary smearing of anti-war activists or anti-interventionists, or even IR theorists and policy experts such as John Mearsheimer or Jeffery Sachs, as anti-American or pro-authoritarian. Consider *FOX News* talking heads denouncing critics of the 2003 Iraq War as "pro-Saddam," or Mearsheimer and Sachs' informed

³¹⁸ Walter Lippmann, *The Cold War: A Study in U.S. Foreign Policy since 1945* (Reading, PA: Addison-Wesley Co., 1973), 47, 49-51. "The other pressures... Mr. X is so concerned about - in the Middle East and in Asia - are, I contend, secondary and subsidiary to the fact that its [USSR's] armed forces are in the heart of Europe. It is to the Red Army in Europe, therefore, and not to ideologies, elections, forms of government, to socialism, to communism, to free enterprise, that a correctly conceived and soundly planned policy should be directed...the policy is misconceived, and must result in a misuse of American power... It compels the United States to meet the Soviet pressure at these shifting geographical and political points by using satellite states, puppet governments and agents which have been subsidized and supported, though their effectiveness is meager and their reliability uncertain."

observations and accurate predictions on the Russian-Ukrainian conflict since 2014, being labeled as “pro-Putin.”³¹⁹ The mutual incompatibility of humanism and militarism should call into question the very notions of what should rightfully constitute a humanitarian intervention, as authors do throughout *Rethinking Humanitarian Intervention in the 21st Century*.³²⁰ Cronin and Herold both problematize the *modus operandi* of the United States military and international humanitarian law (IHL) as mutually exclusive.³²¹

Finally, this chapter demonstrated that a large variety of intellectual and political elites have relied on either outright deception, ignorance, or incompetence to sell to the public: condescending Euro-centric interpretations of economic development and globalization absent serious consideration of the Middle East and North Africa or the legacy of colonialism, neoliberal economic and international relations theory, a sanitized interpretation of United States foreign policy, the faulty logic of militarized humanitarian intervention, a history of

³¹⁹ LeVine, *Why They Don't Hate Us*, 326; Piers Morgan, “Piers Morgan vs John Mearsheimer | On Putin, Israel-Hamas And More,” YouTube video, Piers Morgan Uncensored, uploaded February 27, 2024, 12:50-13:10, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4GqGCjSANWg&ab_channel=PiersMorganUncensored; Piers Morgan, “Piers Morgan vs Jeffrey Sachs: ‘Can You Not Find Anything Negative To Say About Putin?’” YouTube video, Piers Morgan Uncensored, uploaded March 18, 2024, 1:55-2:05, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c586OPde_NA&t=489s&ab_channel=PiersMorganUncensored.

³²⁰ Paul James, Paul Battersby, and Shirley V. Scott provide the most serious contentions.

³²¹ Cronin, “Reckless endangerment warfare;” Herold “‘Unworthy’ Afghan Bodies.”

Islamist terror networks devoid of the United States' key role in cultivating such forces, and analyses of OUP as anything but a war-crime laden failure also devoid of the role of Islamist terror networks amongst the NATO backed rebels

CHAPTER THREE:

HISTORY OF LIBYA: 1881-2011

“The oil companies never forgot that Libya’s nationalization of oil in the 1970s was the precursor to Iranian nationalization in 1979 and Saudi Arabia’s full takeover of Aramco in the mid-1980s.”

-Horace Campbell, 2013, *Global NATO and the Catastrophic Failure in Libya: Lessons for Africa in the Forging of African Unity*.³²²

This chapter will examine Libyan history up to Operation Unified Protector (OUP) and Gaddafi’s death in 2011. Particular interest will be paid to the Libyan population’s struggle against foreign imperialists to maintain their sovereignty. From the early semi-nomadic tribesmen’s domination of the Libyan hinterland to Muammar Gaddafi’s regime, Libyans historically maintained their sovereignty through control of indigenous land trade networks, even when the Libyan coasts were controlled by foreign powers.³²³ This provides important context for the formulation and execution of OUP in 2011, and the development of constructive instability as a default alternative, or acceptable secondary outcome in the face of the failure of the United States’ foreign policy agenda’s maximalist goals to sustain a policy of area denial in a wider imperial strategy lacking the ability to fill geopolitical power vacuums with ideologically similar and subservient regimes.

³²² Campbell, *Global NATO*, 23.

³²³ Vandewalle, *A History of Modern Libya*, 17-18.

The colonial destruction of Libyan sovereignty over these geopolitically significant trade networks provides historical precedent for the supposed underlying *modus operandi* of constructive instability that best accounts for the United States' actions as compared to other European NATO actors (the French and British) or regional actors (such as Qatar) whose actions can best be understood as materially and ideologically motivated.³²⁴ In other words, the United States wished to shut down the Libyan economy and state, and, as their quick abdication from a post-conflict role demonstrates, the United States had comparably little interest in securing material interests or creating a liberal democratic state.

Other historical mirrors or echoes from Libyan history are also noted. For example, it is ironic one of the Italian colonialist's earliest economic footholds inside Libya came through the cultivation of a black-market for European firearms.³²⁵ Furthermore, the Italians armed certain Berber tribes to turn them against their laissez-faire Ottoman rulers only to have these arms turned back against them.³²⁶ These nineteenth century instances eerily mirror the flood of Western arms, pilloried in the chaos of OUP, across the MENA region and the wider arc of the Western cultivation of the anti-Soviet Mujahideen.

Finally, the Gaddafi regime's historical distaste for radical Sunni Wahhabist Islam and persecution of such elements, most notably the *al-Qaeda*-linked Libyan Islamic

³²⁴ Vandewalle, *A History of Modern Libya*, 30.

³²⁵ Oyeniyi, *The History of Libya*, 46.

³²⁶ Vandewalle, *A History of Modern Libya*, 21.

Fighting Group (LIFG) in tandem with the Atlanticist powers cooperation with the LIFG in attempts on Gaddafi's life prior to OUP provide important context and precedent for NATO's assistance to the LIFG and adjacent militant groups in 2011.³²⁷

Colonial Conquest, Fascist Colonial Rule & WWII: 1881-1945

Colonial Conquest 1881-1931

Libya had been a crossroads of trade for centuries, a bridge between sub-Saharan African, West and Central Asia, and Europe in a network of land and seaborne trade. As such, it has been dominated by regional hegemons looking to control this trade since the days of the Phoenicians and Romans. However, besides the Ottoman Empire, no foreign power managed to gain control over the hinterlands, leaving land trade in the hands of the diverse semi-nomadic indigenous population.³²⁸ Following the French seizure of Tunisia in 1881, these three proto-Libyan regions remained the only North African territory without a European colonial ruler.

Ultimately, it was the young state of Italy, officially unified in 1861—not the French or British—that manifested deeper colonial designs on the region. Beyond the coincidental nature of Italy's geographic proximity and Libya's

³²⁷ Pargeter, *Libya: The Rise and Fall of Qaddafi*, 169.

³²⁸ Oyeniyi, *The History of Libya*, 39, 42. Ethnic Berber traders had long traded in gold, ivory, and slaves from across Africa for European goods such as textiles, timber, and firearms - which many Europeans were smuggling into Libya against laws of the Holy Roman Empire.

colonial vacancy, Libya was an attractive prospect to the Italians who sought to consolidate their control of seafaring trade across the Mediterranean.³²⁹ An 1863 periodical, the *Opinione* argues the Italian case, “If Egypt, and with it the Suez Canal, falls to the British, if Tunis falls to the French, and if Austria expands from Dalmatia into Albania, etc. we will soon find ourselves without a breathing space in the center of the Mediterranean.”³³⁰ At the Berlin Conference of 1886 and 1885 Italy laid claim to the region, though Britain, France, Germany, and the United States were also interested in controlling Libya.³³¹

Through the late 1800s, the Italian government began a conscious effort to immerse themselves into the Libyan economy by resettling thousands of Italian migrants with encouragement to purchase indigenous commercial, manufacturing, and shipping establishments.³³² This foreign capture of indigenous economic and manufacturing capacities in an attempt to redirect resources and capital back into the host is exemplary of the core-periphery dynamic. In 1868 Italy and the Ottoman appointed governor of Libya (the *bey*) formalized the Italian economic presence as part of a 20-year agreement towards a “peaceful” relationship and Italian schools, trading firms, and banks sprouted, with the Banco di Roma opening thirteen Libyan operations. Then Italian Prime

³²⁹ Oyeniyi, *The History of Libya*, 41. Other European powers involved in the Mediterranean trade, in Oyeniyi’s words, “nursed a disturbing ambition concerning Libya.”

³³⁰ Oyeniyi, *The History of Libya*, 41.

³³¹ Oyeniyi, *The History of Libya*, 42.

³³² Oyeniyi, *The History of Libya*, 43.

Minister Francesco Crispi words revealed their true intent, “To emigrate is servile, but to conquer colonies is a worthy task for a free and noble people.”³³³

When the *bey*, suspicious of growing Italian ambition in Libya annulled this agreement in 1881 and flirted with the French, the Italians took this as justification for invasion and full colonization, which they began to work towards.³³⁴ Italy also justified its coming invasion in context of shutting out its competition, chiefly France (who acquiesced to Italy for their recognition of the French claim on Morocco) but Germany and the United States as well.³³⁵ This is an early demonstration of the highly competitive increasingly “zero-sum” nature of globalization that ultimately culminated in NATO’s 2011 Operation Unified Protector (OUP) and the post-intervention abandonment of Libya by the United States.

The Italians erroneously believed that sectors of the indigenous Libyan population would welcome them as liberators from Ottoman rule and clandestinely armed Berber groups who then turned them back on the Italians. Many of these Berbers continued fighting decades after the Ottomans officially ceded the territory to Italy.³³⁶ This mirrors the way jihadist groups armed by Western powers to counter the USSR ultimately turned the same arms against

³³³ Oyeniyi, *The History of Libya*, 43.

³³⁴ Oyeniyi, *The History of Libya*, 43.

³³⁵ Oyeniyi, *The History of Libya*, 43.

³³⁶ Oyeniyi, *The History of Libya*, 44.

the West - ultimately coming to play a significant role in European designs to topple Gaddafi through the 1990s and OUP in 2011.

After two Italian settlers were killed in Libya in 1908, Italy declared that the Ottomans must be removed for the danger to Italian lives and property their continued rule posed. In October of 1911, war was declared and the Italians began the colonial intervention from which Libya was carved out of the Ottoman Empire.³³⁷ Italy was determined not to repeat their military defeat in Ethiopia in 1838, mobilized a large force that swept through Tobruk, Tripoli, Derna, and Benghazi by October 19.³³⁸ The 1912 Treaty of Ouchy ceded Tripolitania, Fezzan, and Cyrenaica to Italy, though Tripolitania and Cyrenaica were granted “independence” under Italian administration.³³⁹

Prior to the start of Italian economic colonization, land belonged to the family in a communal system. By 1913 Italians tightened their grip, no longer content to purchase indigenous land or business, the Italian Ufficio Fondario (the Land Office) began to declare “uncultivated” land public land.³⁴⁰ Libyans were then onward systematically excised from all forms or conception of the public or civic participation.³⁴¹

³³⁷ Oyeniyi, *The History of Libya*, 45.

³³⁸ Oyeniyi, *The History of Libya*, 45.

³³⁹ Oyeniyi, *The History of Libya*, 45.

³⁴⁰ Oyeniyi, *The History of Libya*, 64. Between 1914 and 1929 over 180,000 acres of arable land was confiscated from Libyans by the Italians. By 1940 the Italians controlled over 495,000 acres and numbered roughly 110,000.

³⁴¹ Vandewalle, *A History of Modern Libya*, 41.

Despite the Ottoman acquiescence, many Libyans continued to take arms against the Italian settlers. Libyans were divided between those such as Berber ethnic groups who argued for the forced expulsion of Italian settlers, and those who advised submission to Italian colonial rule.³⁴² The Berbers fell back to the hinterlands and declared their own independent Berber state (which was eventually defeated by the Italians in the Battle of Asabaa on March 23, 1913).³⁴³

In the city of Qasr Bu Hadi, over 500 Italian soldiers were killed and notable amounts of Italian equipment was liberated.³⁴⁴ In Fezzan Libyan forces crushed Italian forces in Misurata, dealing over 4,000 Italians casualties in a single day, and seizing 5,000 rifles, millions of rounds of ammunition, and all other Italian supplies in the city.³⁴⁵ By May of 1915, Italy lost roughly 15,000 rifles, and artillery pieces, an unquantified amount of ammunition, and over 27,000 prisoners of war.³⁴⁶

In Cyrenaica the Sanussi Order, a nationalistic Sunni political/religious group founded by Omar al-Mukhtar (from which the first and only King of an independent Libya was picked by the UN to later be overthrown by Gaddafi in 1969), led the resistance to Italian colonization.³⁴⁷ Islam provided a universal uniting aspect amongst various differing ethnic groups that made up the Order.

³⁴² Oyeniyi, *The History of Libya*, 46.

³⁴³ Oyeniyi, *The History of Libya*, 46.

³⁴⁴ Oyeniyi, *The History of Libya*, 46.

³⁴⁵ Oyeniyi, *The History of Libya*, 47.

³⁴⁶ Oyeniyi, *The History of Libya*, 47.

³⁴⁷ Oyeniyi, *The History of Libya*, 46. Sayyid Ahmad al-Shariff led the Sanussi Order at the time.

After years of harsh resistance, The Order aligned with additional ethnic Berber, Tebu, and Tuaregs, which forced the Italians to cede Cyrenaica under the April 1917 Akrama Agreement. Had it not been for British intervention in 1916 (who were primarily interested in maintaining order in neighboring Egypt) the Libyan resistance movement may have rolled back Italian occupation forces entirely - motivating the British to intervene and squash budding indigenous Libyan sovereignty.

The British 1916 intervention in Libya demonstrates key geostrategic and material colonial interests that continue to inform their anti-Gaddafi positions through the 1990s up to OUP in 2011. Though the British were not interested in securing Libyan land or resources they recognized the potential threat of a colonial periphery “standing up” and intervention protected their wider colonial holdings and material interests in the region. Elements of constructive instability can be observed, but important distinctions can be made. The United States and NATO likely saw the Gaddafi regime’s domestic and pan-African developmentalist efforts funded by Libyan economic sovereignty in 2011 as the British saw indigenous Libyan sovereignty in 1916 as a threat. However, by 2011 the new American hegemon did not have analogous colonial material holdings in the region, as the British did to Egypt in 1916, so they lacked the material interest to stabilize Libya. Adjacent, the United States’ instrumentalization of jihadist groups from Afghanistan in the Cold War to OUP in Libya, and afterward in Syria, is much more callous than the UK’s earlier use of similar groups in similar “divide

and conquer” colonial strategies — likely owing to the United States’ lack of immediate on the ground material colonial interests or designs.

Demonstrative of the pan-European core’s desire to crush or curtail any sovereignty from the periphery, when Tripolitania declared its independence in 1918 the UK and Italy began a joint bombing campaign over Misurata, where 70,000 men, tanks, artillery, aircraft, reinforced the Italian position.³⁴⁸ Even with such manpower and assistance, the Italians still could not defeat Libyan resistance which, “undeterred by the heavy equipment and hordes of Italian officers and men, left no one in doubt that Italy had to deal with them as equals.”³⁴⁹ Italian General Giuseppe Tarditi and Libyan leadership negotiated a partial Italian surrender, officially declared in the Fundamental Laws of June 1919.

In a series of meetings between 1919 and 1922, indigenous Libyans were able to negotiate a fragmented piecemeal set of agreements that delegated Libyan leadership’s rights over designated territory. Libyan infighting weakened their position and contributed to the piecemeal nature of these agreements. This politically heterogeneous and diverse tribal makeup of indigenous Libyan society shaped the course of Libyan history up to the present day.³⁵⁰ Unfortunately, these

³⁴⁸ Oyeniyi, *The History of Libya*, 48.

³⁴⁹ Oyeniyi, *The History of Libya*, 48.

³⁵⁰ The political and tribal heterogeneity is observable in the near 2,000 diverse militia groups that took control of small pockets of territory and neighborhoods in post-2011 Libya

significant gains for indigenous Libyan society only proved to be a brief respite from the horrors of European colonial rule.

Fascist Rule and World War Two: 1931-1945

This attack on Africans [OUP] in the midst of a depression is not new, and reminded African intellectuals of the context of the demise of the League of Nations. African scholars wanting to inspire a new appreciation of global history readily understand that it was during a capitalist depression that the League of Nations collapsed, after the European powers failed to intervene to halt the Italian invasion of Abyssinia, in October 1935. This failure of the League of Nations laid the foundations for the triggers of war that engulfed humanity in the tragic cycles of economic crisis, fascism, war, genocide, and the dropping of an atomic bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

-Horace Campbell, *Global NATO and the Catastrophic Failure in Libya*.³⁵¹

Unlike General Giuseppe Tarditi, Mussolini and the Italian fascists refused to deal with, and certainly did not consider the Libyans equals. The inability to swiftly and decisively crush Libyan resistance was seen as a sign of weakness that Italian fascists intended to correct. New fascist military leadership sought to eliminate Libyan gains in the civil and political spheres and annihilate the Libyan resistance through harsh and punitive policies across Libya, especially in East Libya and Cyrenaica.³⁵² Concentration and death camps, mass killings targeted at women and children, and massive forced population resettlement were

³⁵¹ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 20, 21.

³⁵² Oyeniyi, *The History of Libya*, 49.

amongst the Italian fascists favored tools of colonial domination and population control.

Despite the fascist Italian regime's violence, the Libyan resistance continued. In Cyrenaica, the leader of a deadly guerrilla resistance operation against the Italians, Omar al-Mukhtar Muhammad bin Farhat al-Manif, routinely dealt heavy losses with only a few men.³⁵³ On September 16, 1931, Italian forces executed al-Manif, after he was wounded and captured on September 11, 1931. Oyeniyi mentions hundreds to thousands of other captured Libyan fighters and innocents only suspected as sympathizers were also executed alongside al-Manif as a public demonstration, Dirk Vandewalle does not mention any other Libyans executed with al-Manif.³⁵⁴

To counter Libyan resistance the Italians constructed the "Frontier Wire," a barbed wire fence that stretched from the Mediterranean to the oasis of Al-Jaghbub, forced over 100,000 people from the Jebel Akhdar region into concentration camps host to devastating conditions and "severe punishments such as electrocution, maiming, and dismemberment," and killed up to 80,000 Libyans (1/3rd of the population of Cyrenaica) by conservative estimates.³⁵⁵ The director of the Italian Army Health Services noted that between May and

³⁵³ Oyeniyi, *The History of Libya*, 50. Sustained attacks on Italian troops, equipment, and logistical/supply networks were sufficiently devastating that the Italians nicknamed Omar "Matari of the Mnifa - the Lion of the Desert."

³⁵⁴ Oyeniyi, *The History of Libya*, 49, 50; Vandewalle, *A History of Modern Libya*, 31. In 1930 and 1931 roughly 12,000 Cyrenaicans were killed.

³⁵⁵ Oyeniyi, *The History of Libya*, 51.

September of 1930 over 80,000 Libyans were forced into concentration camps and the entire semi nomadic population of tent dwelling Libyans were forced into these concentration camps by the end of the year. The same report suggests a mortality rate of 55 percent for these concentration camps.³⁵⁶ Between 1928 and 1932, it is estimated roughly half the Bedouin population was killed through starvation.³⁵⁷ Between 1912 and 1943, an estimated 250,000 to 300,000 Libyans died “of causes other than natural.”³⁵⁸

In January of 1929, the Italian governor of Libya, Marshal Pietro Badoglio, proposed that the concentration camps become permanent settlements.³⁵⁹ The disruption and control of the various indigenous semi-nomadic people achieved through imprisoning them in concentration camps proved to be key to the conquest of Libya. Only these sweeping measures of control, along with the disruption to the natural movement of those who remained outside the concentration camps barbed wire, were the previously indomitable Libyans brought under the boot of foreign power due to the total destruction of the centuries long indigenous networks of trade that the semi-nomadic peoples previously sustained in the Libyan hinterlands. The loss of sovereignty over and destruction of these trade networks and the communities they sustained, which then sustained indigenous resistance movements, dealt the conclusive blow to

³⁵⁶ Oyeniyi, *The History of Libya*, 51.

³⁵⁷ Oyeniyi, *The History of Libya*, 51.

³⁵⁸ Vandewalle, *A History of Modern Libya*, 31.

³⁵⁹ Oyeniyi, *The History of Libya*, 51.

Libyan resistance, and in 1934 Cyrenaica, Tripolitania, and Fezzan were brought together in one cohesive administrative apparatus for the first time under the mantle of Italian Libya.

Throughout WWII, Libya proved itself to be a geopolitically crucial crossroads between Europe, North Africa and the Middle East, as it always has been. Nazi Rommel's doomed North African expedition across the Maghreb was intend to reintegrate Allied Middle Eastern oil holdings (most significantly in Iran and Saudi Arabia—as Libya's oil reserves had not yet been tapped) into a network that would then feed Germany oil from the Levant through North Africa across the Mediterranean into Europe around the Soviet forces in Eastern Europe. Following the Axis defeat during the Second Battle of El-Alamein in Egypt from October to November 1942, Italians were forced out of Libya and their occupation of Libya officially ended.³⁶⁰ Afterwards the Allied Forces found North Africa to be a useful forward operating base or launch pad into continental Europe, and Libya housed multiple strategically crucial air bases that the United States and UK maintained until Gaddafi forced the foreign powers to leave the country.

Post-WWII Libya's fate was left to the whims of the Atlanticist powers, including the materially interested Europeans and the geostrategically minded Americans, who expressed distaste at the European powers' unsophisticated attempts to reinstate colonialism out of fear it would play into communist

³⁶⁰ Oyeniyi, *The History of Libya*, 73.

anti-imperialist propaganda. The geopolitical pressures of the emerging Cold War and the United States' newfound unprecedented hegemony ironically allowed for Libyan independence under the auspices of the United Nations. Due to the United States' immediate post-War distaste for European colonialism, and desire to cultivate cooperation with the Third World prior to the adoption of The Jakarta Method, they prevented the British and French from enacting a proposed "trusteeship."³⁶¹ This proved ironic in hindsight because ensuing Cold War tensions and the United States' attendant effort to retain global hegemony later found Gaddafi's Libya in decades of antagonisms, with the UN ultimately sanctioning the effective destruction of Libya in 2011 (if only under false pretense presented by the NATO powers).

Independence and Gaddafi 1951-2011

Though the Americans temporarily wore the corpse of anti-colonial ideals of self-determination their nation's founding documents suggested in the immediate aftermath of WWII, Libyans held a distaste for European colonialism that was not as easily discarded. This anti-imperial distaste, more resolute and sincere than is typical the self-interest of Wilsonian/FDR-style idealism and rhetoric surrounding the rights to self-determination for all people, was born out of Libyans subjugation under settler-colonialism. It is worth remembering that the United States' foundational experience of settler-colonialism was as the

³⁶¹ Oyeniyi, *The History of Libya*, 75.

genocidal settler colonialists, and their abuses at the hands the British trivial compared to Libyans' or the indigenous populations of North America. Beyond colonial deprivation, indigenous Libyans' entire experience with the modernist state was that of oppression under harsh fascistic colonial administrations that excluded Libyans from any form of civic participation, leaving the many diverse tribal and ethnic groups to yearn for the days of tribal society and reject European style nationalism.³⁶²

Perhaps the only truly nationalistic unifying aspect shared by the diverse groups of Libyans was their distaste for foreign domination, evidenced in their routine inability to organize beyond these common grievances.³⁶³ Western analysts and observers inability to conceptualize the peripheries' experiences under colonialism enables their routine dismissal of Gaddafi's distrust of the pan-European powers as a product of some eccentricity, or as "quixotic" bad-faith realpolitik endeavors to cultivate support, according to Vandewalle.³⁶⁴ In their formulation, any support garnered from "redistributive largesse" that materially improves Libyans, or Africans, living conditions is an underhanded deal rather than a politician earning support through policies that improve the lives of a nation's citizens, and demonstrates an ideological neoliberal bias born of European Universalism.

³⁶² Vandewalle, *A History of Modern Libya*, 33,34.

³⁶³ Vandewalle, *A History of Modern Libya*, 41.

³⁶⁴ Vandewalle, *A History of Modern Libya*, x.

Or conversely, as Campbell concludes of such academic assets of the financial sector, such analysis is purposefully deceptive, or suggests a severely diminished intellectual capacity and political imagination unable to conceptualize any relationship outside neoliberal democracy as a viable social contract between a government and its people. In the pan-European neoliberal zeitgeist of Vandewalle, or the jingoist humanitarians, the material benefits of widespread improved standards of living in post-colonial societies are cast as fundamentally less desirable than the impoverishment of the masses through austerity and de-industrialization attendant to neoliberal reform due to the perceived democratic bonafides of either political system. Political Scientist Aaron Good notes a similar phenomenon with regard to China in his dissertation later published as *American Exception*, “While China lacks a democratic state... it has functioned democratically in some respects.”³⁶⁵ Despite the lack of Western liberal democratic practices Good notes that China “has pursued policies that have benefited the majority of the population in ways that theoretically mirror what would be predicted in a democracy. Meanwhile, the opposite has occurred in supposedly democratic nation-states that have pursued neoliberalism.”³⁶⁶ Much the same could be said of Gaddafi’s Libya.

The following highlights the significance of Libyan developmentalist projects that threatened to turn Libya into a semi-periphery or regional hegemon,

³⁶⁵ Aaron Good, *American Exception*, 269.

³⁶⁶ Good, *American Exception*, 269.

the likes of which the Wolfowitz Doctrine specifically designates as a threat to United States national security (read as: a threat to full spectrum dominance) to be neutralized. Despite King Idris' perception as a corrupt European puppet, both Idris and then Gaddafi made conscious efforts to improve Libyan sovereignty politically and economically. Through the cultivation of economic and resource sovereignty profits that would be directed into the pan-European core were redirected into developmentalist projects intended to reduce Libya's dependency on foreign powers. This peripheral self-sufficiency and emerging Libyan sovereignty is seen as a threat to the hegemonic power(s), evident in the Europeans' colonial efforts to crush all budding African independence and sovereignty, which OUP can be seen as the latest attempt to do so.

King Idris and the 1969 Free Union Officers Movement Coup

In 1951 the United Nations granted Libya independence under the rule of a constitutional monarchy of King Idris Sanussi, figurehead of the earlier Sanussi Order and previously Amir of Cyrenaica.³⁶⁷ According to Vandewalle newly independent Libya was host to "a largely destroyed infrastructure, virtually no trade, extremely high unemployment, a per capita income estimated at \$25 per year, an infant mortality rate of 40%, and a 94% illiteracy rate."³⁶⁸ Due to this devastation and impoverishment of the Libyan people at the hands of Western colonial powers it is unsurprising that the reconstitution of indigenous and

³⁶⁷ Vandewalle, *A History of Modern Libya*, 28.

³⁶⁸ Vandewalle, *A History of Modern Libya*, 42.

individual tribal sovereignty was of immediate concern to Libyans that had been herded into concentration camps and excluded from every level of society.

King Idris struggled to engender a sense of nationalism and political will among the population that lacked a unified sense of nationalist bonds or self-identification rather than competitive tribalism, and while the importance of attaining sovereignty based on principles of self-sufficiency from the imperialist powers was not lost entirely on either leader, it was of singular importance under the Gaddafi regime.³⁶⁹ The King prevented any major oil companies, “The Seven Sisters”, from gaining a foothold in Libya as they did in all other major oil producing nations in the region and smaller independent oil producing companies were given access.³⁷⁰ This later proved instrumental for the Gaddafi regime, enabling Libya to strong-arm small companies into compliance with the state and exercise unprecedented national control over Libyan oil reserves, enabling that wealth to be spent on development of the state and the betterment of its people.

In part because of the lack of political and educational experience of Libyans previously excluded from any participation in civic society by Italian settler-colonialism, early Libyan political engagement was either nonexistent or quickly polarized under tribal/ethnic lines. King Idris suspended Libya’s first planned elections, supposedly on the advice of British advisors, and political

³⁶⁹ De Bona, *Human Rights in Libya*, 64. In De Bona’s words, “with the exception of self-determination, civil and political rights received no attention and were not an issue in the building of the country between 1969 and 1985.”

³⁷⁰ Oyeniyi, *The History of Libya*, 125.

parties were banned by the king due to these ethnic/tribal loyalist tendencies that often proved violent and destructive, but this move also served the king's own interest in stifling dissent.³⁷¹ British advice to jettison democratic practices to consolidate the UN-appointed King further exposes the disposable nature of liberal idealism in service of a neoliberal economic agenda and Western corporations' bottom line, while either coincidentally or intentionally inevitably destroy peripheries' indigenous sovereignty over their economic and industrial capacity, production, and the attendant sovereignty on the international geopolitical stage generated from such control over resources and capital.³⁷²

Under the King the majority of developmental projects and the most valuable infrastructure was placed inside King Idris and his tribe's land, a tendency that was later leveled against Gaddafi by the pan-European powers as politically depraved and authoritarian in a few short years, while they take no issue suggesting King Idris suspend all democratic pretense if it will serve their interests.³⁷³ However, when it becomes useful for Western neocolonial and corporate interests then democratic ideals can be dusted off to impugn nations and leaders such as Gaddafi as authoritarian.

Much of the remainder of funds under the King found its way in the hands of the remaining Italian settlers, solidifying his corrupt and Western-aligned image. His legitimacy derived from the United Nations, led some Libyans to view

³⁷¹ Vandewalle, *A History of Modern Libya*, 4.

³⁷² De Bona, *Libya and Human Rights*, 58.

³⁷³ De Bona, *Human Rights in Libya*. 58.

the King as little more than an abstraction of colonial relations and grew ever more suspicious. By the mid-1960s Western powers murdered Congolese leader Patrice Lumumba along with hundreds of thousands to millions of Indonesians, and deposed Kwame Nkrumah in a few short years.³⁷⁴ A subservient King could very well enable likewise meddling in Libyan affairs and slaughter by the Americans and British who the King allowed to maintain military bases on Libyan soil.

Ironically, by the time Gaddafi asserted that Libya would remain neutral in the Cold War, the nation that most powerfully argued for Libya's independence that the United Nations granted Libya 1951, was now opposed to a free and independent Libya and sought to destroy any such independence like Sukarno's Indonesia was in 1956 and 1966.³⁷⁵ Gaddafi likely knew of the killings in Indonesia and suspected the United States, as did most of the Global South, though the pan-European world did not as they were sold a racist myth as the *New York Times* ran articles titled things like "When a Nation Runs Amok" describing the events as "inexplicable, vaguely tribal violence," which Bevins notes was "so easy for American readers to digest."³⁷⁶ The success of these types of narratives allowed Gaddafi's Libya to be cast as "Tribal Libya, rogue

³⁷⁴ Bevins, *The Jakarta Method*, 84, 155, 169; Campbell, *Global NATO*, 146, 265.

³⁷⁵ Oyeniyi, *The History of Libya*, 146; Davidson, "Why Was Muammar Qadhafi Really Removed?," 93. According to Davidson "The [1969] revolution immediately cost Britain an estimated £100 million in lost oil-infrastructure investments."

³⁷⁶ Bevins, *The Jakarta Method*, 155.

state, terrorist state, radical Islamist” by intellectuals that Campbell describes as little more than agents of pan-European imperialism that ensured “Libya remained a place for the mirth and mockery of Western media.”³⁷⁷ Shortly after taking power, Gaddafi moved against the United States and Atlanticist powers in Libya, and even pressured neighboring Malta to expel NATO.³⁷⁸

On September 1, 1969 the Free Unionist Officers Movement launched a bloodless coup that ended the monarchy in about two hours with roughly seventy army officers.³⁷⁹ The Free Unionist Officers Movement was initially anonymous and headed by the Revolutionary Command Council (RCC), a twelve-man board until Muammar Gaddafi was promoted to the rank of colonel and leader and commander-in-chief of the Armed Forces of Libya.³⁸⁰ The RCC’s stated revolutionary ambitions mirrored those of the Egyptian Free Officers Movement: freedom for all, the establishment of a socialist state, and unity of all ethnic groups in Libya and the Arab world.³⁸¹ It was no accident that these stated goals so closely mirrored those of neighboring Gamal Abdel Nasser’s Egyptian revolution of 1952.

³⁷⁷ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 26, 142.

³⁷⁸ Oyeniyi, *The History of Libya*, 146.

³⁷⁹ Oyeniyi, *The History of Libya*, 104. King Idris, who had been seeking medical treatment overseas in Greece, then fled to Turkey and then Egypt, where he lived until his death on May 25th, 1983.

³⁸⁰ Oyeniyi, *The History of Libya* 103.

³⁸¹ Oyeniyi, *The History of Libya*, 105.

Muammar “the Mad Dog of the Middle East” Gaddafi

Muammar Gaddafi was a Bedouin tribesman, born 50 miles south of Sirte in 1943.³⁸² Gaddafi was a particularly gifted child and a quick learner, completing six grades of elementary school in four years.³⁸³ Most of his teachers were Egyptian and spurred his interest in the Egyptian revolution of 1919, as did the Egyptian radio broadcast *Voice of Arabs*.³⁸⁴ This awakened an early interest in politics, from which Gaddafi followed in the Arab-nationalist footsteps of Nasser, and he was soon convinced that the only meaningful path towards change required revolutionary struggle.³⁸⁵

At the University of Libya, where Gaddafi studied history, he met like minds that formed the nucleus of the Free Unionist Officers Movement. The group identified the armed forces as the greatest means towards upward social mobility and enrolled in the Royal Military Academy in Benghazi in 1963, from which Gaddafi graduated in 1965. Following this Gaddafi was placed as a communication officer in the Signal Corps which enabled him in the planning and execution of the coup a few years later.³⁸⁶

Though British intelligence services noted Gaddafi as a person of interest, in 1966 Gaddafi was admitted to the UK to study English and “advanced military training in signal science.”³⁸⁷ In 1965 British Intelligence Officer Ted Lough noted

³⁸² Oyeniyi, *The History of Libya*, 104.

³⁸³ Oyeniyi, *The History of Libya*, 104.

³⁸⁴ Oyeniyi, *The History of Libya*, 104.

³⁸⁵ Oyeniyi, *The History of Libya*, 104.

³⁸⁶ Oyeniyi, *The History of Libya*, 105.

³⁸⁷ Oyeniyi, *The History of Libya*, 107.

that Gaddafi was “a murderer, a possible assassin, a revolutionary, and a major suspect.”³⁸⁸ While the British were aware Gaddafi was planning some form of subversion prior to the September 1st 1969 coup they did not share this intel with King Idris. It is possible the British figured that Gaddafi represented a new generation of Libyan youth and feared siding against them with the King, who was already seen as a figurehead of European colonialism.³⁸⁹

Above all, Gaddafi and the RCC were devout anti-imperialists. In a public broadcast on October 16, 1969, Gaddafi declared Libyans would not continue to live with “foreign bases side by side” and declared Libyan independence in the Cold War.³⁹⁰ The British were forced out of Al-Adem Air Base in March 1970 and the United States evacuated Wheelus Air Base in June of the same year. The man in charge of Wheelus Air Base, United States Air Force General Daniel “Chappie” James, personally threatened Gaddafi when he visited the base, which indicates the lack of respect given to Libyans — even the head of state.³⁹¹ It is unsurprising then, that many Libyans consider this expulsion of foreign military bases as the true beginning of Libyan independence.³⁹²

³⁸⁸ Oyeniyi, *The History of Libya*, 107.

³⁸⁹ Oyeniyi, *The History of Libya*, 107.

³⁹⁰ Oyeniyi, *The History of Libya*, 108; Bevins, *The Jakarta Method*. As Vincent Bevins details in *The Jakarta Method*, developing nations' declarations of independence or neutrality in the Cold War were characterized as sympathetic to the USSR to be corrected by the use of force and installation of capitalist authoritarianism.

³⁹¹ Oyeniyi, *The History of Libya*, 109.

³⁹² De Bona, *Human Rights in Libya*, 53; Oyeniyi, *The History of Libya*, 110.

In a 1970 speech, Gaddafi declared, “Tell President Nasser we made this revolution for him. He can take everything of ours and add it to the rest of the Arab world’s resources to be used for the battle against Israel, and for Arab unity.”³⁹³ This was a snipe at the King's decision not to wage war against Israel in the Arab-Israeli War of 1967 (which many Libyans took to the streets to protest in favor of attacking), as well as an early declaration of support for Palestinian statehood and resistance.³⁹⁴ Anti-Zionism remained one of Gaddafi’s core ideological convictions and established the Jihad Fund in 1970 to strengthen Arab and Islamic countries in the MENA in their struggle against Israel and encouraged African states to sever diplomatic relations with Israel and offered economic assistance to those who did before the floor of the Organization of African Unity, by 1973 over 30 nations in Africa had followed suit.³⁹⁵ In 1973 Gaddafi announced his support for a Japanese terrorist group that killed 26 people at Ben Gurion International Airport in Israel (then Lod Airport) on May 30, 1972, and then welcomed all Palestinian resistance fighters to Libya for training, financial, and logistical support.³⁹⁶ Libya was one of the most vocal and prominent supporters of violent revolutionary struggle among many other anti-imperialist groups including the Eritrean Liberation Front, the African National Union in Zimbabwe (Rhodesia at the time), and the South African

³⁹³ Oyeniyi, *The History of Libya*, 106.

³⁹⁴ Oyeniyi, *The History of Libya*, 138.

³⁹⁵ Oyeniyi, *The History of Libya*, 150.

³⁹⁶ Oyeniyi, *The History of Libya*, 151.

National Congress (ANC) led by Nelson Mandela.³⁹⁷ In 1994, when Mandela was elected to the presidency of South Africa, he would not forget that Libya, in Mandela's words "helped us in the darkest hour in the history of this country...they gave us the resources for us to conduct our struggle, and to win."³⁹⁸

Throughout the years Gaddafi strove to unite the Arab and African world divided by European colonial powers, as De Bona noted, "Libyan history since the 1969 revolution can ... be said to contain an internal logic that is frequently overlooked and which converges upon two central themes or objectives: 1) the reunification of the Arab community, and 2) the creation of the conditions necessary to make this unification possible."³⁹⁹ Throughout the 1970s, Gaddafi attempted to carry this out with successful economic reforms designed to attain sovereignty but multiple times his schemes across Nasserite pan-Arabic lines failed. These schemes included several failed attempts at unions with multiple West Asian and North African states throughout 1969-1977, a federation between Libya Egypt and Sudan between 1969-1971, Egypt Libya and Syria

³⁹⁷ William Blum, *Killing Hope: U.S. Military and C.I.A. Interventions Since World War II*, updated 2nd edition, (Maine: Common Courage Press, 2004), 287; Oyeniyi, *The History of Modern Libya*, 147. William Blum noted that between the 1970s and 1980s Libya was accused of supporting: the IRA, Basque and Corsican separatists, Manuel Noriega of Panama, opposition in Costa Rica, Jamaica, Dominica, Guadeloupe, French Guiana, the Italian Red Brigades, the German Baader-Meinhof gang, attempted to assassinate Pope John Paul, and more in a list "without end."

³⁹⁸ Forte, *Slouching Toward Sirte*, 142.

³⁹⁹ De Bona, *Human Rights in Libya*, 54.

between 1971-1977, a union between Egypt and Libya between 1972-1974, a union with Egypt and Syria from 1966-1977, as well a proposed Arab Islamic Republic between Libya and Tunisia in 1972.⁴⁰⁰

Following the lackluster response of fellow Arab nations, including Nasser's successor's, Anwar Sadat, turn towards the West and normalization of relations with Israel in 1978, Iraq's rejection of Libya in the formation of the Ba'athist United Arab Republic in 1972, and Nelson Mandela's later negotiations with the West to drop the UN sanctions leveled against Libya in the 1990s, Gaddafi turned to Africa and pursued a pan-African agenda to much greater success.⁴⁰¹ Though Libya had been a powerful advocate for such policies since the days if the King and thirty one other African nations established the Organization of African Unity on May 1, 1963, which Gaddafi had continued and pursued humanitarian projects throughout Africa.⁴⁰²

To the selective condemnation of the pan-European world whenever convenient, the Gaddafi regime dismissed traditional forms of representative liberal democracy which the British recommended be done away with entirely under the King.⁴⁰³ According to Gaddafi liberal democracy fostered divides in society, a position likely informed by the turbulent experience of early Libyan political participation centered around ethnic groups, which grew so problematic

⁴⁰⁰ Oyeniya, *The History of Libya*, 148.

⁴⁰¹ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 53.

⁴⁰² Oyeniya, *The History of Libya*, 149.

⁴⁰³ Oyeniya, *The History of Libya*, 124.

King Idris outlawed.⁴⁰⁴ To address this Gaddafi established a plethora of governing bodies and committees open to all Libyans in an effort to establish direct democracy of the people.⁴⁰⁵ Though the politicians and academic champions of the pan-European world did not recognize this form of government as democracy, which LeVine explains derives from the self-important attitude of the United States and Western Europe which only recognized neoliberal market-based capitalist democracy (often the real meaning behind “liberal democracy”), “any attempt to imagine alternative forms of social, political or economic organization, or to arrive at “freedom” or “democracy” through indigenous traditions, concepts or practices, can only be “outside” of history and therefore illegitimate.”⁴⁰⁶

Gaddafi continually emphasized the importance of mass political participation, and throughout his rule tinkered with the political structures of the government in response to political threats to himself, as well as the general failure to engender such mass political participation. However, Gaddafi also placed loyalists into these bodies which undermined their intent to foster direct

⁴⁰⁴ Here we again see the internal contradictions of the Atlanticist zeitgeist wherein a developing nation is paternalistically compared to standards of the contemporary developed Western-world and not the developing nations own history in service of neoliberal modernization theory. This formulation ensures the conclusion that a developing nations lower standard of living or economic prosperity is due to their own failure to properly industrialize along the lines of the West.

⁴⁰⁵ Oyenyi, *The History of Libya*, 124.

⁴⁰⁶ LeVine, *Why They Don't Hate Us*, 27.

democracy.⁴⁰⁷ Despite his resolute position at the top of Libyan authority, there is evidence that Gaddafi was not an all-powerful dictator. On multiple occasions Gaddafi's proposals were rejected by the very political bodies that he had set up, for example in 2009 The People's Congresses overruled his proposal for abolition of the central government and direct payment of oil proceeds into Libyans' bank accounts.⁴⁰⁸ These bodies also rejected proposals for abolition of capital punishment and homeschooling.⁴⁰⁹ This proves these political bodies were at least somewhat independent institutions despite the political tinkering and substantial accusations of corrupt dealings and nepotism.⁴¹⁰ The substantial difference between the corruption and nepotism of the Libyan regime, and the garden variety of such found in the United States (as represented by both Joe Biden and Donald Trump's children's unqualified appointments and economic dealings or congressional representatives' lucrative gains on the stock market, besides the confounding level of influence bought by corporate lobbyists) is perhaps the fact that under the 42 years of Gaddafi's rule, the Libyan population experienced notable increases in their standard of living as Libya's economic performance increased.

The Green Book, an attempt to put forth an alternative to communism and capitalism in the pithy package reminiscent of Mao's *Little Red Book* but less

⁴⁰⁷ Oyeniyi, *The History of Libya*, 124.

⁴⁰⁸ Oyeniyi, *The History of Libya*, 123.

⁴⁰⁹ Oyeniyi, *The History of Libya*, 123.

⁴¹⁰ Oyeniyi, *The History of Libya*, 143.

cohesive, authored by Gaddafi and published in 1975, outlined a proposed alternative to capitalism and communism. Gaddafi called this alternative the “Third Universal Theory.”⁴¹¹ How closely the Gaddafi regime managed to stick to its’ Third Universal Theory is beyond the scope of this analysis, however, the economy was a fluctuating mixture of socialist and capitalist principles throughout Gaddafi’s rule. Regardless of the specifics of the Libyan economy under Gaddafi, or the details or authenticity of this form of direct democracy, the material improvements in the standard of living for Libyan citizens are undeniable. As David Harvey’s chapter in *A Brief History of Neoliberalism*, “Freedom’s Just Another Word...” suggests, freedom is a rhetorical signifier for Western liberal democratic ideals that the neoliberal economists and humanitarian interventionists shroud themselves in, and are only empty words that mean relatively little to those killed in warzones or the starving and destitute in the underdeveloped periphery when compared to material improvements in their standard of living.⁴¹² As such, the development and improved standard of living under the Gaddafi regime are significant and deserve deep appreciation, especially in hindsight considering the rapid deterioration of Libyan civil society and standards of living post-OUP.

According to De Bona, “National expenditure on literacy, health care, and education expanded rapidly under the revolutionary regime. Heavy investments

⁴¹¹ Oyeniyi, *The History of Libya*, 142.

⁴¹² Harvey, *A Brief History of Neoliberalism*, 5.

were made in education, with the intention of reducing dependence on foreign labor.”⁴¹³ Before the revolution, an estimated 80 percent of the population did not own a home, which the Gaddafi regime sought to correct by offering free subsidies for the construction of houses once the state took control of the banking system.⁴¹⁴ In May 1978 legislation granted ownership of property to those who live in them and limited speculative investment in the real estate by limiting the number of properties one family could own.⁴¹⁵ This intersection between improved standards of living and economic sovereignty further demonstrates the Libyan regime’s determination to counteract the underdevelopment and attendant dependency of developing nations inherent to the core-periphery dynamic of the interstate system that the Neoliberal Capitalist World-System further exacerbated - especially in Africa as detailed in Patrick Bond’s *Looting Africa: The Economics of Exploitation*. Other developmentalist projects specifically designed to bring about self-sufficiency included the Great Man-Made River and Kufra Oasis projects under the 1976-1980 Five Year Social and Economic Development Plan.⁴¹⁶ A separate 1979 Economic and Social Transformation Plan, valued at \$26 billion USD, detailed further developmentalist projects such as the Misurata Iron and Steel Complex.⁴¹⁷

⁴¹³ De Bona, *Human Rights in Libya*, 58.

⁴¹⁴ De Bona, *Human Rights in Libya*, 59.

⁴¹⁵ De Bona, *Human Rights in Libya*, 59.

⁴¹⁶ De Bona, *Human Rights in Libya*, 59.

⁴¹⁷ De Bona, *Human Rights in Libya*, 59.

Gaddafi was able to exert unprecedented levels of state control over the oil industry due to the absence of any major producing companies and the cultivation of smaller independent oil producers that relied solely on their Libyan concession for the whole or a substantial share of their operation.⁴¹⁸ This meant that when the Libyan government demanded a new contract, higher taxes, or any other form of regulation the companies were not able to push back like the majors could in other producing countries as they could simply shut down operations in X country and increase production out of their facilities in Y country. This gave larger companies substantial influence over the producing countries they took hold in, but the smaller oil producers in Libya were left with little recourse against the state's demands, such as when the Libyan state forced all foreign petroleum companies to hike prices from \$0.90 to \$3.45 per barrel in 1971.⁴¹⁹

Without the large companies that might have more underhanded connections to their governments that wish to retain the large companies' oil flow, like the AIOC did in Iran and led to Mossadegh's overthrow in 1953, it was less likely for Gaddafi to be immediately wrought asunder by Wall Street or Big Oil-connected suits like the Dulles', though this does not mean that the idea was not toyed with in the West.

⁴¹⁸ Oyeniyi, *The History of Libya*, 127.

⁴¹⁹ Oyeniyi, *The History of Libya*, 127.

Bombs, Failed Coups and Sanctions 1980-1999

In the 1980s Libya's reputation as an alleged major state sponsor of terrorism, propagated heavily by the United States, gained more traction and by the end of the decade multiple African states suspended relations with Libya under the guise of international terrorism, though most "resented Gaddafi's use of Islam as an instrument of foreign policy" through the propagation of the Islamic Call Society, which within a year of its founding in 1973 established over 130 chapters throughout Africa.⁴²⁰ In late 1981 a string of reports emerged about a squad of Libyan hit men who planned to assassinate the American ambassador to Italy and then POTUS Ronald Reagan himself, who told reported that "we have evidence," which was never made public despite pressure to do so and some FBI officials even doubted the claim.⁴²¹ However, in November the journalist Jack Anderson reported that the supposed intelligence behind these claims was provided by a shadowy group with ties to Israeli intelligence, which had plenty of motive to sick their American master on Libya.⁴²²

A January 8, 1985 white paper published by the United States State Department alleged Gaddafi intended to assassinate any moderate Arab leader over their normalization of relations with the state of Israel and that Libya was funneling weapons and explosives through their embassies across the world, which Gaddafi denied.⁴²³ One senior national security advisor to Reagan told the

⁴²⁰ Oyeniyi, *The History of Libya*, 151.

⁴²¹ Blum, *Killing Hope*, 284.

⁴²² Blum, *Killing Hope*, 284.

⁴²³ Oyeniyi, *The History of Libya*, 152.

press that the “only thing to do with Qaddafi was kill him. He belonged dead.”⁴²⁴ One joint French-American assassination plot was abandoned in 1981 when the sitting French president lost an election, but by 1984 the CIA provided intelligence to the French in two unsuccessful assassination or coup attempts; and in 1985 the White House and National Security Council was talked out of assisting Egypt in an air and land invasion of Libya by the State Department (wherein officials referred to the NSC as “madmen in the White House,”) which Secretary of State George Shultz called “crazy.”⁴²⁵

In 1986 the United States accused Libya of an April 5, 1986 bombing of a Discotheque in West Berlin, which killed two American servicemen, with little to no evidence to support these claims.⁴²⁶ A series of intercepted communications sent to the Libyan embassy in Berlin that originated in Tripoli, which were never made public, were the only supposed proof of the link, and one West German official told Seymour Hersh that the German government was “very critical and skeptical” of the American’s link to Libya.⁴²⁷

Nevertheless on April 14, 1986, the United States launched a bombing raid over Gaddafi’s home, however, multiple other buildings including the French Embassy were destroyed, killing between 40 to 100 people.⁴²⁸ Ronald Reagan claimed “our evidence is direct, it is precise, it is irrefutable” despite the fact no

⁴²⁴ Blum, *Killing Hope*, 284.

⁴²⁵ Blum, *Killing Hope*, 285.

⁴²⁶ Oyeniyi, *The History of Libya*, 153; Blum, *Killing Hope*, 282.

⁴²⁷ Blum, *Killing Hope*, 282.

⁴²⁸ Blum, *Killing Hope*, 281.

concrete evidence connecting the attack to Libya was presented.⁴²⁹ Gaddafi survived the bombing attack on his home but one of his daughters, Hannah, was killed, and seven of his other children, and wife were hospitalized.⁴³⁰ The CIA planned this assassination attempt which intended to make Gaddafi look weak amongst fellow Libyans. According to the CIA, in Bedouin culture even if Gaddafi survived this showed he was a weak ruler who could not defend his family and home.⁴³¹ The “Voice of America” radio station broadcast through the country and told the grieving Libyans through the smoke and wreckage, that, “Colonel Qaddafi is your tragic burden,” and to “accept the consequences,” while “the US Navy awarded 158 medals to the pilots who dropped 500-pound and 2000-pound bombs in the dark of night upon sleeping people.”⁴³²

Despite Seymore Hersh’s reporting that “Some White House officials had immediate doubts” of Libya’s connections and that “the discotheque was known as a hangout for black soldiers, and the Libyans had never been known to target blacks and other minorities,” Libya’s guilt was sealed in the public conscious.⁴³³ With no future evidence but the assertions of the American government, the United States propaganda machine successfully laundered their claims so that three years later it was sufficient for *Time* magazine to state as a matter of fact

⁴²⁹ Blum, *Killing Hope*, 281.

⁴³⁰ Blum, *Killing Hope*, 281. There is a divide among scholars and commentators on the validity of the claim that Gaddafi’s daughter died, or even existed.

⁴³¹ Blum, *Killing Hope*, 281.

⁴³² Blum, *Killing Hope*, 281.

⁴³³ Blum, *Killing Hope*, 282.

that Libya was indeed responsible for the Berlin bombings.⁴³⁴ Of the more credible allegations, Amnesty International reported in 1987 that at least 37 dissidents had been targeted by Gaddafi abroad, killing 25.⁴³⁵

In 1989, Gaddafi and/or Libya (as Americans often equate an entire country to its leader, see Putin and Russia as of 2022) became the prime suspect in the December 21, 1988 Pan Am Flight 103 bombing of a Boeing 747 over Lockerbie, Scotland, killing 259 people and 11 on the ground, this is despite the State Department noting the CIA was “confident” that Syrian and Iranian actors were the culprits.⁴³⁶ Libya was then hit with a massive set of international sanctions and the United States began to call Libya the *largest* producer of chemical weapons and was considering a full invasion of the country.⁴³⁷ This American invasion never came, but the set of sanctions the United States and the UN leveled throughout the 1990s caused massive humanitarian and economic losses in Libya.⁴³⁸

As De Bona thoroughly details in *Human Rights in Libya: The Impact of International Society Since 1969* these sanctions were ultimately entirely counterproductive to their intended purpose as a tool of international law, or the interstate system ala Wallerstein, which were meant to force Libya into compliance with international law and adoption of Western liberal democratic

⁴³⁴ Blum, *Killing Hope*, 282.

⁴³⁵ Blum, *Killing Hope*, 287.

⁴³⁶ Oyeniyi, *The History of Libya*, 154.

⁴³⁷ Blum, *Killing Hope*, 288; Oyeniyi, *The History of Libya*, 153-162.

⁴³⁸ Oyeniyi, *The History of Libya*, 163-164.

values. Throughout 1987 and 1988 Gaddafi began to show signs of liberalizing his economy and began a series of progressive reforms including the release of political prisoners while relaxing on various restrictions, making peace with the African states which he had previously ostracized, and even gave up funding terrorist organizations he admitted to supporting stating that “when we discovered that these groups were causing more harm than benefit to the Arab cause, we halted our aid to them completely.”⁴³⁹

Even though Gaddafi announced that all Libyans were now encouraged to “become bourgeois,” Gaddafi’s conception of liberalization of the economy functionally equated to supplying public goods for the people and not free market reform, which Gaddafi would never entirely embrace.⁴⁴⁰ But as the Libyan economy faltered, the regime failed to uphold its end of the authoritarian social contract and increasingly relied on harsher punitive policy and power devolved into the hands of the most traditionalist tribal leaders that Gaddafi appealed to solidify the government’s position.⁴⁴¹ Of these reforms to appeal to these traditionalist conservative tribal leaders included a deeply regressive 1997 “Charter of Honour” that imposed collective punishment on an individual’s community and reinstated old tribal custom to further repression and solidify tribal

⁴³⁹ Blum, *Killing Hope*, 289; De Bona, *Human Rights in Libya*, 86, 88.

⁴⁴⁰ Blum, *Killing Hope*, 289; De Bona, *Human Rights in Libya*, 86, 88.

⁴⁴¹ De Bona, *Human Rights in Libya*, 102.

ties he previously denounced as counter to his wider modernization and industrialization schemes.⁴⁴²

In 1993, a group of young Libyan officers from the “influential Werfella tribe” based in the town of Bani Walid (and one of three tribes including the Qaddafi and Megraha which made up the most loyal contingent of security forces Gaddafi actually use as he did not trust his armed forces—for good reason) were in contact with members of the outlawed armed opposition group the National Front for the Salvation of Libya (NFSL).⁴⁴³ The NFSL was founded on October 7, 1981 by Muhammad Mughary, and is given a “special thanks also to Tariq Yousef, who arranged for an invitation to the national conference of the National Front for the Salvation of Libya in Atlanta in April 1995, where I interviewed several of the country’s main opponents to the Qadhafi regime,” by none other than Dirk Vandewalle in his 1998 *Libya Since Independence: Oil and State-building*.⁴⁴⁴ Vandewalle notes that the NFSL military wing was operating “with French and U.S. support, conducted military actions against Qadhafi in the 1970s and 1980s.”⁴⁴⁵

NFSL members, aware of the heavy round of sanctions leveled against Libya, were keen to find partners in Libya to stage a coup against Gaddafi, but

⁴⁴² De Bona, *Human Rights in Libya*, 101, 102.

⁴⁴³ Alison Pargeter, *Libya: The Rise and Fall of Qaddafi* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2012), 163.

⁴⁴⁴ Dirk Vandewalle, *Libya Since Independence: Oil and State-building* (London: Cornell University Press, 1998), xvii.

⁴⁴⁵ Dirk Vandewalle, *Libya Since Independence: Oil and State-building*, 134, 135.

they also had deeper foreign ties as well. Khalil Jedek, one of the Werfella officers described a February 1993 meeting with an American named John, “Of course he worked for US intelligence... We began to talk. The American was asking about a number of points. He asked about chemical weapons, the rocket development programme, the effect of the embargo on Libya and the Russian experts; were they still in the Jamahiriyah or not?”⁴⁴⁶

On October 11, 1993, the regime took custody of all of the actual and suspected Werfella tribe officers, who foreign media then reported the entire tribe began an armed uprising at the Bani Walid military base which inspired uprisings throughout the country.⁴⁴⁷ However, the stories were based on entirely fabricated information the NFSL was feeding foreign media and no uprising of the sort occurred, but the overall plot from a trusted tribe, in league with an American no less, was taken seriously, and punished even more seriously. The officers were dragged in front of cameras to give humiliating confessions that they sold themselves and Libya out to the United States and were convicted of espionage and their family members forced to make a public show of punishing the young officers themselves.⁴⁴⁸ Cousins demolished the houses and seized their land, immediate family members were also hauled before the state TV to denounce them, and in August 1995 a large portion of Bani Walid’s residents signed a petition that called for the execution of the officers who, and in January of 1997

⁴⁴⁶ Pargeter, *Rise and Fall of Qaddafi*, 159.

⁴⁴⁷ Pargeter, *Rise and Fall*, 159.

⁴⁴⁸ Pargeter, *Rise and Fall*, 160.

the six officers were shot and two other civilians supposedly involved were hung.⁴⁴⁹

Gaddafi then sought to institutionalize the steps he took to coopt the Werfella tribe and established another quasi-autonomous governing body, “the social people’s leaderships” comprised of respected local leaders, with his cousin Sayyid Qaddaf Al-Dam as the figurehead of this institution.⁴⁵⁰ The tribes were now officially responsible for all services to their people.⁴⁵¹ In 1994 Gaddafi explained, “the commune will be responsible for everything: even car number plates will be the responsibility of the commune... Then, if something happens in the commune you will be held responsible.”⁴⁵² At the same time Gaddafi began traveling and meeting with tribal leaders to “look for reason, detect it and contain it and disown and of its clans which are involved in treason and say. to the Libyan people: we are not traitors....Every clan should expel the families containing traitors until those very families disown the members.”⁴⁵³

In 1996 the British, who harbored members of the LIFG, coordinated yet another failed coup attempt. Led by Wadi al-Shateh, the LIFG attempted to bomb Gaddafi’s motorcade and attacked Libyan security forces in a concentrated series of guerrilla-warfare attacks, which had been ongoing since the previous

⁴⁴⁹ Pargeter, *Rise and Fall*, 160-161.

⁴⁵⁰ Pargeter, *Rise and Fall*, 163.

⁴⁵¹ Pargeter, *Rise and Fall*, 162.

⁴⁵² Pargeter, *Rise and Fall*, 162.

⁴⁵³ Pargeter, *Rise and Fall*, 162.

year.⁴⁵⁴ Details of the 1996 UK-backed (and thus almost certainly known of and approved by the United States) LIFG coup attempt, along with the LIFG generally, will be expounded on in greater detail below. But it is sufficient to note here that in the wake of the coup attempt, Gaddafi's forces rounded up and either jailed, or summarily executed thousands of LIFG members (and presumably untold number of those simply suspected of such) in Abu Salim Prison. Sudan's earlier expulsion of Bin Laden and AQ-linked fighters in 1995 left Libya's streets teeming with potential LIFG, and of those who were not executed on the spot, hundreds to thousands were killed in response to a prison riot they orchestrated in Abu Salim in 1996. This came to be known as the Abu Salim Prison Massacre, which along with the LIFG would come to play instrumental roles in the 2011 overthrow and execution of Gaddafi.

The 1996 LIFG attack also had a significant effect on Gaddafi, who long opposed the spread of Sunni Wahhabist strains of Islam which Alison Pargeter described the experience in noting that it shook "the Colonel to the core. The prophet of the desert, Muammar Gaddafi, was not as invincible as he thought."⁴⁵⁵ were historically opposed to Gaddafi's rule. The attack deeply affected his disposition as he grew ever more suspicious of his armed forces out of fear they harbored Islamist rebels, and began a new series of administrative, economic, and political reforms in the late 1990s into the 2000s, and after the

⁴⁵⁴ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 64.

⁴⁵⁵ Pargeter, *Libya: The Rise and Fall*, 163.

September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks against the United States, he hoped an alliance would offer protection he did not trust his army to provide.⁴⁵⁶ Thanks to the diplomatic efforts of Nelson Mandela, most of these sanctions ended after April 5, 1999 when Gaddafi handed over two Lockerbie bombing suspects (though their actual culpability, and Libya's for that matter, remains a contentious issue).⁴⁵⁷ By 2003 all the remaining international sanctions on Libya were lifted, along with the United States' unilateral sanctions by 2004, and Gaddafi began to reintegrate back into acceptable society. Perhaps this was the West's attempt at the diplomatic angle suggested by De Bona, which did prove a more effective moderator of Gaddafi, who along with his son Saif al-Islam was regularly praised as reformed or a reformer in this period by a group of intellectuals and academics who, when the time came, quickly turned right back against Libya.⁴⁵⁸

Libya's Rehabilitation. Today's Terrorists. Tomorrow's Allies? 2000-2011

The international community's re-embrace of Gaddafi came as Libya opened up for foreign investment and sought to invest in foreign markets, while embracing a degree of neoliberal privatization, accepting IMF loans, and cooperating with the George W. Bush Administration's global War on Terror by 2003.⁴⁵⁹ Along with sharing intelligence and providing assistance in rendering suspect individuals to the United States, Libya gave up its nuclear program and

⁴⁵⁶ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 64.

⁴⁵⁷ Oyeniyi, *The History of Libya*, 167.

⁴⁵⁸ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 56.

⁴⁵⁹ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 60.

other pursuits of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD). Gaddafi later noted in an interview that Libya no longer needed any WMD programs, which were rudimentary anyhow, and no longer necessary in the new world beyond the hostilities of the Cold War. This assumption proved to be deadly wrong.⁴⁶⁰

As Gaddafi's statements on the futility of WMD programs in the post-Cold War seemed to indicate, he seemingly personally embraced some ideals and aspects of Western neoliberal society and international law (while still resolutely denouncing the abuses synonymous with the rules-based order). In 2007 Gaddafi met with American political scientist Joseph Nye, with who he shared tea over a three-hour conversation on Gaddafi's "fascination with soft power," a concept Nye himself popularized.⁴⁶¹ Nye recounted the meeting as follows,

Where once he sought weapons of mass destruction, now he has abandoned his nuclear program... Qaddafi, in other words, seems to have become interested in soft power - the art of projecting influence through attraction rather than coercion. And the fact that he took so much time to discuss ideas-including soft power- with a visiting professor suggests that he is actively seeking a new strategy.⁴⁶²

Along with Nye, other notable figures in Western society and academia visited Libya under the auspices of a three million dollar deal with the Harvard Business School linked consultancy firm The Monitor Group to help Libya's reintegration including Anthony Giddens, "one of the most respected sociologists in the

⁴⁶⁰ Neoconservative John Bolton would later refer to as the Libyan example in a counterproductive threat to North Korea that by all logic only demonstrated the absolute imperative for states to maintain a nuclear arsenal to avoid the wrath of the United States.

⁴⁶¹ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 58, 59.

⁴⁶² Campbell, *Global NATO*, 59.

Anglo-American academic world,” and as Campbell notes, according to Google Scholar “the most widely cited sociologist in the world” as of 2013.⁴⁶³ And beyond Gaddafi himself thousands of well-off Libyan youth, including Saif al-Islam, attended Western European and North American (mostly British) universities that extolled upon them the values of liberal democracy and neoliberal economics.⁴⁶⁴ Many of who returned and then found positions in the Libyan bureaucracy “and promoted Western-type democracy and neoliberal reforms” to improve Libyan relations with the pan-European world.⁴⁶⁵

In accordance with this pursuit in May of 2003, Libya opened 43 potential concessions, of which roughly 120 international companies showed interest in and Italy’s Eni secured the largest share.⁴⁶⁶ Other international companies such as China Petroleum, Russian Tafneft and Gazprom, amongst others also secured shares by 2004, along with multiple American oil companies which received “eleven of the best” of 15 new offshore and onshore blocks opened up for exploration and production agreements that same year.⁴⁶⁷ However, through the use of negotiated Exploration and Production Sharing Agreements (EPSAs) and Development Production Sharing Agreements the Libyan government

⁴⁶³ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 56-58. Other notable figures included in The Monitor Group’s effort included: Francis Fukuyama, Richard Perle, Benjamin Barber, and Robert Putnam.

⁴⁶⁴ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 55.

⁴⁶⁵ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 53.

⁴⁶⁶ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 90.

⁴⁶⁷ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 60, 90.

“maintained the initiative in its dealings with international oil companies.”⁴⁶⁸

Between 2007 and 2008 major Western companies including Exxon Mobil, Petro-Canada, Respol, Total, Eni, and Occidental were forced to sign deals on significantly worse terms and pay a collective total of \$5.4 billion upfront in the form of bonus payments.⁴⁶⁹ The situation grew even more desperate for the Western oil companies in January 2009 when Gaddafi threatened the nationalization of the oil and gas sector during a video conference with students at Georgetown University.⁴⁷⁰

That same year Gaddafi spoke before the UN over the standard 15 minute allotment and gave an infamous hour-and-a-half speech, in which he welcomed the new POTUS Barack Obama, who Gaddafi ironically praised in an interview shortly before his death as “exceptional,” and that Obama’s African heritage gave him a new point of view. However, “America is America” murmured Gaddafi.⁴⁷¹ Unaware that one year later the Obama administration would sponsor opposition groups to violently end his life, Gaddafi said of a potential visit from the POTUS, “[it is] not necessary, but it would be good. I’m not asking him to come, but if it happens it would be good.”⁴⁷² Obama never came to Libya, but then-Secretary of

⁴⁶⁸ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 90.

⁴⁶⁹ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 62.

⁴⁷⁰ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 62.

⁴⁷¹ Muammar Gaddafi, “Muammar Gaddafi Interviewed Just Before Libyan Revolution,” interviewed by George Neegus, YouTube video, 12:05-13:05, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bUhZmO6P0NU&ab_channel=JourneymanPictures.

⁴⁷² Muammar Gaddafi, “Muammar Gaddafi Interviewed Just Before Libyan Revolution,” interviewed by George Neegus, YouTube video, 12:05-13:05.

State Hillary Clinton showed up shortly after Gaddafi's sodomization with a bayonet by al-Qaeda affiliates on October 20, 2011. This is likely not the “good” outcome Gaddafi imagined when he invited Obama to Libya, but more of America being America.

The Beginning of the End

In December of 2010 Gaddafi likely sealed his fate once he attempted to strike at the heart of the regional energy finance sector, the Arab Banking Corporation based in Bahrain.⁴⁷³ Via deals made between Saif al-Islam and the other Western-oriented reformers’ Libyan Investment Authority and Goldman Sachs on the eve of the 2008 financial crash Libya invested \$1.3 billion into an options basket based on six stocks, which Goldman Sachs reported lost 98 percent of its value by early 2010 and then took another \$3.5 billion from Libya in 2009 to pump their recovery from the recession, and exposed Goldman Sachs to “major risks” which they quickly came to regret.⁴⁷⁴ As Campbell notes, the Arab Banking Corporation was “the jugular” of these “dark markets” in which “Any move for making independent decisions in... threatened the web of speculators in the derivatives industry that depended on the recycling of petrodollars,” which Libya became the dominant shareholder of in December of 2010.⁴⁷⁵ Considering that Bahrain and most other members of the Gulf Cooperation Council such as Saudi Arabia and Qatar had “fundamental differences with Gaddafi,” Qatar and

⁴⁷³ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 103, 113.

⁴⁷⁴ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 112.

⁴⁷⁵ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 77, 113.

Saudi Arabia needed little more motive to act as key non-NATO OUP partners a few months later.⁴⁷⁶ On December 18, 2010 as Libya became the controlling shareholder in the Arab Banking Corporation, Mohamed Bouazizi self immolation in Tunisia in the opening act of “The Arab Spring.”⁴⁷⁷

To the pan-European world, Gaddafi’s entertainment of their prime competitors in China and Russia, along with the periodic shakedowns of their oil companies by the Gaddafi regime, quickly soured them towards Gaddafi once again, though it is doubtful the colonialist perception of Libya and Gaddafi ever shifted from condescension.⁴⁷⁸ China signed onto multibillion-dollar Libyan contracts in construction and infrastructure including a 2.6 billion USD railway contract.⁴⁷⁹ Russia forgave \$4.5 billion of Soviet-era Libyan debt for the first pick of new Libyan development projects, and Gaddafi supported the Kremlin’s views on NATO expansionism in Georgia and Ukraine.⁴⁸⁰ This was likely a major contributing factor to the launch of OUP, and the Chinese claimed the United States was attempting to limit the influence of foreign capital in the region and supplant it with their own.⁴⁸¹ However, it was the French that acted as the vanguard of the 2011 NATO intervention.⁴⁸²

⁴⁷⁶ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 77.

⁴⁷⁷ Oyeniyi, *The History of Libya*, 177.

⁴⁷⁸ Davidson, “Why Was Muammar Qadhafi Really Removed?” 100.

⁴⁷⁹ Davidson, “Why Was Muammar Qadhafi Really Removed?” 100.

⁴⁸⁰ Davidson, “Why Was Muammar Qadhafi Really Removed?” 100.

⁴⁸¹ Łukasz, “Position of the People’s Republic of China Towards the Crisis in Libya in 2011,” *Historia i Polityka* 35 no. 28 (2019): 51, <http://dx.doi.org/10.12775/HiP.2019.014>.

⁴⁸² Campbell, *Global NATO*, 94.

Without consultation and before the official launch of Operation Unified Protector on March 23, 2011, France unilaterally began bombing Libya on March 19, 2011, before the NATO allies had confirmed a plan of attack and the White House, State Department, intelligence agencies, and the United States Armed Forces were still deliberating their approach.⁴⁸³ The French mission was dubbed Operation Harmattan, which must have been routine for the French as just another of over 150 African interventions in 60 years.⁴⁸⁴ Unsettled by the rapid speed and upheaval of the Arab Spring uprisings earlier that year in Tunisia and Egypt, and covetous of the growing Italian and German economic presence in Libya, France moved Bernard Henry Levy into Benghazi sometime prior to the first stirrings on February 15, 2011, where he made contact with the opposition forces that would form the core of the rebels who rallied under the banner of the National Transition Council (NTC), which France was the first to recognize on March 10.⁴⁸⁵ Along with the NTC, Levy met one of the United States' first assets on the ground, former Deputy Chief of Mission in Libya from 2007 to 2009 and future ambassador to Libya who would perish in a September 11, 2012 attack on the United States' joint State Department-CIA post-Gaddafi outpost in (it was not an embassy or proper diplomatic facility) Benghazi, Christopher Stevens.⁴⁸⁶

⁴⁸³ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 103.

⁴⁸⁴ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 95.

⁴⁸⁵ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 102-103.

⁴⁸⁶ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 205, 212.

France's bombing campaign forced the hand of the other NATO allies with financial interests to secure in the country into action, and others, including the United States, joined in the bombing.⁴⁸⁷ The French were heavily motivated to act decisively. As Campbell notes, they were being squeezed out of Libya and "Without Africa's wealth, France would be a minor power with about as much influence as Austria."⁴⁸⁸ Initially, the French proposed to coordinate an intervention outside the auspices of NATO, and participating nations each launched their own individual operation such as the British Operation Ellamy, and Canadian Operation Mobile.⁴⁸⁹ The American's initial campaign, Operation Odyssey Dawn, was launched via AFRICOM, which the Pentagon attempted to distance once the French's initial plans to wrap up the conflict within one week extended into protracted conflict and the participating NATO countries unified their assault on Libya under fraudulent pretext and the name Operation Unified Protector.⁴⁹⁰ This is the exact point that if the United States had previously been motivated to secure shared economic interests in Libya, which very well may have been the case, then they departed along with AFRICOM as it became clear the mission would not be as quick and painless as promised and there was no ambition on the behalf of the White House or Armed Forces to enter another long

⁴⁸⁷ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 100, 122.

⁴⁸⁸ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 94.

⁴⁸⁹ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 122.

⁴⁹⁰ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 122-123.

protracted conflict and occupation, while the State Department opposed the operation almost entirely.

In February 2011, the first stirrings of the supposed ‘Arab Spring’ were underway in Egypt and Tunisia. Gaddafi humorously compared the events that rapidly removed the president, Ben Ali, from power to the American Revolution and a criminal act, “Tunisia now lives in fear...families could be raided and slaughtered in their bedrooms and citizens in the street killed as if it was the Bolshevik or the American revolution...And for what?”⁴⁹¹ Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak, “utterly bewildered” by the spontaneity of the popular revolts, was forced to resign in short order.⁴⁹² In the wake of the Tunisian revolution, Gaddafi embarked on a series of public consultations open to all Libyans, however, the Libyan population and rebels initial displeasure quickly transformed into calls for regime change by the end of the second day.⁴⁹³

Operation Unified Protector, Humanitarian Smokescreen: March-October, 2011

Operation Unified Protector (OUP) was sold to the public and the UN as a humanitarian mission. The operation was cleared by United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1973 with the intent, “to protect civilians and civilian populated areas under threat of attack in the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, including Benghazi, while excluding a foreign occupation force of any form on any part of

⁴⁹¹ Pargeter, *Libya: The Rise and Fall of Qaddafi*, 216.

⁴⁹² Pargeter, *The Rise and Fall*, 215.

⁴⁹³ Oyeniyi, *The History of Libya*, 180.

Libyan territory.”⁴⁹⁴ It also included the finalization of a call for a no-fly zone over Libya, erroneously noting that it had been initially called for by the Council of the League of Arab States on March 12, 2011, which Qatar had been instrumental in rallying the votes for in a meeting which only 11 of the 22 members were present.⁴⁹⁵ As noted in the introduction, NATO not only failed to live up to its mandate to protect civilian lives as it: directly endangered Libyan civilians and infrastructure as “collateral damage,” it widened and prolonged the conflict via support to the anti-Gaddafi rebels, it directly targeted government forces which did not pose a direct threat to anyone, and it directly targeted civilians which supported Gaddafi.⁴⁹⁶ Furthermore, NATO members directly violated the UNSCR which explicitly denied “a foreign occupation force of any form” by deploying their own intelligence agents and special forces, and coordinating with Qatari forces on the ground (which the NTC rebels later called instrumental in their success).⁴⁹⁷ Finally, NATO members directly coordinated with elements of *al-Qaeda* in the Maghreb and what would later become parts of the Islamic State in Libya (for sake of clarity, both will be referred to as AQ and ISIS generally) in their support for the NTC rebel factions.⁴⁹⁸

The uprisings began on February 15, 2011, in the city of Benghazi in reaction to the regime’s arrest of Fathi Othman Mohamad Terbil, universally

⁴⁹⁴ United Nations Security Council (UNSC) Res 1973 3.

⁴⁹⁵ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 79.

⁴⁹⁶ Forte, *Slouching Towards Sirte*, 108.

⁴⁹⁷ Forte, *Slouching Towards Sirte*, 109.

⁴⁹⁸ Oyeniyi, *The History of Libya*, 203.

described as a “human rights lawyer,” likely to sanitize his association with his self-described Islamist brother, who is not explicitly stated to be a member of the AQ-linked LIFG, but is to be suspected given the circumstance, as one 2009 Human Rights Watch report notes “Many of those imprisoned in Abu Salim belong to Islamist groups.”⁴⁹⁹ And it was the hundreds to thousands of suspected LIFG members arrested and then executed during the June 28 or 29, 1996, Abu Salim prison revolt (multiple reports contradict the date and timeline of the event), including his brother, whose rights he represented and founded The Association for the Martyrs of the Abu Salim Massacre in 2009.⁵⁰⁰ The initial protests of Terbil’s arrest consisted of family members of those murdered in the Abu Salim Massacre gathered in Benghazi.⁵⁰¹ And only 10 days after the uprisings began, Gaddafi started warning about the protests being hijacked by elements of AQ.⁵⁰² Other high ranking officials, including Musa Kusa, the feared head of Libyan

⁴⁹⁹ Heba Morayef, “Truth and Justice Can’t Wait: Human Rights Developments in Libya Amid Institutional Obstacles,” edited by Sarah Leah Whitson and Lisa Anderson, December 12, 2009, 35.

<https://www.hrw.org/report/2009/12/12/truth-and-justice-cant-wait/human-rights-developments-libya-amid-institutional>.

⁵⁰⁰ Fathi Terbil, interview, “Fathi Terbil,” YouTube video, uploaded by SharqOrg, June 17, 2013, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GFbH3HQFUrM&ab_channel=SharqOrg; Fathi Terbil, interview with SharqOrg, “Fathi Terbil,” *Tarikhi*, accessed December 20, 2023, <https://tarikhi.org/interview/fathi-terbil/>.

⁵⁰¹ Oyeniyi, *The History of Libya*, 203.

⁵⁰² Muammar Gaddafi, “Gaddafi blames Libya’s unrest on al-Qaeda,” YouTube video, February 24, 2011, 0:00-6:54, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l0DXhTruWT0&ab_channel=AlJazeeraEnglish.

intelligence and Moussa Ibrahim by the following month, which was predictably denounced by the NATO allies.⁵⁰³

Initial attempts to disperse the crowds in Benghazi on February 15 failed and the government forces resorted to increased violence against the protestors (38 people including ten security forces were killed in Benghazi) spurred on additional demonstrations throughout large swaths of Libya in the following days.⁵⁰⁴ Government forces initially used non-lethal tear gas, batons, water cannons, and rubber bullets, but by the end of the second day of protests anti-Gaddafi forces began to call for the toppling of the government, which prompted a much harsher response and the government began employing more lethal means.⁵⁰⁵

Hillary Clinton's Emails and the First Days: February, 2011

At 1:00 AM February 21, 2011, six days after uprisings first began in Benghazi Huma Abedin sent Hilary Clinton an email titled "Overnight Update from DCM Tripoli," recounting the growing violence and destabilization throughout Tripoli and Benghazi, and that the government has lost Benghazi and

⁵⁰³ Musa Kusa, "Libyan minister blames al-Qaeda," YouTube video, March 7, 2011, 0:00-0:16, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hATKqGk5HRM&ab_channel=AlJazeeraEnglish;

Moussa Ibrahim, "Al Qaeda kills Libyan rebels' military chief." YouTube video July 29, 2011, 0:00-0:36, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=89Wui0n_gQs&ab_channel=TeleSUREnglish.

⁵⁰⁴ Oyeniyi, *The History of Libya*, 179.

⁵⁰⁵ Oyeniyi, *The History of Libya*, 180.

Ajdabiyah entirely.⁵⁰⁶ Two hours later at 3:00 AM Sidney Blumenthal sent Hillary Clinton an excerpt of an *Al Jazeera* article in an email titled “No fly zone over Libya,” and briefly summarized the article detailing UK former Foreign Secretary David Owen calling for a no-fly zone before the UN Security Council to stop Libyan air attacks on civilians.⁵⁰⁷ Blumenthal personally added, “like the no-fly zone imposed on Saddam’s Iraq... Libyan helicopters and planes are raining terror on cities.”⁵⁰⁸ These claims against the use of military aircraft to target civilians were instrumental in rallying the international community to action via R2P though it had not been invoked in far bloodier conflicts throughout Africa.⁵⁰⁹ Despite the fact similar accusations would ultimately be made before the UN and the International Criminal Court (ICC), in a March 1 Pentagon press conference Secretary of Defense Robert Gates and Admiral Mullen claimed that there was “no confirmation whatsoever” of pro-Gaddafi forces firing from air on their own people.⁵¹⁰ This email correspondence also undermines UNSCR 1973 which states that the imposition of a no-fly zone is in response to calls for one made by The Council of the League of Arab States on March 12, 2011 and does not

⁵⁰⁶ Huma Abedin, email message to Hillary Clinton, “OVERNIGHT UPDATE FROM DCM IN TRIPOLI,” February 21, 2011, <https://www.wikileaks.org/clinton-emails/emailid/24583>.

⁵⁰⁷ Sidney Blumenthal, email message to Hillary Clinton, “NO FLY ZONE OVER LIBYA,” February 20, 2011, <https://www.wikileaks.org/clinton-emails/emailid/24545>.

⁵⁰⁸ Blumenthal, “NO FLY ZONE OVER LIBYA.”

⁵⁰⁹ Kuperman claims, “Gaddafi’s acts were a far cry from Rwanda, Darfur, Congo, Bosnia, and other killing fields.” Kuperman, “False pretense for war in Libya;” Davidson, “Why Was Muammar Qadhafi Really Removed?”, 106.

⁵¹⁰ Forte, *Slouching Towards Sirte*, 242.

mention these earlier calls before the UNSC by UK former Foreign Secretary Owen.⁵¹¹

By Saturday, February 26, eleven days after the first stirrings began on February 15, 2011, William J. Burns (current Director of the CIA under the Biden Administration) emailed Jacob Sullivan, Alice Wells, and a redacted email address about a meeting he had with French diplomat Jean-David Levitte.⁵¹² Burns emphasized the French concern over a NATO role and that Levitte “believes Qadhafi’s fall or exit ‘matter of days’. Convinced UN should play main organizing role for support for post-Q [post-Gaddafi] Libya... Need to find solid Arab (ideally) head of mission.”⁵¹³ Furthermore, Burns emphasized the need for the United States to play a role in “supporting pol [*political*] and econ [*economic*] change in the region” and that the United States and the European Union “should coordinate ambitious approach to maghreb, Egypt and perhaps others on *liberalized trade* [emphasis added].”⁵¹⁴ Just 11 days from the start of the uprisings and the French asserted regime change is to be expected, in a matter of days at that. This is counter to the assurances given to the public, and especially China and Russia, that this was not a mission of regime change.⁵¹⁵ As Campbell notes,

⁵¹¹ United Nations Security Council (UNSC) Res 1973 2.

⁵¹² William Burns, email message to Jacob Sullivan, *et al.*, “Paris,” February 26, 2011, https://wikileaks.org/clinton-emails/Clinton_Email_December_Release/C05791905.pdf.

⁵¹³ William Burns, email message, “Paris.”

⁵¹⁴ Burns, “Paris.”

⁵¹⁵ Łukasz Jureńczyk, “Position of the People’s Republic of China,” 45–58.

the French para-diplomat and philosopher Bernard-Henri Levy had been in early contact with the anti-Gaddafi rebels, which along with the rapid toppling of Tunisian President Ben Ali convinced French President Sarkozy the Gaddafi regime was equitably fragile, allowing their oil company Total early access to “obtain access to a large share of Libya’s oil reserves, and in this way edge out the role of others such as the Germans, Turkish, and Spanish.”⁵¹⁶ This correspondence also foreshadows the Qatari role in the conflict and suggests that their ultimate position as “head of mission” is artificial and intended to deflect blame from Western countries. The emphasis on political and economic change, including liberalized trade is deeply suspicious considering these motives are absent from the UNSCR and gives insight into the French’s material motivations.

The very next day, February 27, Jake Sullivan forwarded Hillary Clinton an email chain titled “Libya: Thoughts on Post-Qadhafi Assistance & Governance,” which included an analysis of the situation in Libya by John Godfrey.⁵¹⁷ It was originally sent to a handful of officials including William Burns and Alice Wells, who forwarded the message to Sullivan who then forwarded it to Hillary Clinton. In the original memo Godfrey openly mused on almost everything that would be officially denied by the United States and NATO countries in the coming months. The letter opens with the suggested orchestration of humanitarian aid only to the

⁵¹⁶ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 122-123.

⁵¹⁷ Jacob Sullivan, email message to Hillary Clinton, “LIBYA: THOUGHTS ON POST-QADHAFI ASSISTANCE & GOVERNANCE,” February 27, 2011, <https://www.wikileaks.org/clinton-emails/emailid/6604>.

East (rebel held territory) and “plan to do so in western Libya as soon as Qadhafi falls.”⁵¹⁸ This suggestion would be in violation of the later UNSCR 1973 which claimed the imposition of a no-fly zone was to, “help protect civilians... [but] shall not apply to the flights whose sole purpose is humanitarian.”⁵¹⁹ This implies that there is no motive to deprive Western Libya of humanitarian assistance beyond attaining regime change goals. Godfrey then suggested that, “there is space for covert military assistance [in toppling Gaddafi],” while acknowledging the rebels do not want foreign military aid (at that point in time) in the same sentence.⁵²⁰ Western political elite had taken it upon themselves to divine Libyan future by February 27, 12 days after demonstrations in Libya began. Regime change was openly stated as the predicted outcome and D.C. elite had already suggested the potential role of a CIA or analogous operation inside of Libya.

Godfrey emphasized, “It will be important for the international community to realize that, not unlike in Iraq, it is dealing with what is in many ways a broken society.”⁵²¹ Under Gaddafi, Libya was the richest country per-GDP and boasted one of the highest life expectancies in Africa.⁵²² If this is a broken society, what would the bombed out husk of Sirte and the ISIS strongholds post-Gaddafi be

⁵¹⁸ Jacob Sullivan, email me “LIBYA: THOUGHTS ON POST-QADHAFI ASSISTANCE & GOVERNANCE.”

⁵¹⁹ United Nations Security Council (UNSC) Res 1973 3.

⁵²⁰ Sullivan, “LIBYA: THOUGHTS ON POST-QADHAFI ASSISTANCE & GOVERNANCE.”

⁵²¹ Sullivan, “LIBYA: THOUGHTS ON POST-QADHAFI ASSISTANCE & GOVERNANCE.”

⁵²² Oyeniyi, *The History of Libya*, 137.

called? Initially, this was hailed as “liberation” by the Western coalition. Matteo Capasso, an expert on Libya for the EU LISTCO project would later describe the NATO coordinated bombing and siege of Sirte in the operations final days as “genocidal” and notes that Western conflicts of interest kept this point of view suppressed.⁵²³

This Godfrey memo also identifies the potential danger of AQ spreading through the region, noting that “despite Gaddafi’s best efforts, Islam has continued to play an important role in Libyan society.”⁵²⁴ This was deliberately ignored by American politicians and media at the time with Muammar and Saif al-Islam Gaddafi’s later claims of such were routinely derided, with David D. Kirkpatrick of the *New York Times* referring to such as “an Islamist conspiracy.”⁵²⁵ However, this conspiracy turned out to be a reality. Shortly after Gaddafi’s death the British Royal African Society explicitly noted that “A power vacuum in Libya would have deleterious effects on” amongst other things “combatting AQIM [*al-Qaeda* in the Maghreb].”⁵²⁶ The spread of AQ and ISIS throughout post-Gaddafi Libya would also later be given as a justification for the expansion of AFRICOM military operations in the region, which announced days after Gaddafi was killed that it was deploying troops to the Central African Republic,

⁵²³ Davidson, “Why Was Muammar Qadhafi Really Removed?” 108.

⁵²⁴ Sullivan, “LIBYA: THOUGHTS ON POST-QADHAFI ASSISTANCE & GOVERNANCE.”

⁵²⁵ David D. Kirkpatrick, “Libya Allying With Islamists, Qaddafi Son Says,” *The New York Times*, August 3, 2011, <https://www.nytimes.com/2011/08/04/world/africa/04seif.html?hp>.

⁵²⁶ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 188.

Uganda, South Sudan, and the Democratic Republic of Congo, which Gaddafi had vocally opposed.⁵²⁷ By April of 2012 and “Mali groups that were purportedly allied with al Qaeda... turned northern Mali into an austere Islamist state,” which Campbell notes AFRICOM used “as a basis for its legitimation.”⁵²⁸

From February 20 onward, the government forces' brutality increased, reportedly firing high-grade weaponry at civilians indiscriminately from helicopter gunships, allegations made in reports such as the *Al Jazeera* copy sent by Sidney Blumenthal to Hillary Clinton on February 21 and would later be confirmed to be unsubstantiated by Secretary of Defense Gates.⁵²⁹ According to the ICC, 755 Libyans had supposedly been killed by government forces in the first ten days of the conflict by February 25.⁵³⁰ On February 24 however, the International Federation for Human Rights asserted that most of the atrocities alleged against government forces were not true.⁵³¹

Gaddafi and his son Saif al-Islam's public remarks during this time did not improve their situation. On the 20 of February, Saif al-Islam declared the government would fight the protestors “to the last bullet,” and three days later Gaddafi ominously declared the government would, “sanitize Libya an inch at a time, a home at a time, a house at a time, an alley at a time, one by one until the

⁵²⁷ Forte, *Slouching Towards Sirte*, 139.

⁵²⁸ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 209.

⁵²⁹ Forte, *Slouching Towards Sirte*, 181.

⁵³⁰ Forte, *Slouching Towards Sirte*, 181.

⁵³¹ Forte, *Slouching Towards Sirte*, 181.

country is rid of the filth and uncleanness.”⁵³² These declarations exacerbated tensions. According to De Bona, the spontaneous uprisings of popular revolt inspired by those in Benghazi were only strong in the first 15 days in the Eastern region of Cyrenaica, which had historically been the center of resistance groups.⁵³³ After this initial revolt then the Libyan security forces began to recover and push the rebels back.

Operation Unified Protector: in the Flesh and Blood: March-October, 2011

By early March of 2011 the Libyan government was taking back rebel-held cities and the anti-Gaddafi “revolution” seemed to be doomed.⁵³⁴ On March 19, two days after the passage of UNSCR 1973, the French began bombing Libya and sought to establish a “war committee to oversee operations” outside of NATO, born of a desire to “secure oil contracts with a future Libyan government.”⁵³⁵ This was done without notification of the other NATO allies who had been in the process of deliberating their plan of attack and immediately split the allies, drawing criticism from Turkey, Germany, Poland, and Italy. Franco Frattini, the Italian Foreign Minister quickly announced that Italy would revoke the authorization for use of its airbases “unless a NATO coordination structure was agreed to.”⁵³⁶ As Campbell notes, “Italy understood that French leadership in the

⁵³² Forte, *Slouching Towards Sirte*, 182.

⁵³³ De Bona, *Human Rights in Libya*, 156.

⁵³⁴ Forte, *Slouching Towards Sirte*, 182.

⁵³⁵ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 119.

⁵³⁶ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 119.

operation was a threat to its long-term interests in Libya.”⁵³⁷ This marks the first sign of division amongst the NATO allies, who came into the intervention with a multitude of interests, the least of which included the United States where oil and banking sectors did not wish to be edged out by France while military generals and the Secretary of Defense were hesitant to engage and preoccupied with Afghanistan.⁵³⁸

While multiple NATO countries, including the United States, began bombing on the 19th, on March 23 of 2011 NATO operation “Unified Protector” officially began, with the participation of Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Italy, Norway, Spain, the UK, and the United States of the 28 NATO members.⁵³⁹ Without which the rebels would not have defeated the Gaddafi government, as later put by one of the rebels, “This couldn’t have happened without NATO, they gave us big support.”⁵⁴⁰ However, according to the International Institute of Strategic Studies “On the first day, 19 March, the advance of regime forces towards Benghazi, the rebel capital—where Gaddafi had promised to wreak horrible revenge —was stopped,” and within two to three days the regime by most accounts had ceased to pose a threat to Benghazi⁵⁴¹ Despite this, calls for a ceasefire and peaceful transition by the Gaddafi government and the African Union were repeatedly rejected by the rebels and NATO, which Western

⁵³⁷ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 119.

⁵³⁸ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 120.

⁵³⁹ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 122.

⁵⁴⁰ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 187; Forte, *Slouching Towards Sirte*, 85.

⁵⁴¹ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 119.

politicians argued was not a neutral organization and “Gaddafi’s brainchild.”⁵⁴² Instead of ending the supposedly humanitarian operation on the merits it was launched, roughly two days after bombing began, instead it would last for 204 days and Gaub felt in 2013 that it was “one of NATO’s shorter, and seemingly also less controversial missions,” wherein “26,323 sorties (including 9,658 strike sorties),” and 3,124 seaborne vessels mobilized.⁵⁴³

On March 10, 2011 before UNSCR 1973 was inked the Peace and Security Council of the African Union presented a five point plan for peace that called for a dialogue between the NTC rebels and the Gaddafi government, which the rebels rejected.⁵⁴⁴ In the week bombing started, the Secretary General of the Arab League Amr Moussa reaffirmed their support for a no-fly zone but that the league was opposed to the bombing campaign, later announcing that “What is happening in Libya differs from the aim of imposing a no-fly zone, and what we want is the protection of civilians and not the bombardment of more civilians.”⁵⁴⁵ At this time Saif al-Islam sent aid and confidant Moamed Ismail to London to propose a peace plan wherein Saif al-Islam would oversee Libya’s transition into a democratic state and the rest of the Gaddafi family was granted amnesty.⁵⁴⁶

⁵⁴² Oyeniyi, *The History of Libya*, 188; Campbell, *Global NATO*, 135.

⁵⁴³ Gaub, “Six Strategic Lessons learned from Libya: NATO’s Operation Unified Protector,” 1.

⁵⁴⁴ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 20.

⁵⁴⁵ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 129, 153.

⁵⁴⁶ Pargeter, *Rise and Fall*, 238.

On March 31, Congressman Dennis Kucinich addressed the United States House of Representatives and called on Obama to seek Congressional approval under the 1973 War Powers Resolution, which the administration claimed did not apply because NATO's bombing campaign did not meet the definition of "hostilities."⁵⁴⁷ On March 27, Sidney Blumenthal sent Clinton a detailed list of the massive arsenal that the rebels had acquired within 10 days thanks to "French and British Special Operations troops are working out of bases in Egypt, along the Libyan border. These troops are overseeing the transfer of weapons and supplies to the rebels."⁵⁴⁸ The stockpile of weapons either transferred to the rebels or taken from the Libyan state in Benghazi alone included: "82 and 120 mm. mortars; GPZ type machine guns; 12.7mm. machine guns mounted on 4x4 vehicles; some anti-aircraft batteries type ZSU 23/2 and 23/4," and "some tanks type T-72. Possibly some fixed wing aircraft, and some light transport/medium helicopters. A seemingly endless supply of AK47 assault rifles and ammunition."⁵⁴⁹

On April 10 and 11 of 2011, South African President Jacob Zuma led a delegation including the presidents of Congo-Brazzaville, Mali, Mauritania, and the Ugandan foreign minister to negotiate with the Libyan government, which

⁵⁴⁷ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 150, 151.

⁵⁴⁸ Sidney Blumenthal, email to Hillary Clinton, "H: Lots of new intel; possible Libyan collapse. Sid," March 27, 2011, <https://www.foreignpolicyjournal.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/110327-new-in-tel-State-Dept.pdf>.

⁵⁴⁹ Sidney Blumenthal, email to Hillary Clinton, "H: Lots of new intel; possible Libyan collapse. Sid."

agreed to the African Union's peace plan.⁵⁵⁰ Abdel Ati al-Obeidi, the former Foreign Affairs Secretary, proposed to the media a ceasefire which gave the state six months to set up free democratic elections, and negotiate the reform and the “whether the Leader should stay and in what role, and whether he should retire...Everything will be on the table.”⁵⁵¹ Along with Saif al-Islam’s earlier proposal, there was no follow up for Gaddafi was now stated as the target of the Atlanticist leaders, and whatever good Gaddafi’s appeals to the West did, he was still seen as unpredictable and simply put, “he belonged dead,” in the words of one Ronald Reagan aide.⁵⁵² On April 26, 2011, The African Union’s Peace and Security Council stated “the position of the African Union [is] that the issues in Libya were political and could not be resolved by NATO bombs.”⁵⁵³ Four days later on April 30, 2011, in a failed attempt to strike Gaddafi, NATO killed Gaddafi’s son Saif al-Arab and three of his grandchildren.⁵⁵⁴

In June, Mauritania’s Foreign Minister, Hamady Ould Gamady, announced on behalf of the African Union that, “We are here to make a plea for an immediate humanitarian pause [in fighting] in order that the pressing needs of the populations affected can be met, a pause that should be followed by a ceasefire linked to the political process, in particular by starting with an inclusive and

⁵⁵⁰ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 135, 136.

⁵⁵¹ Pargeter, *Rise and Fall*, 238.

⁵⁵² Blum, *Killing Hope*, 284.

⁵⁵³ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 136.

⁵⁵⁴ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 152.

consensual transition.”⁵⁵⁵ However, as Campbell notes, “Neither NATO nor the NTC was interested in the humanity of Africans. These forces were interested in removing Gaddafi from power,” and negotiation with the African Union “was seen as a minor irritation.”⁵⁵⁶

Even when Gaddafi offered to step down from power in compliance with other African nations, as AU chairperson Jean Ping noted of Gaddafi’s “recapitulation” with the AU in an attempt to stop NATO bombing, “These proposals were rejected because the NATO forces were not interested in negotiations.”⁵⁵⁷ Hugh Roberts, formerly of the International Crisis Group, said the NATO allies opposed a ceasefire and negotiation with Gaddafi out of fear it would necessarily rehabilitate his image, “and the whole interventionist scheme would have flopped... Gaddafi was banished forever from the realm of international political discourse, never to be negotiated with, not even about the surrender of Tripoli when in August he offered to talk terms to spare the city further destruction, an offer once more dismissed with contempt.”⁵⁵⁸

On August 20, rebel forces took over Tripoli, but Gaddafi escaped and relocated to Sirte.⁵⁵⁹ In the following days, *The Telegraph* and *The Independent* reported that both British SAS and American special forces were “scouring the

⁵⁵⁵ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 136.

⁵⁵⁶ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 137.

⁵⁵⁷ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 138.

⁵⁵⁸ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 138, 139.

⁵⁵⁹ Oyeniyi, *The History of Libya*, 188.

Sirte area for Gaddafi” while disguised as Libyan rebels.⁵⁶⁰ Following Gaddafi’s exile to his favored city and stronghold of support in Sirte, located in the region where he was born, the city was subjected to an intense NATO bombing campaign and siege by the rebel forces that only ramped up in intensity through August to October.⁵⁶¹ Once imagined as the centerpiece of Gaddafi’s proposed United States of Africa, the city was favored by the government and was the site of extensive development projects.⁵⁶² A Libyan university professor, Zarouk Abdullah, told reporters outside of his half-demolished home in Sirte, “It used to be a beautiful city, one of the most beautiful in Libya... Today it looks like (postwar) Leningrad, Gaza or Beirut.”⁵⁶³ The civilian infrastructure was reduced to rubble, house after house was bombed out, broken pipes flooded streets and cut off running water, there was no electricity while reporters inside Sirte in October of 2011 claimed, “The air rankles with the smell of rotting bodies.”⁵⁶⁴ Ibn Sina hospital came under heavy fire and was also left without running water or electricity. Medical workers and journalists reported seeing a child die on the operating table when the generator ran out of fuel (UN sanctions on gas imports certainly didn’t help), patients dying “every day” for a lack of oxygen, and elderly patients dying of severe malnutrition.⁵⁶⁵ These images would later be referenced

⁵⁶⁰ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 172.

⁵⁶¹ Forte, *Slouching Towards Sirte*, 33.

⁵⁶² Forte, *Slouching Towards Sirte*, 33.

⁵⁶³ Forte, *Slouching Towards Sirte*, 31.

⁵⁶⁴ Forte, *Slouching Towards Sirte*, 32.

⁵⁶⁵ Forte, *Slouching Towards Sirte*, 108.

by Gaub as some kind of propaganda win for the Gaddafi regime which NATO was unprepared to counter, rather than victims which NATO regretfully killed.

NATO's commanding initiative, to protect civilians, cannot be reconciled with the damage it and the rebels wrought throughout Libya, but especially in Sirte. As early as March *The New York Times* questioned the humanitarian rationale of how NATO, "could justify airstrikes if, as seems to be the case, loyalist forces enjoy widespread support in the city and pose no threat to civilians."⁵⁶⁶ These inconvenient facts would simply be ignored and the first bombs flew over Sirte on March 27 and did not stop for seven months until Gaddafi was dead.⁵⁶⁷ As the humanitarian need to protect civilians fell apart, the new justification was a roundabout admission of regime change as the ultimate goal. In a speech the same day the first bombs hit Sirte, Obama proclaimed, "Qaddafi has not yet stepped down from power, and until he does, Libya will remain dangerous."⁵⁶⁸ Just ten days after the UN adopted UNSCR 1973 and the public were promised this was not regime change, Obama's public statements suggested otherwise.

As mentioned by Nicholas Pelham of *The New York Times*, the targeting of Libyan forces in pro-Gaddafi civilian centers did not protect anyone as no civilians were in danger, noting of the August campaign to take Tripoli that "NATO forces intensified their bombardment of loyalist positions on the Western outskirts

⁵⁶⁶ Forte, *Slouching Towards Sirte*, 85.

⁵⁶⁷ Forte, *Slouching Towards Sirte*, 86.

⁵⁶⁸ Forte, *Slouching Towards Sirte*, 83.

of Tripoli, stretching to its limits their UN mandate to protect civilians,” without noting the mandate issued to protect Benghazi specifically was already torn to pieces.⁵⁶⁹ The word “targeting” also does a lot of rhetorical legwork to justify a bombing campaign that multiple observers described as indiscriminate.⁵⁷⁰ In fact, reports of armed civilians wearing green bandanas to signal their support for Gaddafi and Libyan citizens' testimony published by *The Telegraph* in September claimed, “the civilian areas are filled with volunteers for Gaddafi,” necessarily implying that pro-Gaddafi civilians became legitimate targets and making a mockery of the initial mission’s prerogative to protect civilians.⁵⁷¹ Journalist Lizzie Phelan reaffirmed this position, noting that NATO “rapidly moved to bomb all checkpoints in the densely packed city” of Tripoli, which were almost entirely “manned by volunteers - i.e., ordinary citizens that had been armed with Kalashnikovs... followed by masses of youth and other residents in the capital pouring into the streets to defend their city.”⁵⁷²

Even when targeting official Libyan forces, NATO managed to kill scores of civilians. Two independent human rights organizations confirmed that a September 15 strike, officially characterized by NATO as a strike against “2

⁵⁶⁹ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 159.

⁵⁷⁰ Forte, *Slouching Towards Sirte*, 32, 33. A compilation of testimony: “Sirte was found ‘almost without an intact building’,” “so far we visited 7,000 houses and 6,000 are damaged,” “In a city that once served as a showcase to foreign dignitaries, nearly every building bears the scars of war,” “Occasionally you see grotesquely twisted concrete structures, barely recognizable now, that were blown apart by NATO bombs.”

⁵⁷¹ Forte, *Slouching Towards Sirte*, 86.

⁵⁷² Campbell, *Global NATO*, 161.

Armed Vehicles,” constituted a war crime.⁵⁷³ A first strike did indeed target two armed vehicles, but roughly five minutes later another missile struck the scene which was now filled with first responders and other civilians. This second strike killed 47 civilians in a maneuver considered a “double tap” which intentionally targets first responders, and is a war crime.⁵⁷⁴ This was not an isolated incident, on August 8th NATO struck a civilian farming compound in the town of Majer and then again when civilian first responders were on the scene.⁵⁷⁵ According to Human Rights Watch, “the infrared system used by the bomb deployed should have indicated to the pilot the presence of many people on the ground. If the pilot was unable to determine that those people were combatants, then the strike should have been canceled.”⁵⁷⁶

Similar allegations to the documented war crimes carried out by NATO against the Libyan government, while less substantiated, were still labeled genocidal. The NTC rebels and Benghazi were worthy victims while any pro-Gaddafi civilians and Sirte were unworthy victims. While government vehicles fleeing a battle were struck by NATO under the pretense they posed a harm to civilians the rebels were allowed to freely move tanks into position surrounding Sirte.⁵⁷⁷ The NTC rebels were also responsible for a large number of their own

⁵⁷³ Forte, *Slouching Towards Sirte*, 99. The organizations were the Independent Civil Society Mission to Libya and the International Legal Assistance Consortium.

⁵⁷⁴ Forte, *Slouching Towards Sirte*, 100.

⁵⁷⁵ Forte, *Slouching Towards Sirte*, 100. No evidence to suggest the compound had any affiliation with Gaddafi forces ever surfaced.

⁵⁷⁶ Forte, *Slouching Towards Sirte*, 101.

⁵⁷⁷ Forte, *Slouching Towards Sirte*, 106.

atrocities while NATO promptly averted their eyes. In the first month of the uprisings Amer Saad, a “political activist” from Derna—a town known as a hotbed of terrorism since the anti-Soviet jihad—told *Al Jazeera* that over 50 African mercenaries and Libyan conspirators were executed in al-Bayda and more executions were underway in Derna.⁵⁷⁸ The execution of prisoners of war constitutes a war crime, one the rebels would continue to orchestrate. However, this too was already well known in the foreign policy elite’s circles, Blumenthal had relayed to Clinton on March 27 that “one rebel commander stated that his troops continue to summarily execute all foreign mercenaries captured in the fighting,” while noting that *al-Qaeda* was “watching developments in Libya, and elements of that organization have been in touch with tribes in the southeastern part of the country.”⁵⁷⁹

In Sirte, Human Rights Watch found the bodies of 53 Gaddafi supporters in a hotel, many of who were executed with their hands tied behind their back.⁵⁸⁰ The Red Cross reported that the rebels “deliberately shelled the hospital” to prevent their team from delivering medical supplies to the Ibn Sina hospital.⁵⁸¹ It was widely reported that the rebels indiscriminately fired explosives into Sirte, looted civilian homes, and the rebels repeatedly expressed eliminationist intent

⁵⁷⁸ Forte, *Slouching Towards Sirte*, 226.

⁵⁷⁹ Blumenthal, email to Hillary Clinton, “H: Lots of new intel.”

⁵⁸⁰ Forte, *Slouching Towards Sirte*, 111.

⁵⁸¹ Forte, *Slouching Towards Sirte*, 109.

towards the people of Sirte.⁵⁸² One rebel firing rockets into Sirte claimed they knew they were fighting civilians but that “Sirte’s residents had chosen to die.”⁵⁸³ A BBC reporter claims to have met “many people in Misrata who believe Sirte should be wiped off the map.”⁵⁸⁴ In regards to another pro-Gaddafi stronghold Ajdabiya, a rebel called for NATO bombing after the rebels failed to capture it, “even if they blow up Ajdabiya we don’t care.”⁵⁸⁵ When Gaddafi made his threatening “house by house” speech on February 23 it was circulated widely and interpreted as eliminationist, his calls for amnesty for those who threw their weapons down were dismissed as were the rebels’ much more explicit demands for indiscriminate murder.

NTC rebels’ loose lips continually undermined the UNSCR 1973. In one statement a NTC spokesman claimed that the Qataris had planned most battles and were instrumental to their victory.⁵⁸⁶ Qatar would later admit that it sent “hundreds of its special forces to every region of Libya” to help train, plan, and fight against Gaddafi.⁵⁸⁷ This was in direct violation of the UNSCR which denied “a foreign occupation force of any form on any part of Libyan territory.”⁵⁸⁸ As mentioned in the correspondence between Burns and Levitte, by February 26,

⁵⁸² Forte, *Slouching Towards Sirte*, 33. One Libyan girl in Sirte later recounted, “they attacked us in our houses, looted them, they destroyed everything.”

⁵⁸³ Forte, *Slouching Towards Sirte*, 88, 105.

⁵⁸⁴ Forte, *Slouching Towards Sirte*, 33.

⁵⁸⁵ Forte, *Slouching Towards Sirte*, 34.

⁵⁸⁶ Davidson, “Why Was Muammar Qadhafi Really Removed?”, 109.

⁵⁸⁷ Davidson, “Why Was Muammar Qadhafi Really Removed?”, 109.

⁵⁸⁸ United Nations Security Council (UNSC) Res 1973 3.

NATO members were working to find an “Arab head of mission” and Qatar had filled that role dutifully. Qatar was the first Arab state to recognize the NTC as the official government of Libya, played a key role in suspending Libya from the Arab League and rejecting the African Union’s calls for peace.⁵⁸⁹

Not only did Qatar organize military operations, it played a key role in the propaganda battle to remove Gaddafi along with Saudi Arabia. The rebels' claims, who the *New York Times* called untrustworthy two months into the uprising, were instrumental in spreading the anti-Gaddafi propaganda laundered by Qatari and Saudi sources then repeated throughout the West.⁵⁹⁰ Qatar’s *Al Jazeera* continually repeated exaggerated claims made by rebel forces with little to no verification.⁵⁹¹ These claims were then repeated through Saudi media, in the Qatari established “Libya TV” network, and then Western media ad nauseam.⁵⁹² This is evidenced in Blumenthal's message to Clinton on February 21, forwarding and citing an *Al Jazeera* article.

Amongst the falsehoods propagated by *Al Jazeera* include the infamous Viagra rape stories, claiming Gaddafi handed out Viagra to his troops to engage in mass-rape. Cherif Bassiouni, leader of the UN human-rights inquiry into the situation called the story a product of mass hysteria, as did Amnesty International

⁵⁸⁹ Davidson, “Why Was Muammar Qadhafi Really Removed?” 106.

⁵⁹⁰ Davidson, “Why Was Muammar Qadhafi Really Removed?”, 101.

⁵⁹¹ Forte, *Slouching Towards Sirte*, 87, 221. Claims of Gaddafi forces using helicopters to fire on crowds was initially reported by *Al Jazeera* citing a single phone call as the source.

⁵⁹² Davidson, “Why Was Muammar Qadhafi Really Removed?” 106.

who suspiciously found intact boxes of Viagra strewn about the wreckage of burnt out tanks but no evidence of mass-rape.⁵⁹³ Nevertheless, these claims were referred to by prosecutors at the ICC and repeated by the United States ambassador to Libya to the United Nations Security Council.⁵⁹⁴

Qatar was not alone in violating the charter with “boots on the ground,” some French and British forces were already in the “western suburbs of Benghazi,” supposedly only training troops to a “limited degree” according to Blumenthal.⁵⁹⁵ The CIA was also present from the early uprising, possibly even before. The *New York Times* reported in March of 2011 the CIA had agents inside Libya for “several weeks... as part of a shadow force of Westerners... which can help bleed Qadhafi’s military”, later confirmed by United States officials.⁵⁹⁶ At the very least the timeframe of several weeks in March almost certainly puts the date before UNSCR 1973 was published. As noted, the British and French also disregarded the stipulations with their own special forces, their presence in Benghazi as early as March 2011 was exposed by the trove of leaked Clinton emails while public reporting had previously noted their activity in Libya by August, 2011.⁵⁹⁷

⁵⁹³ Davidson, “Why Was Muammar Qadhafi Really Removed?”, 105.

⁵⁹⁴ Davidson, “Why Was Muammar Qadhafi Really Removed?”, 105.

⁵⁹⁵ Blumenthal, email to Hillary Clinton, “H: Lots of new intel.”

⁵⁹⁶ Davidson, “Why Was Muammar Qadhafi Really Removed?”, 109.

⁵⁹⁷ Davidson, “Why Was Muammar Qadhafi Really Removed?”, 109.

Gaddafi's Death & NATO Declares Victory: October 20 - 31, 2011

Mansour Dhao Ibrahim, a Gaddafi loyalist and head of the People's Guard, was with Gaddafi's convoy of some 40 vehicles that made a final attempt to escape the NATO and rebel siege on Sirte on October 20, 2011, and unlike Gaddafi and his son Muatassim, Dhao survived.⁵⁹⁸ Dhao was able to recount the events to Human Rights Watch three days later, and gave testimony to *The New York Times* shortly after and published Dhao's account. He noted that "as the former rebels stormed the city center, the colonel and his sons were trapped shuttling between two houses in a residential area called District No. 2. They were surrounded by hundreds of former rebels, firing at the area with heavy machine guns, rockets, and mortars."⁵⁹⁹ As the convoy of vehicles left, either an American or French craft had picked up signal from a satellite phone that Gaddafi carried and roughly 30 minutes after departing Sirte, NATO air forces struck the convoy. Dhao was struck by shrapnel but managed to continue on foot with Gaddafi and a handful of men who made their way across the road to a farm and into the drainage pipes under constant shelling, which struck Dhao again, knocking him unconscious to later wake up in the hospital.⁶⁰⁰

The drainage pipes Dhao describes are the ones in which a bloody but alive Gaddafi can be seen dragged out of by a mob in video footage that quickly went viral, along with a series of other videos which documented the rebel forces

⁵⁹⁸ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 172.

⁵⁹⁹ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 174.

⁶⁰⁰ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 175.

raping him a blade and then one of his dead body on display in a walk-in freezer.⁶⁰¹ Needless to say, the videos clearly document yet another war crime amongst the litany of unprosecuted war crimes committed by NATO and the rebels between March and October of 2011. Nicolas Beger, Director of the Amnesty International European Institutions Office called for an investigation into the murder, noting that “If he was captured alive and then killed, that’s a war crime.”⁶⁰² Benard-Henry Levy said of Gaddafi’s killing, in a hypocritical dribble that reminds you he is a French philosopher (Blumenthal said those who have dealt with him consider him “a semi-useful, semi-joke figure”), “There is, in the spectacle of Gaddafi’s lynching, something revolting. Worse, I fear that it will pollute the essential morality of an insurrection that had been, up to that point, almost exemplary. And anyone who knows something about revolutionary history knows that this could be the tipping point at which democratic uprising begins to degenerate into its opposite.”⁶⁰³

However, this was quickly brushed off and the NATO allies quickly began the rounds of applause for themselves. As noted previously, Hillary Clinton laughed and cheered with a news team as she received word on October 20. The United States Permanent Representative to NATO co authored an opinion piece along with the Supreme Allied Commander, James G. Stavridis, noting that OUP was a “historic victory for the people of Libya,” which as mirrored by

⁶⁰¹ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 176.

⁶⁰² Campbell, *Global NATO*, 181.

⁶⁰³ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 179.

dozens statements from politicians across the West.⁶⁰⁴ On October 31 in Tripoli the NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen declared victory in a speech, claiming that “At midnight tonight, a successful chapter in NATO’s history is coming to an end. But you have already started writing a new chapter in the history of Libya. A new Libya, based on freedom, democracy, human rights, the rule of law and reconciliation.”⁶⁰⁵ Rasmussen, like Obama’s initial self-congratulations, bore absolutely no resemblance to the reality of the situation on the ground in Libya. Campbell notes that outside of the Atlanticist bubble “diplomats and policy makers raised their voices to say that NATO exceeded its mandate to protect Libyan civilians and instead became the air force to install in power jihadists in what was essentially a civil war.”⁶⁰⁶

Unfortunately, as noted in the very introduction of this study, yet another civil war was on the horizon. A much longer civil war comprised of the over one thousand militia and jihadist groups that made up the rebel forces and interim government, and then quickly fractured the nation by 2014, after a single election was held. However, low to high intensity conflict continued in the few years of supposed peacetime as pockets of rebels developed a preference to violence, or simply found it far more expedient than democracy, or were compelled to defend themselves from the roaming bands of criminals and terrorists now functionally in control of the country and armed to the teeth. In the rampage NATO tried to

⁶⁰⁴ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 181.

⁶⁰⁵ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 182.

⁶⁰⁶ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 182.

portray as freedom, multiple villages were looted and burnt by the rebels. In one pronounced example the town of Bani Walid, home to some 70,000 was laid to siege by thousands of militants from Misrata refusing anything in or out of the city while opening fire with tanks and gassing residential neighborhoods.⁶⁰⁷ Oussama El Jouili, the Defense Minister later confirmed in October 2012 that the government lost control of Bani Walid entirely to waves of sectarian rebels who laid siege to the population.⁶⁰⁸

Conclusion

In the large stretch of Libyan history covered, from the colonial period to Gaddafi's death in 2011, pan-European imperialist powers have continuously and ceaselessly attempted to subvert and undermine any expression of Libyan sovereignty with a very minor pause in the early 2000s while Libya opened its economy to American oil companies. Western academic elites attempted to reverse decades of racist propaganda and outright fabrications about Libya to little success, and Gaddafi was actively attempting to please the United States' foreign policy elite by ending his WMD programs and cooperating in the War on Terror which he hoped would provide protection from Islamist Wahhabist

⁶⁰⁷ Sidney Blumenthal, email message to Hillary Clinton, "Q's gold;" Campbell, *Global NATO*, 218.

⁶⁰⁸ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 218.

terrorism, only for this very group to be weaponized by the United States and he was murdered by “America’s Libyans” on October 20, 2011.⁶⁰⁹

The United States’ cultivation of this jihadist alliance is, ultimately nothing new, and the embrace of constructive instability is not particularly novel. The following chapter will examine the United States’ relationship with jihadi terror networks in Libya, along with the pan-African developmentalist projects and Libyan domestic economic policies that funded them and represented the greatest threat to the United States hegemony over the world-system.

⁶⁰⁹ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 61. Indian scholar Vijay Prashad would use this term to refer to the LIFG and Khalifa Haftar.

CHAPTER FOUR:

PAN-AFRICANISM AND CONSTRUCTIVE INSTABILITY

There is at least a two-decade-long history to the spread of chaos across the Muslim world, the start of which coincided with the end of the Cold War and the spread of neoliberal structural adjustment policies in the region. The seminal examples of this phenomenon are the Lebanese civil war, followed by the civil war in Algeria, and most recently the slow disintegration of the political and social structures of Palestinian society and now Iraq. In all these cases, potential or genuine democratic processes were aborted by those in power, with the endorsement and even active collaboration of Western powers, precisely because such processes fundamentally challenged the position and power of the governing elites and/or foreign corporations and their government backers... [regardless of] the potential gains and losses involved in who “wins” Iraq, it becomes clear that the US simply cannot afford not to invade Iraq; the cost of letting anyone else gain control of all that oil would be too great...unleash creative destruction experts: the US military, followed by USAID’s and the World Bank and IMF’s ‘privatization’ and ‘efficiency’ consultants, and sit back and watch the entropy creep.

-Mark LeVine, *Why They Don’t Hate Us*, 2005.⁶¹⁰

“There is no way the United States can be this incompetent. The chaos here has to be at least partly deliberate.”

-Iraqi psychiatrist, speaking to Mark LeVine, spring of 2004.⁶¹¹

This chapter details Gaddafi’s pan-Africanist policies which threatened to transform Libya and parts of Africa into a semi-periphery or regional hegemon, which the directives of the Wolfowitz Doctrine identified as a threat to the United States’ global hegemony and thus needed to be destroyed before it could present a legitimate national security threat. These pan-Africanist policies motivated the United States’ embrace of a strategy of constructive instability, or

⁶¹⁰ LeVine, *Why They Don’t Hate Us*, 287, 304-305.

⁶¹¹ LeVine, *Why They Don’t Hate Us*, 291.

purposeful destabilization, in Libya during Operation Unified Protector as an evolution of imperial policy in the dawn of a new era of declining unipolar power of the occupations in Afghanistan and Iraq in the early 2000s.⁶¹² As an alternative to these costly invasions and deeply unpopular and failing occupations (which LeVine argues instrumentalized chaos or constructive instability as well, but the occupations functioned to secure order and business interests and the futile attempt to establish democratic orders) constructive instability in Libya represented the highest order of such a policy and functions as an imperial strategy of area denial intended to destabilize Gaddafi's Libya while shutting out potential competitors from filling the power vacuum post-Gaddafi, considered heavy-constructive instability.⁶¹³

The United States' embrace of heavy-constructive instability in OUP marks a definitive turn into the post-2011 geopolitical era as the chaos enabled by the pursuit of full spectrum dominance at the zenith of United States' unipolar power became a tool in the zero-sum globalized world, as well as an abandonment of traditional Cold War-era policy of hegemonic domination.⁶¹⁴ In 2011 the United States had no ambition, intention, or possibly even the capability

⁶¹² Pack, *Enduring Global Disorder*, 13.

⁶¹³ Peter Dale Scott, *Road to 9/11*, 72. Zbigniew Brzezinski's Afghan trap and cultivation of Islamist fighters to give "the USSR its Vietnam War" can be said to be the first adoption of such a strategy.

⁶¹⁴ Pack, *Global Enduring Disorder*, 1, 2, 9, 11-13. "This is in stark contrast to the Cold War period, in which no location was unimportant enough for America or the USSR to cede ground by letting its opponent export its system of order there unrivaled."

to fill the post-Gaddafi power vacuum in an era marked by its own declining hegemonic capability and the rise of potential peer competitor in China. The destruction of Libya provided the United States opportunity to limit Chinese influence while it still clung to the directives of the Wolfowitz Doctrine and the list of countries Rumsfeld marked for destruction in 2001.⁶¹⁵

The Obama administration followed the neoconservative's directives, but adapted the United States' hegemonic tactics into the strategy of heavy-constructive instability, which furthered Rumsfeld's imperative for a lighter military footprint against the directives of the Powell Doctrine, bypassing the possibility of occupation, and instrumentalizing insurgency.⁶¹⁶ All of which further concealed the reality of the United States' globalized military presence from a war fatigued public without stretching the United States Armed Forces even thinner, which were not heavily motivated to fight another protracted war in the region, as then-Secretary of Defense Robert Gates said, "any future defense secretary who advises the president to again send a big American land army into Asia or the Middle East of Africa should have his head examined."⁶¹⁷

⁶¹⁵ Tim Beal, "Weaponizing Europe, Countering Eurasia: Mackinder, Brzezinski, Nuland and the Road to the Ukraine War," 72. Beal writes that, "US imperialism does not have permanent presidents but it does have permanent interests. It seeks to dominate the world and to destroy any challenges to its hegemony."

⁶¹⁶ Forte, *Slouching Towards Sirte*, 195. In outlining the United States strategy in Africa Obama claimed in June 2012 the United States would cultivate ties with "agents of change" as part of an indirect strategy which keeps a "light footprint."

⁶¹⁷ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 115.

As will be shown, and Obama plainly stated in 2016, Libya was of little concern to the United States' in and of itself, and European actors, the French in particular, were the prime movers in both pushing the United States and NATO into action and held the immediate material interests inside Libya which explained their rationale for engaging Libya. The stated humanitarian altruism which supposedly motivated the United States and NATO into action is entirely inconsistent with the reality of United States foreign policy from 1945, leaked communications between the French and Hillary Clintons' State Department, as well as the reality of the operation over Libya which extended the internal conflict, killed far more civilians than Gaddafi did (all available evidence suggests he would have) and placed far more lives in danger as jihadist terrorist organizations (among some 1,700 different militia groups) seized power in NATO's wake.⁶¹⁸

That many of these militia and jihadists were, as Horace Campbell notes, "a central feature of the strategy of the NATO intervention," was obscured to sell the operation as humanitarian to hide "the reality that elements in the military-intelligence hierarchy had formulated a policy to align with certain militia groups in eastern Libya," which were known to be or affiliated with *al-Qaeda*, the most notable of which were the Libyan Islamic Fighting Group.⁶¹⁹ Campbell notes that The United States' "relations with the militia had followed the Petraeus

⁶¹⁸ Pack, *Global Enduring Disorder*, 27; Campbell, *Global NATO*, 182, 183. Pack notes that the supposed humanitarians were "primarily concerned with geostrategic interests."

⁶¹⁹ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 202, 229; Blumenthal, email to Hillary Clinton "H: Lots of new intel."

[Director of the CIA] strategy in Iraq,” which was adapted by NATO allies in the execution of OUP, and the United States continued well after.⁶²⁰ In this strategy Western powers aligned with “international Sunni extremist groups that have benefited from al-Qaeda links,” that the Director of the CIA, George Tenet, called “One of the most immediate threats [to U.S. security]” in 2004, mentioning the LIFG by name.⁶²¹

Furthermore, in the March 27, 2011 email to Hillary Clinton, just 10 days after UNSCR 1973 was passed Blumenthal wrote,

Sarkozy is also concerned about continuing reports that radical/terrorist groups such as the Libyan Fighting Groups and Al Qa'ida in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) are infiltrating the NLC and its military command...Senior European security officials caution that AQIM is watching developments in Libya, and elements of that organization have been in touch with tribes in the southeastern part of the country. These officials are concerned that in a post-Qaddafi Libya, France and other western.European countries must move quickly to ensure that the new government does not allow AQIM and others to set up small, semi-autonomous local entities—or ‘Caliphates’—in the oil and gas producing regions of southeastern Libya.⁶²²

The “Libyan Fighting Groups” Blumenthal mentions is presumably the LIFG. The establishment of “small, semi-autonomous local entities” in post-Gaddafi Libya, if not what was intended, is precisely what occurred. And the United States continued to cultivate their presence in Libya to send to fight in the Syrian civil war.

⁶²⁰ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 203.

⁶²¹ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 63.

⁶²² Sidney Blumenthal, email to Hillary Clinton “H: Lots of new intel; possible Libyan collapse. Sid.”

NATO's knowing cooperation with such groups form a key aspect of a strategy of constructive instability, an evolution of the United States' prior anti-Soviet Afghan jihad, to destabilize Libya without concern for the wellbeing of the nation or its people, which the United States' actions post-Gaddafi demonstrate was never the case. The United States' intentions in OUP were not just to "destabilize Libya, freeze billions of dollars of assets, [and] execute Gaddafi," as summarized aptly by Campbell, but to "keep the [jihadi] alliance going" to use "Libya as a rear base in the drive for regime change in Syria."⁶²³

Though this study supposes that the destabilization of Libya was a direct motive of the United States, the structural and self-reinforcing chaos unleashed unto the world stage from Libya was likely unanticipated, and like the invasion of Iraq in 2003, it ultimately weakened the United States' hegemonic position and capabilities to project power on the world stage rather than bolstered it.⁶²⁴ The following section will examine a historical colonial precedent of the Wolfowitz Doctrine and OUP wherein imperialist core powers and regional actors cooperate to dismantle potentially successful industrial economic projects they cannot bend into subservience before they represent a legitimate security threat. The early nineteenth century developmentalist project of Mohammad Ali in neighboring Egypt was ripped apart by similar actors for similar reasons as Gaddafi's Libya would be in 2011.

⁶²³ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 229.

⁶²⁴ Pack, *Global Enduring Disorder*, xxxv.

Gaddafi and Operation Unified Protector's Colonial Precedents in Egypt

Prior to Muhammad Ali's developmentalist project and dissection by imperial powers, and Gaddafi's explicit adoption of Egyptian Gamel Abdul Nasser's revolutionary ideology and pan-Arab spirit, which was adapted to Gaddafi's more successful pan-African efforts, Egyptian history provides other useful dialectical insights, similarities, and contrasts. As noted of Libya, Egypt also served as a historic crossroads for trade between the edges of Africa, West Asia, and Europe, as Edward Said wrote, "Egypt was the focal point of the relationships between Africa and Asia, between Europe and the East."⁶²⁵ A legacy which Egypt has the fortune or misfortune of maintaining to the present day as host to the Suez Canal, because of which Egypt has maintained its status as an obvious prize to be coveted, conquered, or protected, even if the respect once commanded by its towering ancient pyramids and worldly knowledge has dissipated with the European powers' colonial development.

Egypt, Orientalism, and the Atlanticist Zeitgeist

Edward Said explains the peculiar misfortune for the ancient civilization of Egypt once revered by the Romans and Greeks, "Because Egypt was saturated with meaning for the arts, sciences, and government... By taking Egypt then, a modern power would naturally demonstrate its strength," and foreign occupation became "the very basis" of Egyptian civilization.⁶²⁶ Said methodically detailed this

⁶²⁵ Edward W. Said, *Orientalism*, (New York: Vintage Books, 1994), 34, 84.

⁶²⁶ Said, *Orientalism*, 84, 85.

colonial dynamic he popularized as Orientalism, wherein Europeans' intellectualized their colonial projects conceptualization of the wider Middle East and Islamic culture (the Orient). The essence of which is "the ineradicable distinction between Western superiority and Oriental inferiority."⁶²⁷ Said explains Egypt's pivotal role

The keynote of the relationship [orientalism] was set in the Near East and Europe by the Napoleonic invasion of Egypt in 1789, an invasion which was in many ways the very model of a truly scientific appropriation of one culture by another, apparently stronger one. For with Napoleon's occupation of Egypt processes were set in motion between East and West that still dominate out contemporary perspectives... Egypt and subsequently the other Islamic lands were viewed as the live province, the laboratory, the theater of effective Western knowledge about the Orient.⁶²⁸

The land became a prize and symbol contested between the French and British, "a category denoting the Orientalists' power and not the Islamic people as humans nor their history as history."⁶²⁹ While Napoleon was originally inspired to invade due to his awe of Egyptian history acquired through history, the imperialist competition quickly became a "vindication of Western imperialism," and the Egyptians but "a subject race, dominated by a race that knows them and what is good for them better than they could possibly know themselves."⁶³⁰

Herein lays historical precedent to the way scholars such as Vandewalle and Atlanticist imperialists like Gaub understood Gaddafi's Libya in relation to the

⁶²⁷ Said, *Orientalism*, 42.

⁶²⁸ Said, *Orientalism*, 42, 43.

⁶²⁹ Said, *Orientalism*, 87.

⁶³⁰ Said, *Orientalism*, 35.

developed core and not its own history, and dead Libyan bodies are not humans only registered in relation to perceptions of NATO. Vandewalle's dismissal of Gaddafi's pan-African projects and the assumption that neoliberal market reforms would be preferred is but a thinly veiled update to the idea that the colonial powers know what is good for Libyans better than they could possibly know themselves. His point of comparison is not between Libya under Gaddafi and their prior subjugation under colonial domination, but with the developed European world itself. A tried and true rhetorical trick based in Orientalism pioneered in Egypt. As Said notes of one French colonialist account of Egypt, "history as recorded by the *Description* supplants Egyptian or Oriental history by identifying itself directly and immediately with world history, a euphemism for European history."⁶³¹

The British Viceroy Lord Cromer, referenced and cited often by Said, came to effectively rule Egypt for 24 years, later wrote glorified justifications for English imperialism that typified the Orientalist perspective (as well as Wallerstein's concept of a diffused conception of civilization). LeVine notes the relevancy of Cromer's work, written "as if anticipating the arguments of George W. Bush as he invaded Iraq."⁶³² Cromer invoked the "responsibilities" of a "great nation" like England, drifting on the tide of history "into doing what was not only right" but coincidentally also "in accordance with British interests."⁶³³ Under the supposed

⁶³¹ Said, *Orientalism*, 86.

⁶³² LeVine, *Why They Don't Hate Us*, 68.

⁶³³ LeVine, *Why They Don't Hate Us*, 68.

benevolence of the British, Cromer wrote, “Egypt may now almost be said to be part of Europe... But it may be doubted whether any instance can be quoted of a sudden transfer of power in any civilized or semi-civilized community to a class so ignorant as the pure Egyptians, such as they were in the year 1882,” and that this “subject race” did not “possess the qualities which would render it desirable, either in their own interests, or in those of the civilized world in general” if they gained “full rights of internal sovereignty.”⁶³⁴

Muhammad Ali’s Egypt: Proto-Developmentalist and Proto-OUP

Four years after the French evacuated in 1801, chased out of Egypt by English and Ottoman forces, Muhammad Ali was recognized as the governor of a semi-autonomous Egypt under the Ottoman empire, which he ruled over for 40 years.⁶³⁵ As William Cleveland and Martin Bunton note in *A History of the Modern Middle East*,

From one perspective, Muhammad Ali can be viewed as another traditional warlord seeking to establish an independent hereditary dynasty at the expense of the weakened Ottoman state. Yet for all the customary features of warlordism and absolutism that characterized Muhammad Ali’s rule in Egypt, his regime also represented the first sustained program in the Middle East of state-sponsored Europeanization of the military and of the institutions that supported it.⁶³⁶

⁶³⁴ LeVine, *Why They Don’t Hate Us*, 67.

⁶³⁵ LeVine, *Why They Don’t Hate Us*, 65.

⁶³⁶ Cleveland, Bunton, *A History of the Modern Middle East*, 43-44.

This description of Ali as a warlord on one hand and an indigenous developmentalist on the other could also describe Gaddafi, both of whose primary objective was to establish independence from foreigners for their nation.⁶³⁷

Both embarked on programs of rapid education and like Gaddafi redirected Libya's oil revenue into national development, Cleveland notes that "Ali recognized that to pay for his military, he would have to exploit Egypt's resources to their limits and ensure the maximum possible revenues from all productive sources."⁶³⁸ Ali harnessed the *waqf*, a traditional form of Islamic tax and resource distribution that gives precedent and indigenous lineage to the Gaddafi regime's economic policies that so confounded Vandewalle, or was condemned by other observers as proof of Libya's communist leaning despite Gaddafi's condemnation of both capitalism and communism.⁶³⁹ Cleveland continues, noting aspects of Ali's policy that would later be replicated by Gaddafi and criticized heavily as authoritarian, in which Ali "granted land to certain trusted officials who were expected to cultivate it in exchange for tax exemptions, and he gave large tracts of land to his relatives," while "his sons were appointed to key positions."⁶⁴⁰

⁶³⁷ Cleveland, Bunton, *A History of the Modern Middle East*, 44.

⁶³⁸ Cleveland, Bunton, *A History of the Modern Middle East*, 45.

⁶³⁹ Cleveland, Bunton, *A History of the Modern Middle East*, 45.

⁶⁴⁰ Cleveland, Bunton, *A History of the Modern Middle East*, 45.

As Gaddafi was the first head of state to alert Interpol and call for Osama Bin Laden's arrest, from 1811 to 1819 Ali fought the first Wahhabist Saudi insurrection on the Arabian peninsula on behalf of the Ottoman empire.⁶⁴¹ However by 1831 Ali consolidated his political and military power and successfully invaded both Palestine and Syria, which LeVine notes threatened "the very existence of the Ottoman state," and speculates that with Egypt's resources marshaled under Ali's industrialization Egypt could very well have become "a major world power within a generation," with luck and innovation to the "rudimentary system of administration" which was showing signs it could not handle such rapid industrialization by the 1830s.⁶⁴²

However, this would prove irrelevant, in 1840 European and Ottoman forces teamed up to end Ali's domination that directly threatened the Ottoman empire's territorial integrity and European resource extraction. LeVine notes, foreshadowing NATO's destruction of Libya, that along with Ali's fledgling empire they destroyed "the one possible chance a MENA society had to chart an independent and autonomous path towards modernity and capitalist development—something that needless to say Europe... would not allow."⁶⁴³ Once the Ottoman's opened their economy to European finance (with Egypt now under thrall) it smothered what remained of indigenous competitive productive capacity "increased foreign penetration and control bankrupted the state by

⁶⁴¹ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 63; Levine, *Why They Don't Hate Us*, 65.

⁶⁴² LeVine, *Why They Don't Hate Us*, 65-66.

⁶⁴³ LeVine, *Why They Don't Hate Us*, 66.

1875.”⁶⁴⁴ Those neoliberal stalwarts who assume free markets and increased foreign investments will produce a win-win situation should take note.

The following examines Gaddafi’s domestic and regional pan-African developmentalist policies, and how Libya’s economic engine powered such policies in a powerful mix of resource nationalism and real productive capacity in the oil and gas sector, neoliberal market reform, and financialization directed by nationalist rather than capitalist interests. As in the example of Ali’s neighboring Egypt over a century prior to Operation Unified Protector in 2011, European imperial powers and regional rivals were sufficiently threatened by a successful and industrialized North African power on the Mediterranean to justify intervention against Gaddafi. Once Libya reintegrated into the global neoliberal capitalist world-system at the end of the 1990s, Libya, enabled through its successful resource nationalism, beat the pan-European core powers at their own neoliberal and financialized economic games precisely as their own economies were entering a bubble which exploded in the 2008 financial crisis.⁶⁴⁵ The economic troubles, and the tolls of the occupations in Iraq and Afghanistan, left the United States’ ambition and capability diminished.

⁶⁴⁴ LeVine, *Why They Don’t Hate Us*, 67.

⁶⁴⁵ Pack, *Global Enduring Disorder*, 234, 247. Alternatively, Jason Pack characterizes Libya as “home to world-beating geniuses at corruption schemes,” that through their “enormous resource wealth, have nonetheless proven remarkably successful and performing sophisticated manipulations of the entire global capitalist system.” However, if this interpretation is taken to heart, then the Libyans also simply beat the manipulation of the United States institutions that have deregulated most sectors of the economy to legalize their corruption and manipulation.

Unlike Ali, who “was a dynast, not an Egyptian, and he reputedly despised his subjects,” according to Cleveland, Gaddafi identified with the post-colonial peoples of the Global South, especially the Islamic world and Africa, and poured the wealth back into developmentalist policies across Africa as he gave up armed revolution and terror tactics in a new anti-imperialist political project which would prove more dangerous to the pan-European world.⁶⁴⁶ The experience of Egypt under Anwar Sadat, Nasser’s successor after his death on September 28, 1970, also likely informed Gaddafi’s hardline positions against the economic encroachment of the pan-European world.⁶⁴⁷

Gaddafi’s United States of Africa and Constructive Instability

Gaddafi’s deep nationalist pride was inspired by Gamal Abdel Nasser’s pan-Arabism and his 1952 Free Officers Revolution which liberated Egypt from the clutches of the British. Akin to the hollow independence granted Libya by the UN and the assertion that Gaddafi’s 1969 revolution marked the true start of Libyan independence, Egypt was granted independence from the British in name only in 1922, which even by 1952 they were not willing to truly bestow upon Egypt as their failed attempt to recapture the Suez Canal in the failed joint British, French, and Israeli invasion of 1956 demonstrated.⁶⁴⁸ Nasser’s successor, Anwar Sadat reversed many of Nasser’s policies almost immediately re-established

⁶⁴⁶ Cleveland, Bunton, *A History of the Modern Middle East*, 45.

⁶⁴⁷ Oyeniyi, *The History of Libya*, 139.

⁶⁴⁸ LeVine, *Why They Don’t Hate Us*, 67.

relations with the West in 1973 and pursued an economic and political rapprochement with the United States which “destroyed any possibility of autonomous development or democracy,” as Western corporations flooded Egypt, LeVine notes the Egyptian state henceforth “servicing the economic and military-strategic needs of United States.”⁶⁴⁹

Gaddafi also accused Sadat of orchestrating a 1975 coup attempt against him by former Libyan RCC members Abd al-Munim al-Huni and Omar Muhayashi, who Egypt then harbored and Sadat refused to extradite.⁶⁵⁰ On January 26 of the next year, future Egyptian President, Hosni Mubarak, told the United States ambassador to Egypt that the Egyptian government was continuing to exploit internal divisions in Libya which precipitated a series of back of forth reprisals that escalated into near total war until the Algerian president and Yasser Arafat negotiated peace on July 24, 1977.⁶⁵¹ The Camp David Accords of 1978 normalized relations between Israel and Egypt, which enraged Gaddafi along with much of the Arab world, and solidified Egypt’s position as a semi-periphery of the pan-European world. Oyeniyi then explains that Saddat’s “assassination [on October 6, 1981] was, for many, a just desert for his betrayal of Gamal and the Arab world.”⁶⁵²

⁶⁴⁹ LeVine, *Why They Don’t Hate Us*, 68.

⁶⁵⁰ Oyeniyi, *The History of Libya*, 141.

⁶⁵¹ Oyeniyi, *The History of Libya*, 141.

⁶⁵² Oyeniyi, *The History of Libya*, 140.

Contemporary Egypt, or “America’s Egypt” as LeVine called it in 2005, received more economic aid from the United States than any other country in the world besides Israel and is a major player in “the arms-petrodollar system,” as LeVine calls it.⁶⁵³ He notes that the “weapons-petrodollar coalition” manipulates conflict “to ensure a more or less permanent state of manageable hostilities, from which seemingly endless profits can be siphoned,” in a controlled burn of the Middle East the World Bank referenced slightly more eloquently as a “shake down period to clear out the accumulated structural problems,” and bring the region into the globalized system under the full spectrum dominance of the United States.⁶⁵⁴ Libya escaped both this dependence and the most destructive, but not all aspects of globalization which empowers modern colonial tendencies of the imperialist core powers while it weakens the bonds of indigenous nationalist sentiment and traditional culture as the global neoliberal capitalist world-system either assimilates or destroys societies outside the pan-European world.⁶⁵⁵

Those left on the losing end of the process, especially in the MENA often draw on a “powerful combination of national and religious identities...in the face of an imposed neoliberal globalization that has yet to prove it can bring either democracy or freedom,” and described Iraq in 2004 (as sectarian violence and chaos exploded in 2004 while LeVine was in the country drafting *Why They Don’t*

⁶⁵³ LeVine, *Why They Don’t Hate Us*, 68.

⁶⁵⁴ LeVine, *Why They Don’t Hate Us*, 55, 19.

⁶⁵⁵ LeVine, *Why They Don’t Hate Us*, 55.

Hate Us) and sectors of the Libyan population.⁶⁵⁶ By 2010, Libya was host to some of the highest standards of living and boasted the highest GDP in Africa, however, some Western orientated Libyans and ethnic Arab Libyans who harbored xenophobic anti-black sentiment disagreed with Gaddafi's foreign initiatives across Africa, especially in the less developed eastern Libya, historically a hotbed of discontent.⁶⁵⁷ The most significant strain of opposition throughout Libya took the form of political Islamism, and by the mid-2000s the CIA and journalists noted a significant portion of suicide bombings in Iraq were carried out by Libyans from this eastern region of Libya they dubbed the "Martyr Factory."⁶⁵⁸ Ultimately, all of these forces were operating in reaction to the processes of globalization they felt slighted by under the Gaddafi regime, and formed the base of opposition that NATO enabled the worst sectors of and destroyed Libyan society, unleashing over 1,700 militias instability all across northwest Africa.⁶⁵⁹

From pan-Arab to pan-African. Terrorist to Developmentalist

After multiple failed attempts to form a coalition of Arab states along the lines of Nasser's pan-Arab rhetoric, many of who viewed Gaddafi with suspicion to hostility, and the lack of concern or assistance he felt came from his fellow Arab nations while Libya suffered under the sanctions of the 1990s he turned

⁶⁵⁶ LeVine, *Why They Don't Hate Us*, 55.

⁶⁵⁷ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 27, 63.

⁶⁵⁸ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 216.

⁶⁵⁹ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 235.

away from the Arab world.⁶⁶⁰ Gaddafi even attempted to leave the Arab League after the formation of the African Union in 2002, and only remained after Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak traveled to Libya personally to convince him to stay.⁶⁶¹ South African President Nelson Mandela's support of Gaddafi and negotiations with the West to lift the sanctions placed on Libya demonstrated to Gaddafi that his anti-colonial solidarity and efforts to unify against the pan-European core may be appreciated further by his fellow African nations.

Before Mandela was elected as the President of South Africa in 1994 and became an inspirational figure renowned worldwide, he was known as a terrorist and the African National Congress (ANC) a terrorist organization, which Gaddafi had supported in their armed struggle against the white South African apartheid regime, which imprisoned Mandela for over 20 years.⁶⁶² Mandela was ever grateful and returned the favor by supporting Gaddafi and the people of Libya when it was deeply unpopular to do so. In a thinly veiled critique of then-President Bill Clinton during his visit to South Africa in March 1998, Mandela addressed domestic opposition to his loyalty to Gaddafi that "those South Africans who have berated me, for being loyal to our friends, literally they can go and throw themselves into a pool."⁶⁶³ In Mandela's appreciation for Gaddafi, he reaffirmed his anti-colonial spirit and the legitimacy of armed resistance,

⁶⁶⁰ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 78.

⁶⁶¹ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 79.

⁶⁶² Campbell, *Global NATO*, 50.

⁶⁶³ Forte, *Slouching Towards Sirte*, 142.

On many occasions, you have taken a firm stand against all forms of injustice and oppression, and you have given military support to the South African people in their struggle for freedom and self-determination...Our situation is identical to that of all people who are in struggle. Just as we you are convinced that armed struggle is the only effective way to recover freedom, as can be seen in your commitment to the service of the most elementary of human rights throughout the world and most notably in South Africa.⁶⁶⁴

Mandela's praise for armed struggle as "the only effective way to recover freedom" would be widely condemned and cited as an endorsement of terrorism if Gaddafi, a Palestinian, or anyone outside the pan-European fold made such a statement.⁶⁶⁵ Mandela's celebrity status in the West, (likely a post-hoc attempt to sweep away decades of apartheid and white supremacy globally, which Mandela never allowed the pan-European to forget and in harnessing white guilt likely allowed him to escape the label of terrorist. A label that Gaddafi never successfully escaped despite a concerted effort to do so, and had the West heeded Gaddafi's warnings, Osama Bin Laden would have been imprisoned in 1996.⁶⁶⁶

Western politicians and journalists would often try to criticize Mandela's relationship and praise of Gaddafi, to which the soft-spoken Mandela broke his usual cheerful demeanor and sharply criticized the arrogance of those who had almost universally supported the apartheid government which had imprisoned

⁶⁶⁴ Forte, *Slouching Towards Sirte*, 144, 145.

⁶⁶⁵ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 219. Campbell notes the disparity between how the 10,000 to 50,000 dead Libyans OUP left in its wake are treated in the media and the four Americans who died on September 11, 2012 in Benghazi are treated as if that American lives are roughly 10,000 more valuable.

⁶⁶⁶ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 52.

him. In repudiation to one of the attempts to do so Mandela rejected their condescension as well as the United States' rules-based order, "No country can claim to be the policeman of the world and no state can dictate to another what it should do. Those that yesterday were friends of our enemies have the gall today to tell me not to visit my brother Gaddafi. They are advising us to be ungrateful and forget our friends of the past."⁶⁶⁷ While visiting Libya in 1997, Mandela further condemned the moral bankruptcy of the West, "Those who say I should not be here are without morals. I am not going to join them in their lack of morality," which he promptly reminded them of in their support of apartheid while noting that Gaddafi, "helped us at a time when we were all alone, when those who say we should not come here were helping the enemy."⁶⁶⁸ During this trip to Libya Mandela visited the ruins of the Gaddafi family home which Ronald Reagan, who maintained the United States' relationship with apartheid South Africa against calls for the boycott of the regime, had bombed in 1986.

In 1999, when Gaddafi visited South Africa and the cell in which Mandela was imprisoned in, Mandela returned to his thinly veiled moral condemnation of the United States, noting it was unacceptable that "particular nations or groups of nations may still seek to decide the fate of the planet," and foreshadows the immorality of the so called rules-based order and the belligerency of the United States, "There must be a kernel of morality also to international behavior...the

⁶⁶⁷ Forte, *Slouching Towards Sirte*, 144.

⁶⁶⁸ Forte, *Slouching Towards Sirte*, 146.

amorality of which decrees that might is right can not be the basis on which the world conducts itself in the next century.”⁶⁶⁹ Mandela rejected demands to ostracize Gaddafi and addressed those who called for such as “the enemies of democracy in South Africa” and said their advice “would have betrayed the very values and attitude that allowed us as a nation to have adversaries sitting down and negotiating in a spirit of compromise. It would have been denying that the South African experience could be a model and example for international behavior.”⁶⁷⁰

Mandela’s 1999 commentary on South Africa potential role as a moral counter to the inhumanity and moral bankruptcy of the United States as an example of international behavior was realized in 2024 when South Africa formally charged Israel for genocide before the International Court of Justice (ICJ) while the United States armed it. The following chapter will examine South Africa’s charge of genocide and the international communities’ shameful response but suffice it to say here that there is not a kernel of morality to be found, and Mandela’s commentary on the legitimacy of armed resistance would be compared to *Mein Kampf*.

As noted, it is the bond formed with Mandela which ultimately brought Gaddafi wholly into the pan-African fold and likely influenced Gaddafi’s later embrace of the West. However, Mandela’s career seems to be the one case in

⁶⁶⁹ Forte, *Slouching Towards Sirte*, 147.

⁶⁷⁰ Forte, *Slouching Towards Sirte*, 147.

which acts that could be considered terrorism as an act of resistance against oppressors was viewed by the Western world as legitimate, who have monopolized the term in abusive ways. As such, groups who nine years earlier struck a devastating blow to the United States they would supposedly never forget in 2001, become rebels in Libya in 2011 as the shock troops of NATO's bombing campaign which Campbell notes, "In any other war...would have been termed terrorism."⁶⁷¹ That is, any other war in which the bombing is carried out by an actor outside the pan-European envelope, for who any barbarity is protected by the so called rules-based international order.⁶⁷²

In Gaddafi's 42 year rule over Libya he was cast as the number one sponsor of terrorism by the Reagan Administration, opposed the AQ-linked LIFG and Wahhabist ideology as the West instrumentalized both, and was eventually embraced as partner in Global War on Terror by the W. Bush Administration, only to be killed in short order in a cooperative effort between both the pan-European world and the LIFG in 2011. If Gaddafi previously acted as a mastermind of global terrorism as some claim, the Global War on Terror has certainly killed more civilians and spawned more terrorism than Gaddafi did in half the time.⁶⁷³

⁶⁷¹ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 130.

⁶⁷² Klein, *The Shock Doctrine*, 3. The official doctrine of Shock and Awe is near indistinguishable from most definitions of terrorism as it designed to "create fears, danger, an destruction [terrorize] that are incomprehensible to the people at large [civilians]."

⁶⁷³ Ben Norton, "US post-9/11 wars caused 4.5 million deaths, displaced 38-60 million people, study shows," *geopolitical economy report*, May 18, 2023, <https://geopoliticeconomy.com/2023/05/18/us-911-wars-million-deaths-displace/>

By the turn of the millennium, Gaddafi cultivated a new image and non-violent tactic in his anti-imperialist struggle which proved to be far more threatening to the pan-European world than terrorism as he funded developmental projects across Africa to curry political legitimacy and sovereign capabilities.

As Joseph Nye noted of his three hour meeting with Gaddafi in 2007, the Libyan leader “seems to have become interested in soft power—the art of projecting influence through attraction rather than coercion,” a strategy he embraced following Mandela’s assistance in lifting the sanctions placed on Libya in 1999 by agreeing to render those suspected of the PanAm 103 Lockerbie bombing and paid victims families, though done so in a manner which Libya admitted no blame and took no responsibility.⁶⁷⁴ Though it was often claimed in Western media that Libya had admitted responsibility, one Libyan official later explained in 2004 that they had “bought peace.”⁶⁷⁵ This non-admission was widely reported as the opposite and commonly misunderstood as an admission of guilt which solidified Libya's supposed link to terrorism at the same time Gaddafi sought to cooperate with the Western governments against jihadist terrorism. This phenomenon epitomizes the murky authenticity of Gaddafi’s previous image as a terrorist mastermind popularized by Reagan, which *BBC*

⁶⁷⁴ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 59; Forte, 146.

⁶⁷⁵ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 51.

documentary filmmaker Adam Curtis supposes was embraced and intentionally played up by Gaddafi to bolster his anti-imperialist image.⁶⁷⁶

By 1999 and the lifting of most sanctions, Gaddafi also began to liberalize the Libyan economy and welcomed pan-European corporate interests and “the associated intellectual networks of U.S. capitalism” into Libya, going “overboard to please” the United States and UK in particular by welcoming a “neoliberal assault on Libya,” as Campbell describes it.⁶⁷⁷ Saif al-Islam, who earned a doctorate at the London School of Economics led a group of mostly Western-educated Libyans, colloquially referred to as the reformers, who applied neoliberal doctrine in an attempt to attract foreign investment and cultivate a stock market.⁶⁷⁸ In 2003 Libya entered into agreements with the IMF, sought advice from the consultancy firm McKinsey and Company, and in 2004 awarded the best 11 of 15 newly opened oil exploration and production agreements to United States corporations while UK prime minister Tony Blair became the first Western leader to visit the country.⁶⁷⁹ Libya also orchestrated a public relations campaign through the Harvard Business School associated consultancy firm, The Monitor Group, which enabled the 2007 meeting with Nye, along with other prominent Western intellectuals who were selected based on their supposed

⁶⁷⁶ Adam Curtis, “HyperNormalisation by Adam Curtis HD Full [2016] [Subs],” YouTube video, February 10, 2017, 51:30-53:00, https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=adam+curtis+hypernormalisation.

⁶⁷⁷ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 55-62.

⁶⁷⁸ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 25.

⁶⁷⁹ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 56, 60.

ability to influence the development of United States' foreign policy in a two year contract worth at least \$3 million.⁶⁸⁰

In 2007 British Petroleum (BP) secured the largest deal inked by the Libyan Investment Corporation, with a concession of 54,000 square kilometers on which BP could drill up to twenty wells, but one stipulation demonstrated Gaddafi's developmentalist eye remained while the reformers inundated the Libyan bureaucracy.⁶⁸¹ As part of the contract BP would spend \$50 million on educating and training Libyan professionals at all levels of production in partnership with Libya's National Oil Corporation, which could enable a speedy nationalization process, a possibility Gaddafi would later invoke in 2009.⁶⁸² By the late 2000s when Gaddafi began to welcome more non-Western corporations and renegotiated Western contracts, despite the fact they remained beneficial the United States and UK foreign policy elite took note as their corporations were now exposed when Gaddafi's tendencies bubbled to the surface and Libya's foreign policy remained independent, as according to Campbell "wanted to have a dominant say in the future of the Libyan economy."⁶⁸³

When Libya was supposedly a hotbed of terrorism in the 1970s and 1980s, or sanctioned and forgotten for most of the 1990s, unintegrated into the world-system in any meaningful way Gaddafi's beliefs and anti-imperialist rhetoric

⁶⁸⁰ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 57.

⁶⁸¹ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 56.

⁶⁸² Campbell, *Global NATO*, 56, 62.

⁶⁸³ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 54.

was largely irrelevant to the industrialized core, as were the Libyan people and the status of their human rights. The people were still not a priority of the Western and Libyan neoliberal capitalists and economic reformers in the new millennium. Instead of promoting human rights or liberal democracy, as Samir Amin notes, “as is commonplace, it [neoliberalism] worsened living conditions for the majority of Libyans. The oil rent which was widely redistributed became the target of a small groups of the privileged,” which increased inequality and alienated many, especially in the east and remote hinterlands that received less investment than the larger cities or foreign African nations.⁶⁸⁴ In this environment, political Islamists rallied support amongst the disaffected and propagated racist anti-black sentiment, which exploded into the only legitimately genocidal outbreaks of violence once NATO enabled them to wipe entire villages and towns off the map after hunting down anyone with black skin which was furthered by NATO amplifying the propaganda that falsely smeared as mercenaries hired by Gaddafi.⁶⁸⁵ Something which American diplomats must have at least considered and known would be likely, if not intentional as riots in 2000 described as anti-black pogroms by *The Economist* broke out in multiple cities, including Benghazi, and in 2009 identified ethnic-Arabs Libyan discontent as oil prices and thus revenue diminished while significant spending on African initiatives continued.⁶⁸⁶ As Maximilian Forte explains anti-black racism amongst the Arab

⁶⁸⁴ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 61.

⁶⁸⁵ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 61.

⁶⁸⁶ Forte, *Slouching Towards Sirte*, 170, 173.

Libyan population was well known and any of their supposed experts or specialists that littered Western media in 2011 to characterize the uprisings in a positive light who “knew Libya well should have predicted it.”⁶⁸⁷

The anti-black sentiment in Libya was exacerbated by the European Union which (like the United States) retained some sanctions and arms embargoes into the early 2000s they had leveled independent from the UN that they lifted on October 11, 2004, the same day it was announced that the EU entered into an agreement with Libya to combat illegal immigration.⁶⁸⁸ While Libya spent up to \$4 billion annually in aid and development in refugee and migrant host countries, an attempt which Human Rights Watch described as “tackling the root causes of forced displacement and economic migration,” European politicians only cared that migrants did not reach their shores and offered little to no assistance in doing so, as they would often not assist (deliberately ignore) drowning refugees in the Mediterranean.⁶⁸⁹ Only in 2010, after the regime shut down the UN High Commission for Refugees office in Tripoli and Gaddafi employed the European’s racist anti-immigrant rhetoric to “preserve Europe” as a white civilized society, did the European’s provide any assistance as politicians and media concurred with Gaddafi’s racist statements, which the BBC noted just eight months before OUP was launched on the basis of humanitarianism was far removed from the moral

⁶⁸⁷ Forte, *Slouching Towards Sirte*, 175.

⁶⁸⁸ Forte, *Slouching Towards Sirte*, 177.

⁶⁸⁹ Forte, *Slouching Towards Sirte*, 178.

consternation about Libya's "failure to adopt Western-styled democracy and human rights values."⁶⁹⁰

By the end of 2010 while Western financialized economies suffered in the wake of the 2008 crisis, Libya had successfully integrated into the neoliberal capitalist world-system's economy, perhaps too successfully, and contrary to the promises of neoliberal doctrine Libya was no liberal democracy nor destined to become one. So in early 2011 when protests rapidly collapsed the Tunisian and Egyptian governments the old imperialist powers were already watching Libya for their chance to jump when protests in Benghazi broke out on February 15, 2011. As a leaked communication revealed, by July 2008 the United States had been cultivating insider sources that may flip on Gaddafi, unaware (as Clinton's communications leaked later imply) the French "philosopher" Bernard Henri Levy was in contact with the opposition in Benghazi and French military plans for intervention in Libya already existed before the uprisings began.⁶⁹¹ On the other hand, while not specifically referencing Libya, AFRICOM's official mission statement to "be prepared, as part of a whole government approach, to help protect Africans from mass atrocities" suggests that the rationale employed by NATO in OUP was predetermined.⁶⁹²

⁶⁹⁰ Forte, *Slouching Towards Sirte*, 180.

⁶⁹¹ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 73.

⁶⁹² Forte, *Slouching Towards Sirte*, 197.

Neoliberalism and Libya: An Unlikely Road

Through the real productive capacity of the Libyan oil sector and the regime's economy, which was designed to retain such capacity in the face of international sanctions and lacked most if any of the financialization that typified Western markets by 2000, Libya was able to escape the worst of the detrimental outcomes typical of neoliberal market reform stipulated by the IMF. And as an international pariah through the late 1980s and 1990s, Libya was not offered massive loans by Western financial institutions and emerged without significant debt or interest payments. Both of which enabled Gaddafi to spend massively on developmentalist institutions across Africa and invest into international financial markets. On August 28, 2006, the Libyan Investment Authority (LIA) was established by the neoliberal reformers led by Saif al-Islam to manage investment funds derived from oil revenue and diversify Libyan holdings on the international finance market.⁶⁹³ Initially seeking minor positions in Italian companies, Libya quickly moved from dipping their feet to diving off the financial deep end.⁶⁹⁴ By June 30, 2010, according to British NGO Global Witness, the LIA was responsible for \$53 billion of diverse investments, and as just one of the regime's vehicles for investment some estimates placed Libya's total foreign investment at \$200 billion.⁶⁹⁵ The masses of Libyan wealth accrued allowed the Libyan government the financial leverage Western countries often used to

⁶⁹³ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 109.

⁶⁹⁴ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 110.

⁶⁹⁵ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 110.

strongarm industrial or agricultural economies, and the flexibility to burn cash on soured investments to little consequence.⁶⁹⁶

Figures such as these have been used by some to suggest that Gaddafi was ultimately but another neoliberal stooge and traitor to his professed beliefs. Maximilian Forte notes that this was not the case of Libya being “in bed” with the West, but rather “Libya was buying the West’s bed—not all of it, of course, but a large piece at precisely the same time that Western economies began to sink. The real threat of Libya led by Gaddafi, free of sanctions, and buying up parts of major Western corporations, was that Gaddafi was not being subordinated to Western hegemony, rather, he was buying it.”⁶⁹⁷ As Campbell notes of the ironic series of events that found the nation which “In the 1970s,” considered itself in direct opposition to Western capitalism as “Libya had been at the front of the nationalization of Western petroleum interests,” to the horror of the industrial capitalists of that era, by the end of the 2010s “in the era of neoliberalism, Libya wanted to enter the game of energy trading,” encouraged by the Western educated Saif al-Islam Gaddafi, and with relatively little experience “was swallowed by it.”⁶⁹⁸

It was not a squandering of their riches in risky investments that turned bad which swallowed Gaddafi and Libya’s social order with it, but rather quite the opposite. Libya ended up beating the neoliberal capitalist core powers at their

⁶⁹⁶ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 107.

⁶⁹⁷ Forte, *Slouching Towards Sirte*, 157.

⁶⁹⁸ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 109.

own game of financialization wherein Gaddafi was “buying and ensuring access, making it more difficult to sideline Libya’s corporations,” during a period of economic decline the 2008 financial crisis inaugurated.⁶⁹⁹

Despite Saif al-Islam and the other reformers Western educations on the supposed fundamentals of the neoliberal market, the Gaddafi regime had no experience with, and a rudimentary conception of the cavernous depths of the corruption and deregulation the “Reagan revolution” enabled, or the vast array of economic levers, loopholes, and tricks “conjured up by financial wizards” that Campbell says transformed the United States “from a military-industrial complex to a financial-military complex.”⁷⁰⁰ According to Charles Ferguson, author of *Predator Nation: Corporate Criminals, Political Corruption and the Hijacking of America*, “With each step in the process of deregulation and consolidation, American finance gradually became a quasi-criminal industry, whose behavior eventually produced a gigantic global Ponzi scheme - the financial bubble that caused the crisis of 2008.”⁷⁰¹

In a series of July 2008 Congressional hearings that revealed to the public the extent to which oil companies, banded together under the Intercontinental Exchange in a conspiracy to weaken the Commodity Futures Trading Commission (an independent regulatory agency created by Congress in 1974 in

⁶⁹⁹ Forte, *Slouching Towards Sirte*, 157.

⁷⁰⁰ The finance and insurance industries in the United States grew from 3.8 percent of GDP in 1960 to 8.4 percent in 2010. Campbell, *Global NATO*, 106, 108.

⁷⁰¹ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 111.

the wake of an OPEC embargo in 1973), Professor Michael Greenberger revealed the existence of further financial trickery designed to offset the banks' gargantuan losses as one hair-brained scheme enabled by deregulation and market speculation, the subprime mortgage crisis, exploded in their face.⁷⁰² Greenberger detailed the existence of unregulated “dark markets” in London and Dubai that trade on oil futures in a price manipulation scheme Senator Carl Levin called “an orgy of speculators, a carnival of greed.”⁷⁰³

Due to the trust of the Libyan reformers in their Western higher education, which ultimately only trained them to listen to the authoritative voices of their economists and think tanks who continued to extoll the virtues of the market in the face of economic implosion, the LIA invested \$1.3 billion to Goldman Sachs in an investment basket of various currencies and stocks in early 2008.⁷⁰⁴ In two years the value of these investments dropped 98 percent to a total to about \$25 million, which in 2009 the Gaddafi regime was approached by Goldman Sachs for an immediate Libyan investment of \$3.7 billion in exchange for \$5 billion in shares of Goldman Sachs with up to a 9.25 percent annual interest rate over 40 years to make up for Libya's losses and pump Goldman Sachs with much-needed capital, but the regime wanted a quicker payout over a ten year period, and the negotiations stalled.⁷⁰⁵ That a premier Western financial

⁷⁰² Campbell, *Global NATO*, 108.

⁷⁰³ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 109.

⁷⁰⁴ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 112.

⁷⁰⁵ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 112.

institution, Goldman Sachs, came to Libya with hands extended for a cash injection from a country and economy pan-European scholars like Dirk Vandewalle considered a failed experiment in “statelessness” one wonders what kind of system was coming begging.⁷⁰⁶

While the Libyans began their foray with timid investments in the Italian economy they felt most knowledgeable of, by the end of 2010 the Libyans were skeptical of the American and European markets but flush with capital to invest while the pan-European world was weakened by the 2008 financial crisis, and the Gaddafi regime took a bold move “for the jugular” of the Intercontinental Exchange and into the “dark markets” of energy finance of which Greenberger spoke.⁷⁰⁷ In December 2010, two and a half months prior to the uprisings in Benghazi, Libya became the controlling shareholder in the Arab Banking Corporation, which the IMF described as the largest of a “vibrant” banking sector in the Gulf Cooperation Council which “services the rest of the region,” and was a major node in the weapons-petrodollar system.⁷⁰⁸ As such, any of the Gaddafi regime’s unexpected moves posed a threat to “the web of speculators in the derivatives industry that depended on the recycling of petrodollars” and the Arab Gulf states’ financial domination, of who Bahrain, Qatar, Kuwait, and the United

⁷⁰⁶ Pack, *Global Enduring Disorder*, 212-214. Pack calls Vandewalle’s approach the neoliberal “statelessness myth” which, among other misconceptions, “only serve to perpetuate the status quo,” and identifies Vandewalle by name, as well as his older writings, for propagating this view.

⁷⁰⁷ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 113.

⁷⁰⁸ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 77.

Arab Emirates aligned with NATO via the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative in 2004.⁷⁰⁹ Qatar, which supported many of the Islamist organizations in the MENA, in 2009 had been unsuccessful in an attempt to bring Libya into this fold, and aligned with Saudi Arabia who Gaddafi accused (and thus Qatar on the same basis) of having a “pact with the American devil.”⁷¹⁰ Two days after the uprisings began, on February 17, 2011, prior to any consternation presented before the United Nations, Libyan assets in the United States and British financial sphere were frozen.⁷¹¹

That Saudi Arabia and Qatar then played key functionary roles in Gaddafi’s removal just months after the Arab Banking Corporation fell into Libyan ownership was unsurprising, and given their unsavory track record on human rights, their support for NATO’s supposedly humanitarian mission was clearly not out of an abundance of concern for citizens. Bahrain was busy abusing their own citizens’ protests with militarized police forces while Qatar went to work to lobby the Arab League in support of a no-fly-zone, and along with Saudi Arabia, began to launder the fabricated propaganda that Western outlets then reported and politicians cited before the United Nations Security Council and the public. Notably, Secretary of Defense Gates and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Admiral Mike Mullen, noted the Pentagon had “no confirmation [of]

⁷⁰⁹ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 78.

⁷¹⁰ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 78.

⁷¹¹ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 113.

whatsoever.”⁷¹² Qatar then violated the USCR prohibition on weapons transfers into Libya, which it presumably provided to the Islamist militias along with funding, and its own special forces who fought with and trained the rebel forces.

Libya’s run-in with neoliberal economics and Western finance shattered the nation in both familiar and unique ways. To the outrage of those who set up the international financial markets and defined the rules, the Libyan Investment Authority, run by what the *Wall Street Journal* called a “cadre of inexperienced employees,” made major gains without the insider knowledge and trickery of Western “financial wizards” as the American’s imaginary speculative economy imploded.⁷¹³ However, as the neoliberal reformers grip over Libyan oil revenue ripped money out the hands of Libyans it was previously redistributed to, the regime ended up alienating everyday Libyans who, possibly unwittingly, joined forces with the violent Islamist opposition that NATO empowered. Ironically Gaddafi’s reintegration into the global capitalist world-system and renovation of his image was motivated out of fear to save his life.⁷¹⁴ In 1996 the AQ-linked LIFG, which one year previously had launched a jihad against Gaddafi, failed to assassinate him, and with the August 7, 1998, AQ bombings of the United States’ embassies in Tanzania and Kenya, the jihadists were seemingly at large

⁷¹² Campbell, *Global NATO*, 67.

⁷¹³ Margaret Coker, Liz Rappaport, “Libya’s Goldman Dalliance Ends in Losses, Acrimony,” *The Wall Street Journal*, May 31, 2011, <https://www.wsj.com/articles/SB10001424052702304066504576347190532098376>.

⁷¹⁴ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 52.

in Africa and the Western powers their natural enemy. As such, Gaddafi sought to make amends with the West, renouncing Libya's nuclear ambitions and joining with the W. Bush Administration as an eager ally in the War on Terror by 2003 (Vandewalle suggests "Libyan cooperation with the United States in the global war on terrorism predated 9/11," but offers no further explanation).⁷¹⁵ What Gaddafi likely did not know however, was that Donald Rumsfeld and Paul Wolfowitz had already drawn up plans against Libya in 2001, and that the British had both coordinated the 1996 assassination attempt and disrupted his attempt to bring Bin Laden to justice.⁷¹⁶

However, prior to joining George W. Bush's "coalition of the willing" and opening Libya up to American oil companies in 2003 and 2004, Gaddafi brought the African Union, planned since 1999, into existence in 2002.⁷¹⁷ The AU provided a new vehicle for Gaddafi to then pour the wealth that Libya reaped into developmentalist projects while courting the Western powers and entertaining their business elite for the time being. Perhaps because of the distaste it brought Gaddafi, he planned for the African Union to assert regional sovereignty he hoped would then allow African states to form trade deals with the Western powers as equals. For, as he would later announce to the African Union,

⁷¹⁵ Vandewalle, *A History of Modern Libya*, 202.

⁷¹⁶ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 52.

⁷¹⁷ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 53.

they are the ones who need Africa—they need its wealth. Fifty per cent of the world's gold reserves are in Africa, a quarter of the world's uranium resources are in Africa, and 95% of the world's diamonds are in Africa. A third of chrome is also in Africa, as is cobalt. Sixty-five per cent of the world's production of cocoa is in Africa. Africa has 25,000 km of rivers. Africa is rich in unexploited natural resources, but we were [and still are] forced to sell these resources cheaply to get hard currency. And this must stop.⁷¹⁸

By 2002 the United States already proved Gaddafi correct and were scheming in an effort to bring African resources under their liege, and the political influence that a presence in Africa would shore up against China.

Gaddafi intended for the African Union to rapidly develop institutions and organs which would promote African sovereignty, invoking the former President of Ghana and influential pan-Africanist and theorist of neocolonialism, Kwame Nkrumah, “Had we heeded Nkrumah’s advice in 1963,” Gaddafi said, then “Africa would now be like the United States of America or at least close to it.”⁷¹⁹

However, Gaddafi likely misunderstood just how threatening the notion of dealing with Africa as equals came to the pan-European powers, threatening their long-held Orientalist views, but especially to the United States as the global hegemon to who any potential equal was a rival which must be cut down at the first sign in accordance with the Wolfowitz Doctrine.

⁷¹⁸ Forte, *Slouching Towards Sirte*, 150.

⁷¹⁹ Bevins, *The Jakarta Method*, 169-170; Forte, *Slouching Towards Sirte*, 148. Bevins briefly details Nkrumah’s disposal in a 1966 joint United States and UK backed coup.

Muammar “Son of Africa” Gaddafi “King of Kings” and Brother Leader of the United States of Africa in the Globalized World-System

Libya’s success in both neoliberal financial markets and the real productive oil sectors enabled Gaddafi to spend wildly to solidify the pan-African ideals he expressed with meaningful investment and development inside Africa through bilateral trade or international humanitarian and developmentalist projects funded through the African Union or the Community of Sahel-Saharan States (CEN-SAD).⁷²⁰ The United States imagined the role of an expanded African command, or AFRICOM, to secure their role in Africa by 2002 as detailed by a report issued by the African Oil Policy Initiative Group, which noted the capture of vital resources such as oil, minerals, and precious metals, but profit motive was ancillary to the geopolitical influence the United States did not need to gain (as the undisputed unipolar superpower in 2002) but their failure to do so would be beneficial to, as the group noted in 2002, both China and Libya.⁷²¹ Preventing both China and Libya’s influence from rising, which conversely would damage the hegemonic power of the United States in the global neoliberal capitalist world-system.

⁷²⁰ Forte, *Slouching Towards Sirte*, 171.

⁷²¹ Prior to this scheme in 1994 Algeria, Egypt, Morocco, and Tunisia joined a corollary to NATO called the Mediterranean Dialogue, in the later 1990s Nelson Mandela was among the first to oppose a United States proposed African Crisis Response initiative, and in 2004 the United States announced a supposed humanitarian relief operation called the African Contingency Operations Training and Assistance program, and in 2007 officially launched AFRICOM. Campbell, *Global NATO*, 40, 41; Forte, *Slouching Towards Sirte*, 191.

This logic ultimately informed the United States' embrace of heavy-constructive instability in Libya as the American foreign policy elites' primary concern, as it was stated in the aforementioned 2002 report, was to prevent potential rivals from damaging the hegemonic position of the United States.⁷²² The logic of which was laid out by the Strategic Space Command, an organization designed to secure outer space in the pursuit of full spectrum dominance, in a 2000 report called *Vision for 2020* that, suggested as globalization continued it would produce a "zero-sum game of winners and losers" in which the United States much be prepared to do what it must to win.⁷²³ Functionally this *Vision for 2020* represented an interplanetary Wolfowitz Doctrine, aka the 1992 Defense Planning Guidance, which Paul Wolfowitz drafted with the same ethos of which institutions such as the World Bank and the IMF announced that "US-led globalization was going to necessitate and generate violence throughout the third world and in the Middle East," as was an article he titled "Managing Chaos."⁷²⁴ In the era of unipolar dominance of the 1990s the United States managed chaos in the MENA region in service of, what the World Bank called a "shake down period to clear out accumulated structural problems" to incorporate the peripheries into the United States led world-system and neoliberal capitalism definitively.⁷²⁵

⁷²² Pack, *Enduring Global Disorder*, 25.

⁷²³ LeVine, *Why They Don't Hate Us*, 295.

⁷²⁴ LeVine, *Why They Don't Hate Us*, 294.

⁷²⁵ LeVine, *Why They Don't Hate Us*, 55.

As the United States slipped from the era of unipolar dominance (initiated by the 2003 invasion of Iraq) managing chaos took on a new form as the retention of unipolar hegemony became the dominant concern.⁷²⁶ Directed by the logic of the zero-sum game of winner or losers, as was the African Oil Policy Initiative Group's 2002, the "shake down" of Gaddafi's Libya in 2011 prioritized shutting out competitors like China, and shutting down Libya's hegemonic capabilities. Libyan resource sovereignty and successes in financial markets were now explicitly being leveraged in an effort to free not just itself, but a large swath of African nations out from under the pan-European core, which did not have the ambition or capability to attempt to secure Libya definitively, and the United States lacked existing interests in Libya to incentivize the United States to do so as it did with Iraq and Afghanistan, both invasions and occupations planned during the zenith of its unipolar power.⁷²⁷

As such, this study disagrees with Horace Campbell's *Global NATO and the Catastrophic Failure in Libya* (2013) and Maximilian Forte's *Slouching Towards Sirte* (2012) assertions that securing financial interests for American corporations, primarily in the oil sector, was a primary motivation of the United States in its war on Libya. Such a description aligns with the motivations of the French, British, and Italian governments, and the interests of the American

⁷²⁶ Pack, *Enduring Global Disorder*, 13.

⁷²⁷ Pack, *Enduring Global Disorder*, 24-25. Richard Haass has maintained "Libya's lack of direct importance for American geostrategic interests," while Pack notes that failure to counter Gaddafi's threats "would have damaged Western influence" throughout the MENA region.

business elite likely played some influential factor, but the actions of the United States national security and foreign policy elite in post-Gaddafi Libya did not align such business interests as they continued to cultivate the jihadist element inside Libya to wage war against Syria.⁷²⁸ Both Paul Craig Roberts and F. William Engdahl speculated that this anti-Chinese objective was the United States' underlying goal in going to war in Libya by referencing statements from United States think tanks, military consultants, and politicians explicitly stating that AFRICOM must be expanded to contain China.⁷²⁹ Engdahl noted that the war was ultimately about the control of oil, not for America's sake however, but to control "China's free access to long term oil imports from Africa and from the Middle East."⁷³⁰

The African Union versus AFRICOM

The African Union was precipitated by the success of another supranational institution that Gaddafi was instrumental in funding and forming on February 4, 1998 in Tripoli, where CEN-SAD was also based.⁷³¹ CEN-SAD successfully pioneered many of the African Union's later initiatives and opposition to foreign influence in Africa, and by 2005 included over twice as many countries as the AU at twenty-three members, was granted observer status in the UN General Assembly, through which Libya \$9.3 million for the United

⁷²⁸ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 216.

⁷²⁹ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 188.

⁷³⁰ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 189.

⁷³¹ Forte, *Slouching Towards Sirte*, 171.

Nations' Food and Agricultural Organization to assist member nations, amongst other humanitarian projects.⁷³² Noted by Gaddafi as the "pyramidal base" of the African Union, CEN-SAD's success belied all of the later consternation by the pan-European powers about Gaddafi and his policies' unpopularity in the African Union, and, according to Forte, all mention of CEN-SAD disappeared in diplomatic communications by the time of Gaddafi's death.⁷³³

Between 1999 and 2005 Gaddafi announced the institutions he wished to develop and initiatives to pursue included: an African Central Bank, the African Monetary Fund, the Africa Investment Bank, the African Court of Justice, an African peacekeeping force under an African Peace and Security Council and defense minister, an "integrated economy and a unified monetary zone," a single African currency, African passports, and the cancelation of African debt, amongst other piecemeal developmental or humanitarian initiatives.⁷³⁴ African heads of states' initial hesitancy to relinquish their own sovereignty was calmed by Gaddafi's reasoning that without greater cooperation African countries already existed in a constant state of diminished sovereignty at the hands of the

⁷³² Forte, *Slouching Towards Sirte*, 171.

⁷³³ Forte, *Slouching Towards Sirte*, 172.

⁷³⁴ Forte, *Slouching Towards Sirte*, 148-151. Sidney Blumenthal, email message to Hillary Clinton, "H: France's client & Q's gold. Sid." Blumenthal wrote to Hillary Clinton on April 2, 2011, noting that the "Qaddafi's government holds 143 tons of gold and a similar amount in silver... accumulated prior to the current rebellion and was intended to be used to establish a pan-African currency based on the Libyan golden Dinar. This plan was designed to provide the Francophone African Countries with an alternative to the French franc (CFA)."

imperialist powers.⁷³⁵ Having spent much of his life in the pursuit of Libyan sovereignty, Gaddafi's argument was convincing,

We do not accept diminished sovereignty and interference in our internal affairs from others, not even for the sake of the unity of Africa. But our national sovereignty is violated and threatened by the lack of African unity. That is why we agree to compromise our sovereignty to foreign powers and we accept this as a matter of fact. But when we talk about compromising any part of our collective sovereignty for the sake of the African Union, we say 'no, we will not compromise our sovereignty'. So, we have sovereignty without unity.⁷³⁶

Bolstering his argument by again invoking Nkrumah, while unfortunately outlining what would come to be his fate, "Nkrumah says there is no chance for an independent African country today to follow an independent path of economic development. Those of us who have tried to do that were destroyed and forced to return to the framework of the old colonial rule."⁷³⁷

However, Gaddafi did not know that in 2008, as he warned the Arab League of the United States' duplicity in Damascus (the opening quote provided in the front of this study), Hillary Clinton's eyes had already locked onto Gaddafi and filled with disgust at the African Union's attempt to assert sovereignty from the ICC, and sent out the notice to diplomatic circles to relay all the information they could gather on the African Union to explain how such a decision was reached citing the opposition of member states which just happened to be aligned with the United States, Ghana and Botswana, with particular interest for

⁷³⁵ Forte, *Slouching Towards Sirte*, 149.

⁷³⁶ Forte, *Slouching Towards Sirte*, 149.

⁷³⁷ Forte, *Slouching Towards Sirte*, 150.

other signs of dissent from Gaddafi's leadership.⁷³⁸ Although, Clinton did not need to tell the United States' diplomats to pay attention demonstrated by the frequency and detail they noted in their cables back to Washington, they observed carefully and prepared to catch any moment that could be painted as a sign of failure, which was where the analysts creative writing flourished in a variety of contradictory ways.⁷³⁹ The American diplomats often invoked caricatures of Gaddafi and wrote in animated emotive language that displayed their distaste for Gaddafi and Africans at large.⁷⁴⁰

Perhaps the focus on the African Union was especially pronounced because in January 2009, Gaddafi's position as chairman of the AU was unanimously supported by all present in CEN-SAD, which was then discounted as a potential avenue the United States could use to sow dissent and was henceforth described as a "Libyan organization," a tactic which NATO allies would later use on multiple occasions to discredit the African Union's attempts to negotiate peace in 2011.⁷⁴¹ In 2010 AFRICOM's stated objectives to provide operations concerning food security, healthcare, disease, disaster relief, aid for women and children, and election supervision among other areas of "governance", which Forte notes is no coincidence that it mirrors the African

⁷³⁸ Forte, *Slouching Towards Sirte*, 148.

⁷³⁹ Forte, *Slouching Towards Sirte*, 63.

⁷⁴⁰ Forte, *Slouching Towards Sirte*, 172.

⁷⁴¹ Forte, *Slouching Towards Sirte*, 172. Forte notes that these demeaning communications were "strikingly different from the few statements written by those diplomats on Libya's so-called 'human rights record,' which hardly occasioned any semblance of emotion or personal investment."

Union and CEN-SAD's goals while committing significantly less money to do so.⁷⁴²

Rather than any threat to genuine national security, or American business interests, that Libya, CEN-SAD, or the African Union may have presented Forte aptly explains the United States' interests were based in the defense of its own global hegemonic position, which Clinton felt she needed "to remain watchful regarding the chances of an alternative power bloc forming that could provide even friction or any impediment that would raise the costs of U.S. penetration of the continent. Nor could the U.S., France, and the UK afford to see allies that they had cultivated, if not installed in power, being slowly pulled from their orbits by Libya, China, and other powers."⁷⁴³ The costs of penetration is not a reference to the costs incurred by private businesses, but the ability to expand AFRICOM's military presence in the region and counter Chinese influence, which was first suggested in 2002 and was later incorporated into Obama's pivot to Asia.⁷⁴⁴ When CEN-SAD rejected AFRICOM headquarters in Africa in 2007 it was personalized into a policy solely directed by Gaddafi despite concurring statements by the South African Minister of Defense.⁷⁴⁵

In 2002 a group comprised of members of the House Africa Subcommittee, diplomats, Col. Karen Kwiatkowski of the Air Force (with ties to

⁷⁴² Forte, *Slouching Towards Sirte*, 194-195.

⁷⁴³ Forte, *Slouching Towards Sirte*, 167.

⁷⁴⁴ Forte, *Slouching Towards Sirte*, 172.

⁷⁴⁵ Forte, *Slouching Towards Sirte*, 171.

the Department of Defense's Africa Policy unit), and representatives of private energy corporate interests formed the African Oil Policy Initiative Group concluded that the United States was "on the verge of an historic, strategic alignment with West Africa" in part of a "reevaluation" of Americas "global alliance system" due to a projected figure of over 2.5 million barrels of African oil entering the American market every day by 2015.⁷⁴⁶ They claim that "vigorous focus on U.S.-military cooperation" in the form of a "sub-unified command structure" could produce "significant dividends in the protection of U.S. investments," which only highlights profit as beneficial corollary to emphasized strategic interests.⁷⁴⁷ Their conclusions highlight the United States' primary concern as strategic, which is conveyed in relation to the United States potential "Failure to address the issue of focusing and maximizing U.S. diplomatic and military command organization," demonstrating the zero-sum logic of American foreign policy planning on a global stage and invoke the United States' unipolar hegemonic status.⁷⁴⁸ This failure would, according to this group, "be perceived by many in Africa as a device of cultivated neglect by the world's only superpower, and could therefore act as an inadvertent incentive for U.S. rivals such as China, adversaries such as Libya, and terrorist organizations like Al-Qaeda to secure political, diplomatic, and economic presence in parts of Africa."⁷⁴⁹ The characterization of the United

⁷⁴⁶ Forte, *Slouching Towards Sirte*, 191.

⁷⁴⁷ Forte, *Slouching Towards Sirte*, 191.

⁷⁴⁸ Forte, *Slouching Towards Sirte*, 192.

⁷⁴⁹ Forte, *Slouching Towards Sirte*, 192. It is also noteworthy that, as this document states clearly, by 2002 the United States conceived of China as a rival.

States' potential failure as a "device of cultivated neglect" (as if Africans are begging for American imperialism), and the invocation of AQ are both humorous inversions of the reality in which Chinese development was soon to be widely welcomed across Africa (though critiques still existed) and elements of AQ were American allies in the 2011 campaign against Libya and Syria which culminated in the inability to secure oil for themselves or allies, and harmed the United States' political and diplomatic position in Africa.

The United States continued to try to present its globalized military presence as an altruistic force and its imperialist designs under the rhetorical smoke and mirrors that worked so well to launch OUP. In 2012, as part of an eleven-day campaign across post-Gaddafi Africa, Hillary Clinton attempted to shore up the United States humanitarian facade and claimed that only the United States was interested in human rights while others left unspoken, clearly China, are only interested in resource extraction.⁷⁵⁰ That China surpassed the United States as Africa's number one trade partner, growing from \$6 billion in 1999 to over \$90 billion in 2009, while simultaneously becoming the largest investor in Libya by 2010, all provide motive to the Chinese claim that OUP was intended to curb their influence in Africa.⁷⁵¹

Counter to Hillary Clinton's blatant dishonesty, in 2008 AFRICOM was described by Vice Admiral Robert Moeller as part of the United States' effort to

⁷⁵⁰ Forte, *Slouching Towards Sirte*, 192.

⁷⁵¹ Forte, *Slouching Towards Sirte*, 192.

preserve “the free flow of natural resources from Africa to the global market,” in which China, along with the rest of the Global South, are not included.⁷⁵² As if he was afraid some would not understand the translation from policy elite speak to common English, Moeller reiterated in 2010, “Let there be no mistake.

AFRICOM’s job is to protect American lives and promote American interests.

That is what nations and militaries do.”⁷⁵³ In 2010, while diplomatic cables from American diplomats on the African Union spoke harshly of Gaddafi’s efforts to marshal support for a unified African defensive force AFRICOM’s own website invoked the “frailty of African security institutions,” which the United States apparently was going to fix with a fraction of the African Union’s budget allocated to AFRICOM.⁷⁵⁴

Africa’s defensive capabilities along the lines that Nkrumah suggested in 1960 were integral to Gaddafi’s vision, and in 2010 an African Standby Force was approved by the AU.⁷⁵⁵ Ironically, the AU adopted NATO’s policy of collective defense in which an attack against one was to be considered an attack against all under the Common African Defense and Security Policy.⁷⁵⁶ The American diplomats who wrote back were tripping over each other to deride Libya and Africa in condescending memos that contradicted themselves in an effort to paint Libya’s influence as dangerous, while at the same time ensuring that every policy

⁷⁵² Forte, *Slouching Towards Sirte*, 195.

⁷⁵³ Forte, *Slouching Towards Sirte*, 198.

⁷⁵⁴ Forte, *Slouching Towards Sirte*, 189.

⁷⁵⁵ Forte, *Slouching Towards Sirte*, 168.

⁷⁵⁶ Forte, *Slouching Towards Sirte*, 168.

proposal was but rhetorical showmanship with no chance of success or plan for implementation that none of the African leaders would agree too, sometimes unaware the very policies they were discussing had already been voted on and approved, including the concept of a unified African defensive force, which two cables on the same day provided contradictory information on.⁷⁵⁷

Another prime example of the contradictory nature found in within the American diplomats communications on the African Union include their characterization of the proposed African currency that one memo characterized as “unpopular and impractical,” and explained that it “would saddle the Libyan economy with debts and inflationary pressures of countries bereft of the mineral wealth an massive foreign trade surpluses Libya enjoys.”⁷⁵⁸ This is despite other memos directly noting the popularity of such policies, as Ambassador Gene Cretz noted African heads of state that do not join in such a plan are “wary of losing out on Libya’s dinar diplomacy” while Donald Yamamoto, United States’ Ambassador to Ethiopia noted that graffiti on walls throughout Sirte called for “One African Currency.”⁷⁵⁹

⁷⁵⁷ Forte, *Slouching Towards Sirte*, 168-170.

⁷⁵⁸ Forte, *Slouching Towards Sirte*, 170.

⁷⁵⁹ Forte, *Slouching Towards Sirte*, 170; Donald Yamamoto, “African Union Summit Wrap-Up: Gaddafi Pulls it Off, Barely.” State Department cable, 09ADDISABABA1662_a, July 15, 2009, https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/09ADDISABABA1662_a.html; Gene Cretz, “Libya’s AU Summit Scorecard: Victory (of sorts) From Jaws of Defeat,” State Department cable, 09TRIPOLI570_a, July 15, 2009, https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/09TRIPOLI570_a.html.

Furthermore, much of the over \$30 billion in Libyan assets frozen by the United States in February 2011 that belonged to the Libyan Central Bank was allocated to establish the African Investment Bank, the African Monetary Fund (AMF), and the African Central Bank which would have printed the African currency.⁷⁶⁰ On top of that, Algeria agreed to contribute \$16 billion, which exceeded the \$10 billion from Libya, cumulatively supplying 62 percent of the planned AMF's funds, which directly challenged the IMF and was planned to host to over twice the capital the IMF allocated for Africa without the web of neoliberal conditions mandating privatization under structural adjustment programs.⁷⁶¹ If such a program was truly unpopular and impractical, that some Western countries attempted to join in the AMF and were unanimously rejected by the African Union in December of 2010, the same month Libya became a majority shareholder in the Arab Banking Corporation, makes little sense.⁷⁶² According to African Union documents, "Many African experts support the idea of creating the AMF on the grounds that programs supported by the IMF have not solved the balance of payments problems of the African countries in a lasting manner. In their view, these programs have tended to rely too much on 'adjustment' without providing the 'financial resources' needed to promote growth and reduce poverty."⁷⁶³

⁷⁶⁰ Forte, *Slouching Towards Sirte*, 161.

⁷⁶¹ Forte, *Slouching Towards Sirte*, 161.

⁷⁶² Forte, *Slouching Towards Sirte*, 161.

⁷⁶³ Forte, *Slouching Towards Sirte*, 161.

While the exact figures on the amounts of Libyan finance that was directed into Africa via the AU is disputed, it alone did not represent the grand total of Libyan investment into Africa.⁷⁶⁴ A litany of Libyan financial institutions existed, seemingly due to the division of powers within the Libyan government, as The Libyan Investment Authority was formed by the General People's Congresses in 2006 as an umbrella institution that others such as The Libyan African Investment Portfolio, founded by the Gaddafi regime in 2006, and The Libyan Arab Foreign Investment Company which founded in 1981 and controlled by the Central Bank of Libya.⁷⁶⁵ According to Forte, “Among its many projects, Libya funded the construction of 23 hotel resorts in 15 different countries, as well as oil refineries, banks and telecommunications networks across Africa,” with other investments in “at least 31 countries throughout Africa” by 2002, and in December 2007, Libya financed and launched the first African telecommunications satellite which ended African dependence on European satellites as well as the exorbitant rates that cumulatively added up to a roughly \$500 million annual bill and “billions of dollars in debt and interest,” that dependency on European telecommunication satellites costed.⁷⁶⁶

Forte notes pages of investment data from these larger funds, along with more humanitarian and social projects, such as The Libya’s World Islamic Call

⁷⁶⁴ Pack suggests the entire Libyan economy and finances were “hallucinagenic, bizarrely interconnected and recursive, and truly defying the capacities of the human mind to comprehend.” Pack, *Enduring Global Disorder*, 223.

⁷⁶⁵ Forte, *Slouching Towards Sirte*, 158.

⁷⁶⁶ Forte, *Slouching Towards Sirte*, 158, 160.

Society's Islamic projects across Sub-Saharan Africa designed to educate future Imams, such as the Islamic University in Uganda it finished in 2008, and direct bilateral trade with dozens of African countries where in Egypt Libya invested \$10 billion and another five billion in Morocco.⁷⁶⁷ The combined figure of \$15 billion in just Egyptian and Moroccan bilateral trade with Libya as one dissenting voice suggested that in 2002 Libya only invested \$800 million in Africa with \$6 billion in Italy via the Libyan Arab Foreign Investment Company to denounce Gaddafi's pan-African rhetoric as fraudulent.⁷⁶⁸ Another such example in the wake of OUP Jean Ping the Chairman for the African Union Commission offered a figure of \$5 billion set aside for the African Union by Gaddafi while he invested \$150 billion into Europe to downplay the significance of Libyan investment in Africa to the NTC rebels and the United States.⁷⁶⁹

Gaddafi told then Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice in 2008 that "U.S. military intervention on the continent concerned Africans and could encourage popular support for terrorism," which as the next chapter will detail in the post-OUP blowback on the global stage, was precisely the function AFRICOM's expansion and Libya's destabilization played.⁷⁷⁰ Gaddafi would later reiterate this point to General William "Kip" Ward, then commander of AFRICOM, twice in a

⁷⁶⁷ Forte, *Slouching Towards Sirte*, 162, 166.

⁷⁶⁸ Forte, *Slouching Towards Sirte*, 157.

⁷⁶⁹ Forte, *Slouching Towards Sirte*, 156.

⁷⁷⁰ Forte, *Slouching Towards Sirte*, 199.

May 21, 2009 visit.⁷⁷¹ During this visit, Gaddafi attempted to secure the United States' assurances of their friendly intentions through a peace agreement or defensive alliance, and/or the sales of American manufactured weapons, none of which were agreed to.⁷⁷² This was typical of Gaddafi in the mid to late 2000s as he sought to ensure the United States' good intentions. However, on the eve of OUP the United States military had been attempting to convince Congress to make such an arms sale to Gaddafi, further demonstrating that the American military establishment was not concerned with Libya and hesitant in the push for intervention in early 2011, which the French and Hillary Clinton's circle of jingoistic humanists were instrumental in pushing for, along with sectors of the intelligence community that took the initiative in the United States' covert operations on the ground in Libya during OUP and after.⁷⁷³

While the United States refused to cooperate with Gaddafi in the fashion he felt would reassure their intentions vis a vis Libya and the AU, American forces expanded their presence in Africa in the form of training facilities and smaller outposts they refused to call bases, which Gaddafi viewed as a deceptive language game and grew ever more suspicious of their intentions.⁷⁷⁴ Gaddafi repeatedly stressed his belief that an expanded United States presence in Africa

⁷⁷¹ Ward was later demoted to a three star general in November 2012 by Robert Gates' replacement as Secretary of Defense, Leon Panetta, and ordered to pay \$82,000 for mismanagement of funds. Campbell, *Global NATO*, 221; Forte, *Slouching Towards Sirte*, 202.

⁷⁷² Forte, *Slouching Towards Sirte*, 202.

⁷⁷³ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 165.

⁷⁷⁴ Forte, *Slouching Towards Sirte*, 201-202.

would only lead to the proliferation of terrorism and began to reject further cooperation in joint anti-terrorist partnerships in the last years of his life.⁷⁷⁵

As Campbell notes, “A reconstruction of the chronology of the exchanges between the Gaddafi government and the West is essential” to make sense of the relationship and that “the African scholarly community ought to study the chronology” of Libya’s relations with the United States, the following evolution of Libya’s neoliberal policies and opening to West explains the Libyan leaders oscillating position by considering the role of the LIFG, and the Western cooperation with such groups that many retellings of OUP and Libyan history exclude. In doing so it also demonstrates further motive for the United States embrace of heavy-constructive instability in contrast to the European vanguard of the war against Libya.

After the 1996 LIFG attempt (or attempts, as a report by the Mapping Militants Project contends three LIFG assassination plots failed between 1996 to 1998) on his life, and the 1998 AQ embassy bombings in Africa Gaddafi courted the Western powers which seemed to naturally align against the Islamist threat.⁷⁷⁶ Unaware of their ongoing cooperation with Western intelligence

⁷⁷⁵ Forte, *Slouching Towards Sirte*, 199-201.

⁷⁷⁶ Mapping Militants Project (MMP), “The Libyan Islamic Fighting Group,” last modified July 1, 2018, <https://mappingmilitants.org/node/445>; Mapping Militants Project (MMP), “About: General Background,” accessed June 10, 2024, <https://mappingmilitants.org/about>. MMP “has been overseen by Stanford CISAC-FSI Senior Fellow Emerita Martha Crenshaw since its inception in 2009. Iris Malone, former Assistant Professor at The George Washington University, co-directed the project 2019-2022. Kaitlyn Robinson, Assistant Professor at Rice University, has co-directed the project since 2023. Stanford Ph.D. candidates in

agencies, which the 1998 bombings and then September 11, 2001, sufficiently convinced Gaddafi he could rely on the enemy of his enemy in the United States to provide cooperation in neutralizing the mutual threat, and potentially provide security while Gaddafi insulated himself from his own armed forces which he did not trust, fearful of potential Islamists amongst their ranks.⁷⁷⁷ This suspicion, potentially born of the Reagan Administration's attempts to plant the seeds of such mistrust, would come back to bite Gaddafi in 2011 as the Libyan Armed Forces were never well trained, coordinated, and integrated into a command structure, while Gaddafi relied heavily on private militia forces, and the roughly billion dollars Gaddafi spent annually on weapons was ultimately of little use in the face of the rapid evolution of the rebellion.⁷⁷⁸ Thousands of Libyan tanks and aircraft remained in storage, along with massive caches of other advanced weaponry which the rebels then armed themselves with and proliferated across the region.⁷⁷⁹

As it seems, 2002 is the earliest publication of any musings on the UK's cooperation with the LIFG in its 1996 assassination attempt, and British Prime Minister Tony Blair visited Libya in May of 2007 and secured a \$900 million contract for Royal Dutch Shell for the first time since Gaddafi originally

Political Science have assisted with the oversight of the project and managed a team of graduate and undergraduate research assistants: Rachel Gillum, Kerry Persen, Iris Malone, and Kaitlyn Robinson. Stanford CISAC Postdoctoral Fellow Laura Courchesne assisted with the project in 2022-2023.”

⁷⁷⁷ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 164.

⁷⁷⁸ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 165.

⁷⁷⁹ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 165.

nationalized the oil industry in 1971, suggests that Gaddafi was still not privy to the British collusion with the LIFG at that point.⁷⁸⁰ Wesley Clark revealed Libya was among the seven countries Rumsfeld marked for destruction in that same year, 2007, which reached a wider audience as it was widely published. If it is assumed Gaddafi caught wind of Clark's testimony the dates roughly coincide with Gaddafi's turn towards Chinese and Russian investors, while Western corporations that gained a foothold in Libya in 2004 were squeezed with renegotiated settlements including an additional collective \$5.4 billion arbitrary bonus payment Exxon Mobil, Petro-Canada, Respol, Total, Eni, and Occidental coughed up between 2007 and 2008.⁷⁸¹

In April of 2008 Russian President, Vladimir Putin, along with four hundred additional assistants, visited Libya and met with Gaddafi, wherein a deal was reached which Russia forgave \$4.5 billion of Libya's Soviet-era debt in exchange for "a large railroad contract and several future contracts in housing construction and electricity development," and Gaddafi expressed his support for Putin and opposition to NATO expansion in Ukraine and Georgia.⁷⁸² In September the same year Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice (and executive of Chevron Oil Company) also visited Libya and noted ominously that the United States had no "permanent friends in Libya, only permanent interests."⁷⁸³ Permanent interests

⁷⁸⁰ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 89-90.

⁷⁸¹ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 62.

⁷⁸² Campbell, *Global NATO*, 257.

⁷⁸³ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 52.

which Gaddafi, returning to an attitude of antipathy towards the United States, threatened to nationalize in January, 2009.⁷⁸⁴ The previous year he warned of the looming threat of death at the United States' hand which every Arab head of state was under, and, to the surprise of the United States, refused to participate in the Trans-Sahara Counter Terrorism Partnership.⁷⁸⁵ After refusing this American initiative he announced that African security and intelligence operations should be done by Africans, marking a definitive end to whatever source of protection Gaddafi once saw in the United States.⁷⁸⁶

The American companies who enjoyed the vast majority of the initial share of Libyan oil contracts in 2004, 11 out of the initial 15, watched as the decade progressed and their shares of new rounds of Exploration and Production Sharing Agreements rapidly dwindled and Brazilian, Chinese, Russian, Turkish, and Indian corporations secured new contracts while the favorable terms of the American's initial contracts were renegotiated less attractive terms (and is worthy of note that Brazil, Russia, India, and China comprise the core members of BRICS).⁷⁸⁷ By 2010, the United States eminent rival China had secured its position as largest source of foreign investment in Libya, while the previous year PetroChina eclipsed ExxonMobil in net worth.⁷⁸⁸

⁷⁸⁴ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 62.

⁷⁸⁵ Forte, *Slouching Towards Sirte*, 199.

⁷⁸⁶ Forte, *Slouching Towards Sirte*, 199.

⁷⁸⁷ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 23.

⁷⁸⁸ LeVine, *Why They Don't Hate Us*, 304-305; Campbell, *Global NATO*, 23.

The American oil companies may have felt slighted when they were squeezed out of significant market share in Libya, but their concerns were ultimately tertiary at best and did not inform the United States' execution of OUP. The French, who had been largely excluded while Gaddafi welcomed other Western powers into Libya, were rather blatant in their desire to secure oil deals and felt threatened by the other Europeans. Sarkozy even attempted to collude with the Chinese behind the backs of the other NATO allies, demonstrating the incoherence of the NATO forces and varying motives.⁷⁸⁹

The French represented the near polar opposite position to the United States, regarding interests in Libya and motivation for OUP, as they were deeply concerned about securing material interests in Libya and Africa at large, which was the economic engine of the French economy and they frequently intervened militarily in Africa to secure their interests.⁷⁹⁰ The French, or President Nicolas Sarkozy in particular, were incredibly insecure in their position vis a vis the other European powers who they likely imagine themselves still in competition with as great powers who stand on their own merit rather than the vassals of the United States left to play pretend in the backyard. Both German and Italian presence in Libya prior to the OUP proved irrationally upsetting to the French. The Germans imposing position was laid out in the report "German Middle East and North Africa Policy" published by the German Institute for International and Security

⁷⁸⁹ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 98.

⁷⁹⁰ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 95, 98.

Affairs, which stated “the Maghreb still occupied a marginal position in German foreign policy, with no sign of a clear formulation of German interests.”⁷⁹¹ The Italians, who officially enjoyed the most secure position of the Europeans in Libya thanks to a 2008 “friendship and cooperation agreement” wherein Italy planned to construct a new coastal road and Libya would “favor Italy with regard to oil and gas supplies.”⁷⁹² Furthermore, Italy went so far as to dare remind France of the Italian “prerogative” in Libya.⁷⁹³ Germany was hesitant to join in the bombing campaign and withdrew itself from the operation in a matter of days, which Italy also threatened to do but then joined in once it became clear the British and French intended to remove Gaddafi, and the two were obviously engaged in a war to conquer Libyan resources. The Polish Prime Minister Donald Tusk represented the majority of the twenty-eight NATO members that refused to participate in OUP and aid Sarkozy’s campaign for oil, stressing the hypocrisy of the Europeans he said: “If we want to defend people against dictators, reprisals, torture and prison, that principle must be universal and not invoked only when it is convenient, profitable, or safe.”⁷⁹⁴

The presence of other Europeans in the periphery represented no threat to the United States hegemony over the world system. As the junior partners of the Atlanticist industrial core, and to who much of the United States’ concern on

⁷⁹¹ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 100.

⁷⁹² Campbell, *Global NATO*, 190.

⁷⁹³ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 190.

⁷⁹⁴ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 122.

the security of global oil reserves since WWII has been directed, the Western European presence and initiative to secure Libyan oil reserves did not harm the United States' interests in the struggle for full spectrum dominance (even if such strategic thinking did little stymie private American oil giants' interest, who also rushed into the void of post-Gaddafi Libya before the media fabricated image of a peaceful Libya exploded).⁷⁹⁵ As such the presence of the Europeans was welcomed, and Obama explicitly stated he hoped the Europeans would stabilize and secure their interests in post-Gaddafi Libya, to who the United States left to their own devices while the CIA continued to cultivate jihadist forces to repeat the destabilization of Libya in Syria.⁷⁹⁶ Without the occupation force that could act as security for United States business interests, is not the policy one would imagine conducive to securing returns on investment.⁷⁹⁷

The growing influence of the People's Republic of China, which had also secured lucrative contracts in the construction of infrastructure and housing development in addition to Libyan oil, was particularly threatening to the United States' continued maintenance of unipolar liberal hegemony, even though Libya was, as Obama later noted, "not at the core of our interests."⁷⁹⁸ However, as two

⁷⁹⁵ Good, *American Exception*, 5-11. Aaron Good's "tripartite theory of state" is useful to conceptualize this intersection between three competing interests in the private oil companies and/or the CIA, the national security state, and the public state. All of which represent and further a different set of interests.

⁷⁹⁶ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 216; Goldberg, "The Obama Doctrine."

⁷⁹⁷ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 203. The policy, described as an adaptation of David Petraeus' Iraqi cooperation with elements of *al-Qaeda* in the Sunni Awakening, did not work to the limited extent that it did in Iraq.

⁷⁹⁸ Goldberg, "The Obama Doctrine."

rising powers both host to an impressive indigenous industrial capacity, if China and Libya established a symbiotic relationship of mutually reinforcing capabilities they could have bolstered the speed at which they emerged as not just regional hegemonic powers but true peer competitors on the world stage as the West was still recovering from the financial meltdown of 2008.

However, the crisis initiated by the collapse of Lehman Brothers (that Campbell notes made the “limitations of neoliberal globalization” more “apparent every day since 2008”) only sped up existing timetables and realities.⁷⁹⁹ Prior to United States burning down the United States-led international financial system, in 2005 Mark LeVine explained the urgency that should be expected from Washington to counter a real threat in China (especially considering the lengths fabricated threats justified in Iraq),

Such logic is even more compelling if we realize that China is no longer content to play the role of the world’s chief low-cost manufacturer of American consumer products (assigned to it in the neoliberal division of world labor), but is now seeking to challenge the US as a preeminent technological power too as symbolized by its purchase of IBM’s computer business. If it could accomplish this the United States’ position as the world’s dominant economic power would be lost; we can imagine what a Bush Administration convinced about America’s divinely appointed role as world hyper-power would do to meet such a threat.⁸⁰⁰

What it seems LeVine likely did not predict is that, for all the commentary he provided on the ideological similarities between neoconservative Christian fundamentalist Republicans in the United States and the radical Islamic terrorist networks, a supposedly anti-war liberal Democratic president was not just going

⁷⁹⁹ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 28.

⁸⁰⁰ LeVine, *Why They Don’t Hate Us*, 305.

to stay the course, but align with elements of *al-Qaeda* against a regional ally in the War on Terror who gave up their WMDS.⁸⁰¹

International Terrorist Networks and Constructive Instability

The cultivation, if not wholesale creation, of international terror networks to combat the USSR and communist influence throughout Asia, Africa, and South America was standard United States Cold War-era foreign policy.⁸⁰² From post-WWII Operation Gladio “stay-behind networks” and Nazi collaboration, to the eventual cultivation of the anti-Soviet Mujahideen and their more despotic offspring in AQ and ISIS, the foreign policy elite in the United States would collaborate with any group, and former and/or current enemy, if their violence could be directed in service of American geostrategic interests.⁸⁰³ The integration of former Nazis, Italian fascists, and their collaborators into the Atlanticist anti-communist fold as terrorist agents of the United States proved to be a rather

⁸⁰¹ LeVine, *Why They Don't Hate Us*, 31. LeVine writes of “the worldview and psychological perspectives of millions of Muslims...believe very similar things to middle Americans,” and their obsession with “God, guts and guns as central to” defeating a global elite that have denigrated their culture of old they wish to return to.

⁸⁰² Bevens, *The Jakarta Method*, 184, 206; Peter Dale Scott, *Road to 9/11*, 73.

⁸⁰³ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 12; Bevens, *The Jakarta Method*, 184, 206; Peter Dale Scott, *Road to 9/11*, 73. The jihadi networks would come to be used in an adaptation of the David Petraeus strategy of “supporting jihadists and then fighting against them,” that Petraeus pioneered in Iraq in 2006 as a general, Campbell notes, and in 2011 would try with the CIA.

smooth process once all the pan-European powers could agree on which populations were fair game to systematically cage, torture, and kill.⁸⁰⁴

Due to the shared colonial history between the Atlanticist powers they held near identical experiences and positions within the capitalist world-system and interstate system, as industrialized cores that dominated the periphery, when co-opting post-WWII fascist actors into the pan-European fold the shared structural and material incentives in the world-system eased the process. A comprador class of collaborators who idealized Western capitalist society and sought approval for their rule from the core powers, were placed into power by the pan-European imperialists to serve Western capital directly, or were either ideologically lock-step and/or a wealthy local elite who naturally shared the industrial core's interests to maintain or further the capitalist world-system in most of the Global South. The instrumentalization of Islamists, who by and large rejected both capitalism and communism, was a more delicate (read: volatile) operation.

⁸⁰⁴ O'Rourke, *Covert Regime Change*, 131-133. Future CIA legend Frank Wisner, along with Allen Dulles, led the American charge to rehabilitate Nazi contingents. In May 1945, former head of Nazi military intelligence, Reinhard Gehlen sent message from an allied POW camp signalling his willingness to cooperate, and Gehlen then connected them to the network of local Nazi collaborators behind Soviet lines, most of which were even more brutal and killed more of their local Jewish populations than the Nazis due to speaking the native tongue, this included the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists. O'Rourke notes that by 1955 the United States spent "at least \$200 million and employed around 4,000 staff to rebuild Gehlen's organization." These Eastern European groups became the progenitors of Gladio which "US policymakers explicitly modeled these operations on those conducted by Nazi Germany during WWII."

Unlike those trained in international terror networks who the Atlanticist powers could reasonably trust to not turn loaded weapons and explosives back on them, the Islamists' experience under colonial rule and in the global neoliberal capitalist world-system was radically different than the pan-European's and for who the status quo has been unacceptable.⁸⁰⁵ For these reasons, Wallerstein and LeVine describe the post-communist rise of Islamist forces as anti-systemic forces in opposition to the internationally political and culturally totalitarian neoliberal capitalist world-systems exploitation of their economic power and destruction of traditional ways of life. LeVine quotes a Turkish Islamist activist who explained the Islamic opposition to globalized capitalism that alienated and exploited populations who then turned towards traditionalist religion and culture, "we have been defeated in front of the reality that one cannot be a Muslim without being a capitalist... There is no solution to this. Because the lifestyle which befits a Muslim one which emphasizes abstention from worldly pleasures—would paralyze all markets."⁸⁰⁶

The use of terror networks such as the LIFG in the area denial tactic of constructive instability marks a definitive turn in the United States' foreign policy planning in the wake of failure in Iraq and Afghanistan and challenged by the rise of a potential peer-competitor in China. Which if France and the UK failed to

⁸⁰⁵Campbell, *Global NATO*, 217. As British journalist Robert Fisk described the phenomenon writing for the *Independent*, "The U.S. had fed the al-Qa'ida scorpion and now it had bitten America."

⁸⁰⁶ LeVine, *Why They Don't Hate Us*, 94-95.

secure in the aftermath of OUP, would leave China likely to do so —if they wished to return to Libya as the largest foreign investor and developer inside the country, with thirteen large-scale projects in the country and over 35,000 workers in 2011 on the eve of the conflagration.⁸⁰⁷ It seems likely in such a scenario the CIA Benghazi annex would have redirected some of its new recruits away from Syria and towards Chinese investments in Libya.

For the United States to do so in the post-9/11 world is extremely egregious on multiple counts (to say the least). Had the birth and spread of AQ out of the mujahideen in the anti-Soviet Afghan campaign not proven destructive enough by September 11, 2001? It is difficult to even conceptualize the massive loss of life and spent resources burnt in the fires of the War on Terror. How could American and Western leaders be so depraved to cooperate with these forces? LeVine writes of the trepidation that blocks most from even considering the possible utility of utilizing chaos, “Some might argue that the idea that the chaos in Iraq was even partly planned is preposterous,” if nothing else wouldn’t it “be too big an electoral risk?”⁸⁰⁸ Well, not exactly, “as the 2004 election demonstrated, it cost Bush nothing,” by the way of political capital and in true colonial fashion, “tens of millions (perhaps most) Americans intuitively believe that Arabs and Muslims are half-civilized at best.”⁸⁰⁹ So LeVine’s note on how to

⁸⁰⁷ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 188-189.

⁸⁰⁸ LeVine, *Why They Don’t Hate Us*, 293.

⁸⁰⁹ LeVine, *Why They Don’t Hate Us*, 293.

conceptualize the deprivation of pan-European legacy of colonialism and/or slavery proves salient,

imagine the destruction it would take to kill 27–41 million Americans; then imagine that a dozen or so more powerful countries do everything possible to profit from that destruction at the expense of the United States, and to prevent a severely weakened America from ever recovering its former economic resources, population or strength... and you'll have a good idea of the ideology guiding the people who have managed the world's affairs for the last two hundred years.⁸¹⁰

The preconception that Muslims (and the Global South generally) were “half-civilized” enabled the widespread belief among the American population that “in some vague way Iraq was tied to al-Qa’eda,” and prepared them to look away, dismiss with a shrug, or cheer on the United States far more destructive bouts of violence as it methodically attacked one nation after the last in a strategy to, as Michael Ledeen put it, “cauldronize the region.”⁸¹¹

As historic enemies of the Gaddafi regime and other secular nationalists in the region who commanded the economy and resources of entire states, often against the interest of the pan-European powers, the Sunni Wahhabist strains of Islamists which spawned AQ and ISIS have proven nearly incapable of realizing nationalist ambitions due to the alienation of almost all who were not themselves that their radical violence brought, were ultimately less of a threat to the industrialized core’s grip over the periphery than a state.⁸¹² After all, the jihadists could not nationalize oil holdings as Gaddafi did. Furthermore, the states which

⁸¹⁰ LeVine, *Why They Don’t Hate Us*, 59.

⁸¹¹ LeVine, *Why They Don’t Hate Us*, 293. O’Rourke, *Covert Regime Change*, 233; Dan Sanchez “The Cauldron Doctrine;” O’Rourke notes that 72 percent of Americans supported the invasion of Iraq.

⁸¹² Pack, *Global Enduring Disorder*, 114-116.

are their most natural allies in their progenitor Saudi Arabia, and some surrounding Gulf States, relied heavily on Western support and cooperation to remain in power, often on the back of an agreement regarding oil production, leaving them unlikely to nationalize production or take overt stands against their Western patron.

However, LeVine notes that it is important that “we must be careful not to assume that al-Qa’eda and similar groups” are lower-order savage beings of a prior age, for they are “a quintessentially modern and even globalizational phenomenon.”⁸¹³ As John Gray wrote in *Al Qaeda and What it Means to be Modern*, “the ideology of Al Qaeda is both Western and modern. Itself a byproduct of globalization’s transnational capital flows and open borders, al-Qaeda’s utopian zeal to remake the world descends from the same Enlightenment creed that informed both the disastrous Soviet experiment and the neoliberal dream of a global free market.”⁸¹⁴

Benghazi: September 11, 2012

Jason Pack knew the United States’ Ambassador to Libya, Christopher Stevens personally and claims this relationship imparted Pack with “unique data points,” to evaluate the unfortunate death of Stevens (and three other oft-forgotten Americans) on September 11, 2012.⁸¹⁵ Despite these “unique data

⁸¹³ LeVine, *Why They Don’t Hate Us*, 177.

⁸¹⁴ LeVine, *Why They Don’t Hate Us*, 177.

⁸¹⁵ Pack, *Libya Global Enduring Disorder*, 109; Dana Milbank, “Letting Us In on a Secret,” *The Washington Post*, October 10, 2012, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/dana-milbank-letting-us-in-on-a-secret/>

points” Pack does not go into much detail at any point in the 390 pages of his book on Steven’s actual function in Libya as an Ambassador nor his previous role as the “Special Representative” to the NTC rebels during OUP.⁸¹⁶ ⁸¹⁷ Neither does Pack touch on any of the scandalous information was revealed on the covert inter-agency cooperation between the Pentagon, State Department, CIA, and Libyan militia groups, in the cultivation of Libyan jihadi groups as shock troops of the Syrian civil war, all exposed to the public a month later to the public in the much publicized Benghazi Congressional hearings.⁸¹⁸ Radical outlets like *Business Insider* published articles detailing as much, such as an October 19, 2012, article by Michael B. Kelly titled “How US Ambassador Chris Stevens May Have Been Linked To Jihadist Rebels In Syria.”⁸¹⁹

[2012/10/10/ba3136ca-132b-11e2-ba83-a7a396e6b2a7_story.html](https://www.businessinsider.com/2012/10/10/ba3136ca-132b-11e2-ba83-a7a396e6b2a7_story.html). Of the three others killed included two CIA agents that the United States originally attempted to pass off as private security. However it was quickly deduced through a line of questioning and answers that eliminated all other agencies.

⁸¹⁶ Pack, *Global Enduring Disorder*, 109; Campbell, *Global NATO*, 205. Robert F. Worth of the *New York Times* wrote that as the “Special Representative” to the NTC rebel factions “Stevens and his team became de facto participants in a revolution.”

⁸¹⁷ Michael B. Kelly, Geoffrey Ingersoll, “Intrigue Surrounding the Secret CIA Operation In Benghazi Is Not Going Away,” *Business Insider*, August 3, 2013, <https://www.businessinsider.com/the-secret-cia-mission-in-benghazi-2013-8>;

Pack, *Global Enduring Disorder*, 109; Campbell, *Global NATO*, 205.

⁸¹⁸ Charlene Lamb, “Benghazi Libya Attack: State Department Charlene R. Lamb Opening Statement,” YouTube video, October 10, 2012, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TQSfqHJd2mU&ab_channel=GOPOversight.

⁸¹⁹ Michael B. Kelly, “How US Ambassador Chris Stevens May Have Been Linked To Jihadist Rebels In Syria.” *Business Insider*, October 19, 2012, <https://www.businessinsider.com/us-syria-heavy-weapons-jihadists-2012-10>.

In 2021 Pack described Stevens' untimely presence in the secret CIA Benghazi outpost, having left the capital and actual embassy in Tripoli entirely of his own volition to, was because he went "to open a hospital."⁸²⁰ Campbell describes Stevens as,

An expert in inter-agency cooperation, so that when AFRICOM had been given the command of the U.S. participation in Libya, he had been the senior U.S. representative of the military on the ground in Benghazi.

Stevens belonged to the division of the U.S. Department of State that was very knowledgeable about the movements of militia members between Benghazi and the war against the Assad regime in Syria.⁸²¹

In the aftermath of Stevens' death, the facade of a transformed Libya safe for foreign business interests was shattered and Pack says "most Westerners cut and ran from Benghazi," and by 2014 "a few hundred militia men had chased all the major Western powers and the bulk of the Global Fortune 500 Companies out of the country."⁸²² Once the public became privy to the reality of the chaotic situation in Libya because, as Campbell put it, "Disinformation could not block the

⁸²⁰ Pack, *Global Enduring Disorder*, 109. It seems from several accounts that Stevens was more genuinely interested in the wellbeing of Libya, and the people of the region, than most other Western ambassadors or diplomats, and there very well could of been a hospital which Stevens was hoping to open around this time, however the absence of any other detail is rather suggestive that Pack is downplaying the extent of Western cooperation with jihadist terrorism, while still accounting for the Islamist militias role in OUP and post-Gaddafi Libya.

⁸²¹ Michael B. Kelly, Geoffrey Ingersoll, "Intrigue Surrounding the Secret CIA Operation In Benghazi Is Not Going Away;" Campbell, *Global NATO*, 208.

⁸²² Pack, *Global Enduring Disorder*, 109, 112.

story,” business interests fled and the short-lived period of economic and democratic development quickly evaporated.⁸²³

Along with the support of the State Department, the CIA was cultivating ties in an adaptation of a strategy then-Director of the CIA, David Petraeus forged in Iraq to coopt the Sunni Awakening Movement through bribes that swayed roughly 100,000 fighters by 2009.⁸²⁴ This strategy as employed by the CIA had no such success in Libya, and was directly responsible for Stevens’ death. While the CIA attempted to cultivate these jihadist-ties in post-Gaddafi Libya, fighting between the CIA and militia groups broke out intermittently, which then spiraled out of control. The CIA began hiring militia as security, while keeping other militia members prisoner in the private gated-villa the State Department rented for the CIA to use as a covert base of operations. Paula Broadwell, “the mistress of David Petraeus” suggested this joint State Department-CIA compound was made a target because of the prisoners it held. Stevens died in this compound, 1.2 miles away from the actual United States consulate in Benghazi that the media initially reported as the site of the attack.⁸²⁵

As these several layers of deceit propagated by the State Department, CIA, and AFRICOM, were peeled away it was revealed that they were making policy decisions independently of the executive branch or civilian oversight.⁸²⁶

⁸²³ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 218.

⁸²⁴ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 203.

⁸²⁵ Kelly, Ingersoll, “Intrigue Surrounding the Secret CIA Operation.”

⁸²⁶ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 222.

Campbell described this outpost manifested the wider “culture of rampant deception and distortion within the military establishment in Africa...molded by the neoconservatives,” and without the oversight or command structures that would typically be expected, the CIA and AFRICOM “experimented with all of the techniques” Donald Rumsfeld endorsed in the prior administration, which is fancy way to say torture.⁸²⁷ On November 9, 2012, David Petraeus resigned from the CIA, but he reappeared in 2015 to once again suggest adapting the 2006 Iraqi Sunni Awakening strategy once again, this time finding moderate *al-Qaeda*-linked *al-Nusra* Front members to fight ISIS.⁸²⁸

The Benghazi CIA outpost was revealed to be the largest in North Africa, hooked up to the eastern Martyr Factory (as the region was often called), through which roughly 1,200 to 1,500 fighters joined the jihadist contingent of fighters inside Syria in the first years of the conflict, of a total 3,500 fighters from Chechnya to Pakistan in what came to be the CIA’s Operation Timber Sycamore, and the supposedly moderate jihadist fought alongside the Free Syrian Army.⁸²⁹ Beyond fighters, Libyan weaponry recovered in the aftermath of OUP were sent over to Syria. It would later be claimed by Hillary Clinton that the State Department and CIA’s mission was to secure the shoulder-fired rocket launchers

⁸²⁷ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 222, 223.

⁸²⁸ Rob Garver, “Can the U.S. Use al Qaeda Fighters to Defeat ISIS? David Petraeus Has a Plan,” *The Fiscal Times*, published September 1, 2015, <https://www.thefiscaltimes.com/2015/09/01/Can-US-Use-al-Qaeda-Fighters-Defeat-ISIS-David-Petraeus-Has-Plan>; Campbell, *Global NATO*, 221.

⁸²⁹ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 208; O’Rourke, *Covert Regime Change*, 233.

(MANPADS) that proliferated across Libya and North Africa (and Blumenthal has reported to be defective according to the March 27 email to Clinton).⁸³⁰ The CIA might actually have been doing as Clinton described, just that these MANPADS, likely SA-7s, were then routed through Turkey into Syria in an operation overseen by Christopher Stevens.⁸³¹ On the day he died, Stevens' last meeting with a Turkish General was to "negotiate a weapons transfer in an effort to get SA-7 missiles out of the hands of Libya-based extremists," according to a 2013 *Business Insider* report.⁸³²

A little under month after Stevens' passing, and a ten days short of a year from Gaddafi's murder, on October 10, 2012 State Department official Charlene Lamb revealed before the Congressional Benghazi hearings that one of the buildings in the covert State Department-CIA compound "served as barracks for the Libyan 17th February Brigade members," who the CIA depended on for further security.⁸³³ An October 10, 2012, *Los Angeles Times* article by Shashank Bengali based on testimony from two members of the militia who were at the CIA annex the day of the attack clearly shows the FBI was heavily suspicious of the group, questioning why they did not fight harder or why it took so long for

⁸³⁰ Kelly, Ingersoll, "Intrigue Surrounding the Secret CIA Operation;" Blumenthal, email to Hillary Clinton, "Lots of new intel; Libyan army possibly on verge of collapse."

⁸³¹ Kelly, Ingersoll, "Intrigue Surrounding the Secret CIA Operation."

⁸³² Kelly, Ingersoll, "Intrigue Surrounding the Secret CIA Operation."

⁸³³ Charlene Lamb, "Benghazi Libya Attack: State Department Charlene R. Lamb Opening Statement," 1:40-1:45, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TQSfqHJd2mU&ab_channel=GOPOversight.

reinforcements to arrive in the six-hour attack.⁸³⁴ The 17th February Brigade, one of the largest Islamist militia groups to rise to prominence in the fight against Gaddafi forces, was reportedly run by no other than the former (a variety of sources say they disbanded, reformed in a non-violent organization, or were still active in the post-Gaddafi era) leader of the LIFG, Abdelhakim Belhadj, who was working in cooperation with Qatar.⁸³⁵ According to Michael B. Kelly, “In March 2011 Stevens became the official U.S. liaison to the al-Qaeda-linked Libyan opposition, working directly with Abdelhakim Belhadj of the Libyan Islamic Fighting Group.”⁸³⁶

Stevens then became the American point-man opposite to Belhadj and orchestrated the delivery of experienced jihadi fighters, the most capable fighters in the nascent Syrian civil war, and “400 tons of heavy weapons” through the State Department-CIA Benghazi annex and into Syria through Turkey to connections Belhadj previously made with the Free Syrian Army in 2011.⁸³⁷ Belhadj then managed to gain some kind of stake in an airport, or the airline

⁸³⁴ Shashank Bengali, “Libya guards speak out on attack that killed U.S. ambassador,” *Los Angeles Times*, October 10, 2012, <https://www.latimes.com/archives/la-xpm-2012-oct-10-la-fg-libya-us-guards-2012-1011-story.html>.

⁸³⁵ Editors of Maghreb Confidential, “Abdelhakim Belhadj, the military leader turned international businessman,” *Africa Intelligence*, online, published April, 28, 2016, <https://www.africaintelligence.com/insiders/libya/2016/04/28/abdelhakim-belhadj-the-militia-leader-turned-international-businessman/108146782-be1>.

⁸³⁶ Kelly, “How US Ambassador Chris Stevens May Have Been Linked To Jihadist Rebels In Syria.”

⁸³⁷ Kelly, “Ambassador Chris Stevens May Have Been Linked To Jihadist Rebels.”

Libyan Wings Aviation Company, shortly after to further enable flow of weapons and fighters in and out of Libya according to David Isenberg writing for the Quincy Institute for Responsible Statecraft.⁸³⁸ In 2017 Abdullah Belhaq, a spokesman for Libya's eastern government, declared Belhadj is still, and will always be, dangerous, and asks "Where did he get these billions," which he presumably used to buy out the airline company.⁸³⁹

Kelly's October 2012, *Business Insider* article reported that some members of the former LIFG "reportedly" participated in the Benghazi attack that took Stevens' life.⁸⁴⁰ That report links to Reuters reporting on the suspected Abu Khattala, who was present at the CIA facility during the September 11 Benghazi attacks along with multiple members of the group Ansar al-Sharia, which he is suspected to be a member of and later declared allegiance to ISIS in 2015, and Pack, Oyeniyi both consider Ansar al-Sharia as good as guilty.⁸⁴¹ Belhadj and the

⁸³⁸ David Isenberg, "Libya Has Been Flooded With Mercenaries and Private Military Companies," Quincy Institute, February 5, 2020, <https://responsiblestatecraft.org/2020/02/05/libya-has-been-flooded-with-mercenaries-and-private-military-companies/>.

⁸³⁹ Sudarsan Raghavan, "These Libyans were once linked to al-Qaeda. Now they are politicians and businessmen," *The Washington Post*, September 28, 2017, https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/middle_east/these-libyan-ex-militiamen-were-once-linked-to-al-qaeda-now-they-wield-power-in-a-new-order/2017/09/27/8356abf8-97dd-11e7-af6a-6555caaeb8dc_story.html.

⁸⁴⁰ Kelly, "Ambassador Chris Stevens May Have Been Linked To Jihadist Rebels."

⁸⁴¹ Hadeel Al Shalchi, Faith Shennib, "Exclusive: Libyan Islamists says he was at U.S. consulate during attack," Reuters, published October 18, 2012, https://www.reuters.com/article/2012/10/18/us-libya-consulate-attack-idUSBRE89H19P20121018/?feedType=RSS&feedName=topNews&utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=feed&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+reuters%2FtopNews+%28News+%2F+US+%2F+Top+News%29.

Islamists duplicity becomes incredibly suspicious when considering that, as Cameron Glenn's wrote in 2017 for the Wilson Center, "Several hundred fighters" from the militia the CIA hired and housed in barracks in their annex, the February 17th, Brigade (sometimes the February 17 Martyrs Brigade), "reportedly left the group to join Ansar al Sharia in 2012," while Belhadj officially became the Commander of the Tripoli Military Council after leading the charge against Gaddafi's stronghold, Bab al-Aziziya, during the fall of Tripoli on August 22, 2011.⁸⁴²

Belhadj and other actors ever shifting allegiance is not unique or contradictory, but the norm, if not a strategy. Pack suggests analysts have given too much credence to the "agitprop" of these various jihadist groups and said before The Atlantic Council in 2017, "the fact is these groups are all connected and it is really easy to jump from one another."⁸⁴³ Pack detailed this intrinsic phenomenon of jihadist groups' constant processes of change and flux as a core strength, "like a retrovirus its genius is its [jihadist ideologay and groups] constant

⁸⁴² Cameron Glenn, "Libya's Islamists: Who They Are—And What They Want," The Wilson Center, August 8, 2017, <https://www.wilsoncenter.org/article/libyas-islamists-who-they-are-and-what-they-want>; Oyeniyi, *The History of Libya*, 204-206; Sudarsan Raghavan, "Abdulahakim Belhadj's Journey from Extremism to Political Life," *Asharq Al-Awsat*, September 29, 2017, <https://english.aawsat.com/home/article/1037576/abdulahakim-bel%C2%ADhadj%E2%80%99s-journey-extremism-political-life>.

⁸⁴³ Jason Pack, "The Origins and Evolution of ISIS in Libya," YouTube video, Atlantic Council, June, 20, 2017, 15:45-16:00, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WNqLoeDNfMo&t=801s&ab_channel=AtlanticCouncil.

mutation. And now when we look at the Libyan reality we realize there are no sharp boundaries between the Libyan Islamic Fighting Group, the LIFG, between Ansar al-Sharia, or al-Qaeda in the Maghreb, or ISIS,” mostly because the average jihadist does not comprehensively understand the ideology of their respective group, nor are ideological differences real driving-factors compared to material factors, particularly locality, and existing relationships, which allegiances tend to form around.⁸⁴⁴

Abdelhakim Belhadj's name or alias has been spelled in English under almost any conceivable variety, much like Gaddafi's and other Arabic names, while he has also been known by Abdelhakim Al-Khoweildy and Abdallah al-Sadeq. Both of which are also subject to a large variety of spellings.⁸⁴⁵ The latter alias, Abdallah al-Sadeq, was supposedly the name he was most well known by in jihadist circles and used by *al-Qaeda*'s then-deputy Ayman al-Zawahiri in 2007, announcing the LIFG's union with AQ. Zawahiri said, "Dear brothers... the amir of the [Libyan] mujahideen, the patient and steadfast Abu-Abdallah al-Sadiq; and the rest of the captives of the fighting Islamic group in Libya, here is good news for you... Your brothers are continuing your march

⁸⁴⁴ Pack, "The Origins and Evolution of ISIS in Libya," 15:00-15:50. Pack gives the example of the 2017 Manchester bomber Salman Abedi, whose parents were connected to the AQ-linked LIFG and thus he grew up imbibed in that ideology, but embraced ISIS which is ostensibly conflicting.

⁸⁴⁵ Morayef, "Truth and Justice Can't Wait," 64. In 2009 Human Rights Watch referred to him under both latter names and suggested that in August of 2009 Belhadj and the LIFG had renounced violence, the legitimacy of which is questionable and the date when this renouncement officially came differs in multiple sources.

after you... escalating their confrontation with the enemies of Islam: Gadhafi and his masters, the crusaders of Washington.”⁸⁴⁶

AQ and ISIS in post-Gaddafi Libya: 2012-2020

The United States' cooperation with Islamist groups linked to AQ in Libya and Syria, affiliates of the terrorist organization who are at least officially assigned guilt for the first 9/11 terror attacks against the United States on 2001, ironically blew up in their face (or rather United States Ambassador to Libya, Christopher Stevens' face) in Benghazi. The public was accidentally made aware of the depths of the CIA and jihadist international cooperation because Republican lawmakers were eager to use the attacks in Benghazi to secure a political win against the Democratic Party.

On the United States' culpability for the creation and cooperation with ISIS, Colonel Lawrence Wilkerson, former Chief of Staff to Colin Powell, said in April of 2024,

we [the United States] have done as much to create, and to nurture ISIS as anything else on the face of the Earth. Whether it be Abu Musab al-Zarqawi [founder of ISIS], or any instigators of the so-called ISIS Consulate in the beginning, we've used ISIS —and when I say 'we' I mean that agency called the CIA, the same agency that does so many nefarious things in our name—and they have worked ISIS, and worked operatives from ISIS in order to do other things.⁸⁴⁷

⁸⁴⁶ ABC News, “From Terror Group Founded to Libyan Rebel Military Commander,” ABC News, August 29, 2011, <https://abcnews.go.com/Blotter/terror-group-founder-libyan-rebel-military-commander/story?id=14405319>.

⁸⁴⁷ Lawrence Wilkerson, “Col. Lawrence Wilkerson : - Starvation Strategy / Aid Workers Executed,” April 5, 2024, 16:59-17:30,

Perhaps it was a complete coincidence the United States near single-handedly created the post-2011 chaos in Libyan society that ISIS then flourished in the “relative safety compared to Iraq and Syria,” while it just so happened “Libya has the money, connection to global networks, trained fighters, and armaments to resupply and regenerate any global jihadi movement that can exploit its state implosion and subsidy-driven economy,” according to Pack.⁸⁴⁸ In the environment of rule by local militia that NATO legitimized while fully aware these groups were unreliable (to say the least), ISIS contingents initially laid low blending into the chaotic environment (a strategy which they returned to doing whenever they were pushed out of one stronghold, just to reconsolidate again). Furthermore, the United States had a newfound reluctance to bomb ISIS in Libya rather than the rapidity and eagerness demonstrated in 2011, waiting years to ultimately bomb ISIS positions in 2016, and once again quickly leaving without coordinating any comprehensive security measures with the anti-ISIS militia groups.

The weapons, dollars, and fighters pipelines in post-Gaddafi Libya created a self-reinforcing jihadi network. According to Pack, “By the end of 2013, there was a new pattern of Libyan foreign fighters returning home from Syria, armed with the militant legitimacy that came from having fought in the widely popular Syrian civil war,” and then used the terror tactics they learned in Syria

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FKIFASqQgtU&t=1112s&ab_channel=JudgeNapolitano-JudgingFreedom.

⁸⁴⁸ Pack, *Libya and the Enduring Global Disorder*, 131,154.

and the respect it got them to do the same in Libya.⁸⁴⁹ Some months before Gaddafi was killed on October 20, 2011, the CIA established itself in Benghazi as well as on the Turkish border with Syria to “oversee the funneling of arms, materiel, money, and fighters into the Syrian civil war.”⁸⁵⁰ By 2016, ISIS was operating openly throughout much of Libya, beheading and crucifying people in the streets.

Gaddafi and other Libyan officials, such as Moussa Ibrahim, had announced that AQ were among the NATO backed rebels before the end of February, yet their existence was routinely dismissed or denied by mainstream Western media pundits and analysts.⁸⁵¹ This is despite the fact it was fairly well known and widely reported that Gaddafi had strongly opposed Islamist groups and never had strong relations with the Sunni Gulf states like Saudi Arabia and Qatar that funded them.⁸⁵² Perhaps it was a successful case of manufacturing consent through media manipulation that, by 2011, the military and corporate news had honed the techniques of the early 2000s and adapted to the digital and internet age. During OUP the media control was so severe that Campbell qualifies it as a “military information operation,” a term Donald Rumsfeld used to

⁸⁴⁹ Pack, *Enduring Global Disorder*, 130.

⁸⁵⁰ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 216.

⁸⁵¹ Moussa Ibrahim. “NATO’s Invasion of Libya: Insider Interview With Gaddafi’s Ex-Spokesman,” 16:00-16:20. “A very small minority, led by religious extremists sided with the West.”

⁸⁵² Pargeter, *Rise and Fall*, 127. Pargeter details Gaddafi’s bitterness at the his fellow Arab states, writing that he “regularly stormed out of Arab summits, hurling insults at his fellow leaders as he went.”

refer to a psychological operations initiative called Total Information Awareness (TIA), and the Pentagon spent \$355 million USD on military information operations in 2011.⁸⁵³

The Pentagon initially dropped the TIA program after a public outcry but then repackaged and rolled out the Information Operations Roadmap in 2003, which officially provided the Department of Defense with “a plan to advance the goal of information operations as a core military competency” as well as provided “adversary behavior modification.”⁸⁵⁴ The Senate Armed Services Committee called for an audit into the Pentagon's information operations, which was reported to be up to \$580 million USD for the year of 2009.⁸⁵⁵ The Pentagon's African information program was called Operation Objective Voice and was, according to Campbell, “supplemented by a special social science research network” to formulate a strategy to win African public support, which after killing Patrice Lumumba, toppling Kwame Nkrumah, and backing the apartheid government against Nelson Mandela, there was little hope of.⁸⁵⁶

British-Irish war correspondent for RT Lizzie Phelan, previously of the *Daily Mail*, reported on September 6, 2011, that “The war on Libya...has reasserted Western mainstream media's power to fabricate reports,” including the initial (according to widely debunked claims that Gaddafi fired from

⁸⁵³ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 143-146.

⁸⁵⁴ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 146.

⁸⁵⁵ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 146.

⁸⁵⁶ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 146.

helicopters into crowds in Tripoli, that Gaddafi had fled to Venezuela, when footage from India was passed off for Libya, claimed rebels had captured multiple cities to hide that NATO bombed them, and claimed Tripoli fell without resistance just weeks prior in late August.⁸⁵⁷ Tripoli had actually been viscously bombed by NATO because, as Phelan reported, “masses of youth and other residents in the capital pouring into the streets” in support of Gaddafi, who were then bombed, as was the Tripoli broadcasting station once information on NATO’s attack on the capital was reported.⁸⁵⁸

The point being, when Gaddafi and other Libyan officials had been called some variation of insane and untrustworthy for announcing the presence of Islamist forces in the rebel groups the media or the sources feeding the media information surely knew it was true. By March 27, at least some “Senior European security officials,” Nicolas Sarkozy, and Hillary Clinton knew, as Sidney Blumenthal’s aforementioned email to Clinton that day said the Europeans were worried that “radical/terrorist groups such as the Libyan Fighting Groups and Al Qa’ida in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM)” were “infiltrating” the rebel forces.⁸⁵⁹ The Europeans were moving so quickly, according to Blumenthal, “to ensure that the new government does not allow AQIM and others to set up small, semi-

⁸⁵⁷ Lizzie Phelan, “Free Tripoli’ - Just Don’t Mention the Corpses,” axisoflogic.com, September 6, 2011. https://axisoflogic.com/artman/publish/Article_63711.shtml. Phelan’s article was originally published by *RT*, which is now inaccessible.

⁸⁵⁸ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 159, 160.

⁸⁵⁹ Blumenthal, email to Hillary Clinton, “Lots of new intel; Libyan army possibly on verge of collapse.”

autonomous local entities—or "Caliphates"—in the oil and gas producing regions of southeastern Libya."⁸⁶⁰ It is impossible to say that the United States Secretary of State was not warned. The almost complete omission of what this single email alone, sent just 10 days after OUP was launched, by media sources, analysts, and academics over a decade later is confounding, granted it was not made public until late 2015.

In multiple interviews, print, video, and audio during the uprisings Vandewalle consistently downplayed, outright rejected really, the notion of radical Libyan Islamists or other organizations having any presence in Libya, and his 2012 work never mentions the LIFG or any Islamist group by name, only mentioning the Islamists' presence a few times in passing.⁸⁶¹ Vandewalle does not even mention the 1996 joint UK-LIFG assassination plot against Gaddafi in his 2012 work, but in *Libya Since Independence: Oil and State-building* (1998) he does note the following (if sequestered in the footnotes),

Since 1973 there have been periodic arrests (and executions) of Islamist figures. Some of these—such as shaykh al-Bishti (heir to a prominent Tripolitanian family) and the Tripoli mufti, shaykh Zawi—were independent leaders who objected in particular to Qadhafi's pronouncements on Islam and the value of hadith and sunna. Others, however, particularly those arrested since 1987, belonged to more politically active, "fundamentalist" groups that Qadhafi clearly considers more dangerous to his regime. They include the Hizb al-Tahrir al-Islami, Takfir wa Hijroh, Tabligh, the Jihad al-Islami, and the Munazzamat al-Jihad al-Islami, as well as other groups that have randomly cropped up and claimed responsibility for diverse acts of sabotage inside the country.⁸⁶²

⁸⁶⁰ Blumenthal, email to Hillary Clinton, "Lots of new intel."

⁸⁶¹ Coleman E. Shear, "Interview With Dirk Vandewalle."

⁸⁶² Vandewalle, *Libya Since Independence*, 50.

Vandewalle relays information of a different, and successful 1988 assassination of “Ahmad al-Warfalli, a prominent revolutionary committee member,” which was blamed on Islamists, in 1998.⁸⁶³

In her 2012 book, *Libya: The Rise and Fall of Qaddafi*, Pargeter at least included the 1996 assassination attempt on Gaddafi and other historical instances of and wrote of Gaddafi’s “almost personal hatred for his Islamist enemies” that he “sought to ridicule them at every turn.”⁸⁶⁴ Pargeter’s abundant commentary on the Islamist presence in Libya since the 1970s actually includes details that a variety of other publications do not mention. In May of 1972 one Islamist student in Benghazi publicly challenged Gaddafi and denounced his pan-Arabist tendencies, “there is no call for nationalism in the Qu’ran” said the student, “The Qu’ran didn’t say, ‘oh Arabs’, not even once and the mention of the Ummah in the Qu’ran is the Islamic one.”⁸⁶⁵ Gaddafi replied “No, no, you are sick! I blame this college...we must put you in a clinic,” and arrested him, two days later the student was publicly apologizing on television.⁸⁶⁶ Pargeter doesn’t mention if this Islamist was executed, as many were, but writes of “Islamist and militant leftish elements...battling it out on university campuses” in 1976.⁸⁶⁷

Part of what so enraged Gaddafi about the Islamists, besides the challenge to his power that they represented, was their rejection of his genuine

⁸⁶³ Vandewalle, *Libya Since Independence*, 132.

⁸⁶⁴ Pargeter, *Rise and Fall*, 167.

⁸⁶⁵ Pargeter, *Rise and Fall*, 121.

⁸⁶⁶ Pargeter, *Rise and Fall*, 121.

⁸⁶⁷ Pargeter, *Rise and Fall*, 94.

attempts to promote moderate readings of Islam, pouring huge sums of money into institutions such as The Islamic Call Society.⁸⁶⁸ In 1998 Vandewalle wrote that since the 1970s Gaddafi repeatedly “stressed the need to restore Islamic law as part of a rejection of the cultural legacy of Western colonialism. In April 1990, Qadhafi still insisted that his revolution had reinstated true Islam.”⁸⁶⁹ Rather than cultivate moderate readings of Islam, the British and United States worked towards the very opposite. Throughout the 1990s the British fostered elements of the LIFG, while many other “key” LIFG members also found haven inside Ireland according to Christopher M. Davidson.⁸⁷⁰

A former Libyan jihadist described the situation leading them to Afghanistan, “a lot of young [Libyans] felt desperate because the regime made it very hard for people of Islamic persuasion to express their opinion.”⁸⁷¹ If the jihadist feels this way it reinforces the notion that Gaddafi promoted moderate readings of Islam, meanwhile the known jihadist’s words should not be taken at face value. Islam was designated the state religion in article two of the 1969 Libyan constitution, Gaddafi repeatedly praised its glory in public statements (one of his sons is even named Saif al-Islam), and other African leaders were upset at his fostering of a wider African Islamic community, all of which runs counter to the notion that people of Islamic persuasion were oppressed inside Libya - though

⁸⁶⁸ Oyeniyi, *The History of Libya*, 151.

⁸⁶⁹ Vandewalle, *Libya Since Independence*, 130.

⁸⁷⁰ Davidson, “Why Was Muammar Qadhafi Really Removed?”, 96.

⁸⁷¹ Davidson, “Why Was Muammar Qadhafi Really Removed?”, 95.

Gaddafi did oppose the position of Imams into the government.⁸⁷² Why then, would one claim it is hard for people of “Islamic persuasion to express their opinion” inside Libya? The type of “Islamic persuasion” was likely that of AQ and other radicals, their methods of self expression include terrorism and assassination plots.

Libyan Islamists and International Islamic Terror Networks in Libya: 1980-2020

Sometime between 1990-1995 Libyan veterans of the anti-Soviet Afghan jihad who were disillusioned in the Gaddafi regime formed the LIFG, while Ashour notes that between 1990-1995 the structure of the group was fluid.⁸⁷³ Pargeter suggests had roughly 300 members in 1994, while Ashour noted that by “April 1992 [the LIFG] numbered between 900 and 1,000 individuals.”⁸⁷⁴ A former Libyan jihadist described the situation leading them to Afghanistan, “a lot of young [Libyans] felt desperate because the regime made it very hard for people of Islamic persuasion to express their opinion.”⁸⁷⁵ In the 1980s, the anti-Soviet jihad consolidated support and Islamist sentiment in the region, attracting the likes of Belhadj, in 1988.⁸⁷⁶ In 2019, Tam Hussein writing for the Middle East Eye

⁸⁷² Oyeniyi, *The History of Libya*, 112, 123, 151.

⁸⁷³ Oyeniyi, *The History of Libya*, 203. Ashour, “Post-Jihadism,” 381.

⁸⁷⁴ Pargeter, *Rise and Fall*, 168. Omar Ashour, “Post-Jihadism: Libya and the Global Transformations of Armed Islamist Movements,” *Terrorism and Political Violence* 23 no. 3: (June 1, 2011), 382, <https://doi.org/10.1080/09546553.2011.560218>.

⁸⁷⁵ Davidson, “Why Was Muammar Qadhafi Really Removed?,” 95.

⁸⁷⁶ Tam Hussein, “Abdul Hakim Belhadj: Why I rejected bin Laden’s invitation to join al-Qaeda,” Middle East Eye, June 30, 2019,

published a biographical article on Belhadj based on a personal interview Hussein conducted with Belhadj, where he details Belhadj's motivations and why he, supposedly, "rejected bin Laden's invitation to join al-Qaeda."⁸⁷⁷ At the age of 18 Belhadj fell in with other dissidents "Following an attack on an army barracks by anti-Gaddafi militants in May 1984," and seeing "bodies hanging from a gallows erected in a square on the campus as students hurried between lectures" at Tripoli University.⁸⁷⁸

According to one "former militant" his brother was ripped off a bus by Libyan security services for having a long beard, which the security forces then lit on fire on the streets of Benghazi.⁸⁷⁹ This was not an isolated phenomenon, she also noted that in "one interrogation of Sheikh Al-Bishti, the imam of Tripoli" the security forces also lit his beard on fire.⁸⁸⁰ In 1989, after an armed Islamist group of sleeper cells led by Sheik Mohamed Fahkih were uncovered by the regime in the cities of Ajdabia, Misrata, and Benghazi, the regime launched a mass arrest campaign for hundreds of suspected Islamists and their sympathizers which included, according to Pargeter and Omar Ashour, anyone suspected of "the slightest connection to the Islamist movement."⁸⁸¹ "Qaddafi left no space

<https://www.middleeasteye.net/big-story/abdul-hakim-belhaj-libya-alqaeda-binladen>.

⁸⁷⁷ Hussein, "Abdul Hakim Belhaj: Why I rejected bin Laden's invitation to join al-Qaeda."

⁸⁷⁸ Hussein, "Why I rejected bin Laden's invitation to join al-Qaeda."

⁸⁷⁹ Pargeter, *Rise and Fall*, 165

⁸⁸⁰ Pargeter, *Rise and Fall*, 102.

⁸⁸¹ Pargeter, *Rise and Fall*, 166; Omar Ashour, "Post-Jihadism: Libya and the Global Transformations of Armed Islamist Movements," 387. Ashour noted that,

whatsoever for those of an Islamist persuasion,” and he declared “the sentence...for everyone who is found guilty of not knowing God properly will be to crush him immediately.”⁸⁸² Gaddafi continued, “If you are told that one member of your family was found in this [religious] movement, it is as if you have been told that he has AIDS, and that he is finished. You cannot possibly plead on his behalf. His is a religious hypocrite and must be crushed.”⁸⁸³

During the anti-Soviet jihad, Libyan Islamists in Afghanistan formed *Seraya Al-Mujahideen*, later renamed to the LIFG (which may actually just be Islamic Fighting Group as some claim the national designation is a pan-European phenomenon), in the same milieu as *al-Qaeda*, and shared quarters and conversation with Osama bin-Laden and other soon-to-be ranking AQ members.⁸⁸⁴ According to Ashour, the group developed ties to other jihadist groups in the region such as, *al-Gama’a al-Islamiyya* (or the Egyptian al-Jihad Organization), the Algerian Armed Islamic Group, and “the Salafi Group for Preaching and Combat (GSPC), from which a major faction separated to form al-Qaida in the Islamic Countries of al-Maghreb (AQIM).”⁸⁸⁵

besides the common detention and torture, the Libyan forces “also used various forms of collective, indiscriminate punishments, such as razing the houses of families of LIFG members, taking relatives of suspected LIFG members hostage, and even publicly exhibiting the bodies of dead LIFG members.”

⁸⁸² Pargeter, *Rise and Fall*, 166-167.

⁸⁸³ Pargeter, *Rise and Fall*, 166-167.

⁸⁸⁴ Omar Ashour, “Post-Jihadism: Libya and the Global Transformations of Armed Islamist Movements,” 392. See footnote 2.

⁸⁸⁵ Ashour, “Post-Jihadism,” 378.

All the while Ashour, Belhadj himself, and most sources, contend that the LIFG was not particularly sympathetic to *al-Qaeda* or Bin-Laden.⁸⁸⁶ Supposedly the majority of the LIFG had soured on jihadism right before 9/11, and a 2007 “declaration that the LIFG had joined al-Qaida” by Ayman al-Zawahiri alongside ranking LIFG member, Abu Layth, was a fluke, as was Abu Yahya al-Libi (another LIFG member) membership in the upper echelons of AQ.⁸⁸⁷ Following the United States’ rendition to Belhadj back to Libya in 2004 or 2005, on the initiative of Saif al-Islam the regime began a reconciliation process in which Belhadj, and other ranking LIFG members, officially renounced violence and authored the book, *Corrective Studies in Understandings of Jihad, Enforcement of Morality, and Judgment of People*, to denounce their prior ways.⁸⁸⁸ However, according to a 2017 biographical article on Belhadj, Sudarsan Raghavan wrote that according to Belhadj, “Still, waging ‘jihad’ against US forces in Iraq and Afghanistan was ‘a sacred act,’ they maintained. ‘When America invades a country, the insurgency is legal,’ Belhadj told me in 2010.”⁸⁸⁹ To what degree Belhadj reformed is questionable, perhaps, as Pack said, too much trust is put into what they profess to believe ideologically.

⁸⁸⁶ Sudarsan Raghavan, “Abdulahkim Belhadj’s Journey from Extremism to Political Life.”

⁸⁸⁷ Ashour, “Post-Jihadism,” 385.

⁸⁸⁸ Ashour, “Post-Jihadism,” 384.

⁸⁸⁹ Sudarsan Raghavan, “Abdulahkim Belhadj’s Journey from Extremism to Political Life.”

By the early 1990s some of the LIFG settled in Benghazi and rivaled other local groups, such as the Islamic Martyrs' Movement and the secular Libyan Nationalist Salvation Front (LNSF) according to Ashour, aka the National Front for the Salvation of Libya (NFSL).⁸⁹⁰ In 1995 LIFG cell network exposed themselves after botching, in some way, a rendition of one of their members being treated at a hospital that alerted the Gaddafi regime of their previously covert cells.⁸⁹¹ The regime then unleashed another sweeping crackdown on Islamist groups and anyone suspected of being in one, and the tribal and familial connections of those swept up were collectively punished as well.⁸⁹²

Believing their cover to be blown the LIFG then called for a jihad against Gaddafi in 1995, and in 1996, LIFG member Mohamed Abdullad Al-Ghrew threw a grenade at Gaddafi's vehicle which missed and blew up a separate car.⁸⁹³ However, while most sources cite a single 1996 attack, (and the suspicious sources don't mention it all) a 2018 report on the LIFG by the Mapping Militants Project (MMP) lists three separate attempts on Gaddafi's life, with the one recalled by Pargeter involving the explosive thrown by Al-Ghrew in November supposedly occurring on February 14, while another attempt was carried out in

⁸⁹⁰ Ashour, "Post-Jihadism," 383.

⁸⁹¹ Pargeter, *Rise and Fall*, 168; Ashour, "Post-Jihadism," 383. Pargeter describes the situation as "a naïve error on the part of one LIFG cell," while Ashour claims that the LIFG was essentially too good, and the operation at the hospital "was successful and sophisticated, and the Libyan authorities believed that there must be a well-organized group behind it."

⁸⁹² Pargeter, *Rise and Fall*, 169; Ashour, "Post-Jihadism," 385

⁸⁹³ Pargeter, *Rise and Fall*, 169.

November 1996, but the report offers no detail, and lists yet another LIFG assassination plot on the November of 1998.⁸⁹⁴ Ashour notes that the group “attempted to assassinate Libyan leader Colonel Qaddafi on three occasions between 1995 and 1996,” and in 2011 *ABC News* wrote that the LIFG “carried out at least four suspected assassination attempts against Gaddafi in the 1990s.”⁸⁹⁵ Either way, after a 1996 attempt on his life Gaddafi declared, in tandem with another mass arrest campaign, open season on Islamists. Members of Libya’s revolutionary committees were granted the right to kill any suspects and then “triumphantly paraded the corpses” through the streets as the family members of suspects were forced onto the streets to take part in hunting down their relatives and then parading their corpse.⁸⁹⁶ This environment of revenge in the country when the 1996 Abu Slim (Pargeter and Pack both use this translation) prison massacre occurred, which interestingly Pargeter offers a specific number of 1,286 total deaths but it is not cited in any way.⁸⁹⁷

The 1996 LIFG assassination attempt on Gaddafi, which Davidson reaffirms MMP’s finding it took place in February, was orchestrated, at least in part, by British intelligence agencies.⁸⁹⁸ The British planned to use LIFG veterans to assassinate Gaddafi and spread unrest through Libya while compromised

⁸⁹⁴ Mapping Militants Project (MMP), “The Libyan Islamic Fighting Group,” last modified July 1, 2018.

⁸⁹⁵ Ashour, “Post-Jihadism,” 383; *ABC News*, “From Terror Group Founder to Libyan Rebel Military Commander.”

⁸⁹⁶ Pargeter, *Rise and Fall*, 169.

⁸⁹⁷ Pargeter, *Rise and Fall*, 170.

⁸⁹⁸ Davidson, “Why Was Muammar Qadhafi Really Removed?”, 96.

Libyan Army Officers carried out a political coup. Six were ultimately killed in this overthrow attempt, but Gaddafi remained.⁸⁹⁹ The British Foreign Secretary denied any involvement in this action, but MI5 Officer David Shayler claimed two years later, in an interview with the BBC, that the MI6 paid the LIFG 100,000 pounds and provided 250 weapons to carry out the assassination of Gaddafi.⁹⁰⁰ A leaked MI6 document later appeared in United States intel databases in 2000 called “UK Alpha Eyes” which confirmed a British plot and the secretary of the British “D Notice” censorship committee then requested the document not be published in full, suggesting there is sensitive information included that likely concretely confirms British involvement.⁹⁰¹

Among the LIFG members granted asylum in the UK was Abu Anas al-Libi, considered a “key player in al-Qaeda in Afghanistan since the early days”, who moved to London in 1995.⁹⁰² Al-Libi participated in an earlier failed assassination plot on Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak, would later be implicated in the AQ bombings of two American embassies in Tanzania and Kenya in 1998, and trained AQ operatives in surveillance techniques in Nairobi.⁹⁰³ Al-Libi was implicated in the MI6 orchestrated 1995 assassination attempt on Gaddafi and supposedly worked closely with the MI6 for a period.⁹⁰⁴

⁸⁹⁹ Davidson, “Why Was Muammar Qadhafi Really Removed?”, 96.

⁹⁰⁰ Davidson, “Why Was Muammar Qadhafi Really Removed?”, 96.

⁹⁰¹ Davidson, “Why Was Muammar Qadhafi Really Removed?”, 95-96.

⁹⁰² Davidson, “Why Was Muammar Qadhafi Really Removed?”, 96.

⁹⁰³ Davidson, “Why Was Muammar Qadhafi Really Removed?”, 95.

⁹⁰⁴ Davidson, “Why Was Muammar Qadhafi Really Removed?”, 96.

After fleeing Manchester in 2000 a search of his apartment revealed a 180-page terrorist training manual.⁹⁰⁵ Many other lower profile LIFG members remained inside Western Europe, with one member leaving Dublin in 2004 to join the Islamist insurgency growing against United States-led coalition forces and the post-Saddam Baghdad government in Iraq.⁹⁰⁶

Given these details, it is much more likely the earlier Libyan jihadist that “felt desperate because the regime made it very hard for people of Islamic persuasion to express their opinion,” was lying or exaggerating the claims to justify the Libyans excursion into Afghanistan, and to downplay his radical beliefs.⁹⁰⁷ Hundreds of Libyans had poured into Afghanistan to take part in the anti-Soviet jihad, particularly from Libya’s Eastern province where many more later traveled to oppose the Americans that initially armed them against the Soviets.⁹⁰⁸ This could be the true lynchpin of the jihadists’ complaints, as many in the East felt that the region was unfairly glossed over in favor of development projects elsewhere - particularly in Sirte, Gaddafi’s home region.⁹⁰⁹ By and large the East was viewed with hostility because it was home to the jihadists who made attempts on Gaddafi’s life, and the March 1997 adoption of the Charter of Honour empowered tribal leaders and Gaddafi indirectly to crush them, while the eastern city of Benghazi was neglected.

⁹⁰⁵ Davidson, “Why Was Muammar Qadhafi Really Removed?”, 96.

⁹⁰⁶ Davidson, “Why Was Muammar Qadhafi Really Removed?”, 96.

⁹⁰⁷ Davidson, “Why Was Muammar Qadhafi Really Removed?”, 95.

⁹⁰⁸ Oyeniyi, *The History of Libya*, 204, 205.

⁹⁰⁹ Forte, *Slouching Towards Sirte*, 96.

In 1998, the regime managed to take 152 members into custody, including their leadership and by the end of the 1990s, the LIFG and wider Islamist threat was vanquished.⁹¹⁰ Pack confirms this was true of Iraq prior to the 2003 American-led invasion and collapse of that government, and Syria in 2011, wherein the partial (in Syria) or total state collapse (in Libya and Iraq) allowed the jihadi elements to return in force and not vice versa, as some have tried to claim as an excuse for the ostensible nightmarish failures of their Libyan and Syrian interventions.⁹¹¹

As mentioned, after rebels forced Gaddafi out from Tripoli, in August 22, 2011 Belhadj was appointed as commander of Tripoli Military Council for successfully leading the rebels assault on Tripoli.⁹¹² Christopher M. Davidson succinctly describes the duplicity or coincidental happenstance that Belhadj and ISIS continued to serve the United States interests (if indirectly) while suddenly adopting a deeper respect for jihadi-led Libya's sovereignty than was given to the country in 2011 (however these claims have been disputed, like most on the LIFG, Belhadj, and Libya generally),

By 2015 things were going badly for the Tripoli government. Not only was it still challenged by the pro-US administration in Tobruk and continuing to face air strikes from two of the West's Arab allies, but its leadership was experiencing repeated Islamic State-linked assassination attempts. To

⁹¹⁰ Ashour, "Post-Jihadism," 383.

⁹¹¹ Pack, *Global Enduring Disorder*, 119.

⁹¹² Forte, *Slouching Towards Sirte*, 204; Raghavan, "Abdulkhakim Belhadj's Journey from Extremism to Political Life."

make matters worse, the Qatar-backed and former CIA captive Adel Hakim Belhadj had also resurfaced, but this time allegedly as part of the Islamic State in Libya. Making the allegation on mainstream US television that Belhadj was now 'firmly aligned with the Islamic State and supports their training camps in eastern Libya', US intelligence officials told their interviewers that Belhadj and other such Islamic State commanders in Libya could nevertheless not be attacked because '[the United States] didn't have targeting authority to take them out.'⁹¹³

During OUP, the LIFG welcomed AQ elements into the Libyan uprising, where they operated under the name mantle of AQIM, which, as Blumenthal's email noted, were present in Libya since the earliest days of the uprising. Operating out of Darnah, AQIM spread to nearly every city and town and used the area to direct and train for global terror operations.⁹¹⁴ Known AQ organizer Abd al-Muhsin Al-Libi's Libya Shield Force allied with the NTC, coordinated with the LIFG, and supposedly played a key role in Gaddafi's death on October 20th, 2011.⁹¹⁵ In 2014, roughly 500 members of the previous Battar Brigade, and now an element of ISIS, returned to Libya and formed the Islamic Youth Shura Council (IYSC).⁹¹⁶

⁹¹³ Davidson, *Shadow Wars*, 474.

⁹¹⁴ Oyeniyi, *The History of Libya*, 205.

⁹¹⁵ Oyeniyi, *The History of Libya*, 203.

⁹¹⁶ Oyeniyi, *The History of Libya*, 206.

The IYSC quickly took control of Derna in chaotic post-Gaddafi Libya, and ISIS sent leading members to organize there, including Abu Nabil al Anbari, a senior aide to ISIS founder Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi.⁹¹⁷ By November 13, 2014 al-Baghdadi officiated IYSC members as part of ISIS and announced their presence throughout Libya in al Bayda, Benghazi, Sirte, al-Khums, Jebel Akhdar, and Tripoli.⁹¹⁸ From here ISIS turned Libya into a hot-bed of recruitment and a center to organize global terror operations.⁹¹⁹

Fathi Terbil, The Abu Salim Prison Massacre of 1996 and the Start of the Uprising

The February 15, 2011, uprisings that initiated OUP were intimately linked to the LIFG, which considering their historic cooperation with Western intelligence services, the fact that LIFG involvement is to be found at every point of OUP is highly suspect. The Abu Salim Prison Massacre of 1996, wherein most sources claim over 1,000 LIFG members were killed, was the violent conclusion of Gaddafi's brutal retaliation against the LIFG.⁹²⁰ The massacre was initiated when Abdullah al-Sanussi assembled a prisoners' demonstration in the courtyard, leading the security forces to open fire on the crowd.⁹²¹ This was precipitated by events in 1995, when Osama Bin Laden was unable to prevent the Sudanese government's campaigns against Arab jihadists and the LIFG was expelled from

⁹¹⁷ Oyeniyi, *The History of Libya*, 206.

⁹¹⁸ Oyeniyi, *The History of Libya*, 206.

⁹¹⁹ Oyeniyi, *The History of Libya*, 209.

⁹²⁰ Oyeniyi, *The History of Libya*, 205.

⁹²¹ Oyeniyi, *The History of Libya*, 178.

the country.⁹²² Many of the LIFG were then forced to return to Libya where those suspected of LIFG or jihadist activities were quickly arrested and or killed. News of the massacre was suppressed from the public and no effort was made to inform the families, some of who continued to visit the prison and leave gifts for their long-dead relatives.⁹²³

Fathi Terbil, the “human rights lawyer” (which is where most Western sources begin and end with their description of Terbil) established The Association for the Martyrs of the Abu Salim Massacre in 2009.⁹²⁴ This organization and Terbil advocated for those killed in Abu Salim which, as a 2009 Human Rights Watch report notes “Many of those imprisoned in Abu Salim belong to Islamist groups. Although some have advocated violence, many have not and none have received fair trials,” including Terbil’s own brother, a brother-in-law, and a cousin.⁹²⁵ Alison Pargeter describes Terbil as “young and unassuming lawyer,” and “the softly spoken Terbil.”⁹²⁶ Which are not inaccurate descriptors and match Terbil’s recorded interview appearance, but without including information on his familial ties to the LIFG feel insincere.⁹²⁷

⁹²² Oyeniyi, *The History of Libya*, 204.

⁹²³ Oyeniyi, *The History of Libya* 178; Pargeter, *Rise and Fall*, 213.

⁹²⁴ Fathi Terbil, interview with SharqOrg, “Fathi Terbil,” *Tarikhi*.

⁹²⁵ Morayef, “Truth and Justice Can’t Wait,” 35.

⁹²⁶ Pargeter, *Rise and Fall*, 213.

⁹²⁷ Insincere on the part of Western retellings, not Terbil, who is largely forthcoming about these relations and has every reason to wish for his family’s release from prisons. Given he was arrested multiple times and repeatedly released, it seems unlikely Terbil was personally involved in any jihadist or violent activity.

According to Terbil, his brother Ismail was arrested on January 18, 1989 after he “became an Islamist while studying to become an aero engineer. He became quite fundamentalist and left university. Islamism in the 1980s wasn’t political... Ismail wasn’t intellectual enough to be a political Islamist.”⁹²⁸ Though the ideological leaders of the political Islamist movement might have been learned intellectuals or studiously religious, there was not an entry exam for the fighters who wished to join the anti-Soviet jihad, and Islamism in Libya was certainly political in the 1980s. As Jason Pack put forth, the ideological and intellectual basis of jihadist groups are tertiary to more immediate interests and allegiances based simply in social relations and locality, and function very similarly to the logic of the secular militia groups, as Pack put it, “if you’re Misuratan and you’re connected to Misurata in this way, so you don’t really care that its connected to Libya Dawn.”⁹²⁹ Combined the two assertions appear as a very weak attempt to distance not just Terbil and his brother from further scrutiny, but the entire NATO campaign, which rested in large part on the back of the legitimacy of Terbil’s reputation and the uprisings he planned. The fate of Libya may have been entirely different had Western audiences and the United Nations not been sold an image of the uprisings and rebels as being led by democratic liberal-minded individuals along with fabricated propaganda sourced from Qatar and the Saudis, both of who were major financiers of Islamist operations

⁹²⁸ Terbil, interview, “Fathi Terbil.”

⁹²⁹ Pack, “The Origins and Evolution of ISIS in Libya,” 15:50-16:30.

throughout the MENA region, with Saudi Arabia implicated directly in funding the LIFG.⁹³⁰

Beyond the fabricated atrocities, the media or the sources that fed them information appeared to be intentionally sanitizing the image of anyone related to the LIFG, along with the high command of NATO, the academic champions of foreign intervention, and the desperate humanitarian altruists. The vast majority of these Western sources continued to sanitize the image of the rebel forces in their publications long after the fact and in their characterization of the jihadist element in the Syrian civil war as rebels once again.

Terbil notes that his other brother, Faraj, was an officer in a foreign intelligence unit and was arrested as well, but was placed in a separate ward than those that revolted and were then massacred because “he was not considered high risk,” implying that whoever was in the 1996 massacre were possibly considered high risk given their LIFG ties.⁹³¹ Terbil suggests Faraj was not associated with any Islamist group and his arrest was out of an abundance of caution due to Ismail’s connections, and that Faraj had not alerted the regime of them previously.⁹³² Whatever the veracity of these claims, a member of the foreign intelligence community having familial ties with whatever the state considers a terrorist group would alarm most security agencies. Furthermore, as a member of the Libyan foreign intelligence services, Faraj would almost

⁹³⁰ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 63.

⁹³¹ Terbil, interview, “Fathi Terbil.”

⁹³² Terbil, interview, “Fathi Terbil.”

certainly have connections to the United States or the UK as intelligence sharing and inter-agency cooperation was initiated as part of the War on Terror cooperation between the two. During this Abdelhakim Belhadj, leader of the LIFG, was rendered by the United States back to Libya in the mid 2000s, where he was released in 2010 after supposedly reforming under a program of reconciliation Saif al-Islam promoted, only to appear as a leader in the rebel NTC forces, and major link between the CIA, State Department, Turkey, and Syria in the network that transferred arms and fighters between the nations for years afterword.⁹³³

Terbil was arrested (for the fifth time) by the Gaddafi regime on February 15, 2011, in order to preempt a demonstration that he had been planning for the 17. The arrest had the opposite effect. Terbil's arrest backfired and served as the tinder the lit Libya ablaze, despite that the regime's intention to only hold Terbil temporarily to wait out the planned demonstration. Though it sounds unlikely on the face of it, precedent demonstrated that he would have likely been released by the regime rather than killed. Terbil's first arrests in 1991 and 1995 lasted only two months, as he notes "They [the Gaddafi regime] would round up people with ties to any security concerns for fear they might jeopardize the various celebratory events held around 1 September," the anniversary of the 1969 coup.⁹³⁴

⁹³³ Campbell, *Global NATO*, 61; Kelly, "Chris Stevens May Have Been Linked To Jihadist Rebels In Syria."

⁹³⁴ Terbil, interview, "Fathi Terbil."

Though the prisons were certainly harsh, and prisoners arbitrarily subjected to various forms of torture without so much as a formal charge, the fact that Terbil had been arrested and released repeatedly also suggests that the regime was not habitually executing prisoners at random, though that notion is floated with some good cause. In their 2009 report, Human Rights Watch detailed one of Terbil's arrests (assumedly his fourth) between March 26 and March 30, after which Saif al-Islam personally intervened to secure Terbil's, and two others release.⁹³⁵ Saif al-Islam was consistently one of the most outspoken voices for not just neoliberal economic reform, but also legal reform of the Libyan criminal justice system for many suspected Islamists who could not have expected the same sympathy if held by the United States. In the same 2009 Human Rights Watch report, it was noted that "Over the past two years, Libyan authorities have released 238 prisoners, 40 in March and most recently 88 in October. Overall, 136 of these prisoners were members of the Libyan Islamic Fighting Group."⁹³⁶ By 2010 even Belhadj was released, and according to an August 2010 *Reuters* report Saif al-Islam "has campaigned for reconciliation with Islamists who promise to lay down their arms," and "More than 700 prisoners accused of having ties to Islamist militant groups have now been released."⁹³⁷ Which ultimately

⁹³⁵ Morayef, "Truth and Justice Can't Wait," 58.

⁹³⁶ Morayef, "Truth and Justice Can't Wait," 35.

⁹³⁷ Salah Sarrar "Ex-Islamists walk free from Libyan jail," *Reuters*, August 31, 2010, <https://www.reuters.com/article/2010/08/31/us-libya-prisoners-release-idUSTRE67U5U420100831/>.

backfired tremendously, and given the February 15 uprisings in Benghazi in opposition to Terbil's arrest consisted primarily of associates and family members of those killed in Abu Salim (family and associates of the LIFG), the supposedly spontaneous uprisings throughout were also likely infiltrated by LIFG associates from the very beginning.⁹³⁸

It is likely that Saif al-Islam's campaign to release the Islamists from prison in an effort to reform Libya's image and appeal to the United States' more liberal minded sentiments only provided NATO with more shock troops to hunt his family down in 2011, and onward in Syria.

After being captured by one of the stronger secular militia groups, the Zintani, Saif al-Islam was filmed discussing his frustration at Belhadj's continued Western media appearances that sanitized his record and vilified the Gaddafi regime after Saif ensured that conditions significantly improved for LIFG members, even continuing to provide for them after their release and struggle with unemployment.⁹³⁹ According to Ashour, "the 214 LIFG suspects who were released on 24 March 2010 were given an initial 'loan' of 10,000 Libyan Dinars to help them resettle."⁹⁴⁰

In the aforementioned recording, translated and posted by *The Telegraph*, Saif al-Islam ironically predicted that in under a year they will regret trusting Belhadj over him,

⁹³⁸ Terbil, interview, "Fathi Terbil."

⁹³⁹ Pack, *Global Enduring Disorder*, 84.

⁹⁴⁰ Ashour, "Post-Jihadism," 389.

Keep on considering them the good ones and me the liar, but mark my words, because I swear to God I did too much good to those two guys and they paid me back with betrayal. I assure you that Abdul Hakim Bilhadj and (Ali) Al Sulabi will not bring any good. Not to the country, nor to the Libyan people. There is one thing. The other thing is regarding the people of Benghazi, or the mountains (means Amazig or Berber peoples), or Misurata [simply put, the rebels]. You consider them your brothers and you have brought them upon us. Well go ahead but just give them a couple of months, or max one year, and you will find out the reality. But please don't deny that on the day Saif al-Islam was taken prisoner he warned you of all that. How come he (Abdul Hakim Bilhadj) goes on the media; I haven't seen it but I was told, and claimed that we mistreated and tortured him? I swear to God the day the Americans handed him over to us he told us how the Americans brought him here hanging from an iron bar after torturing him. We have been nothing but good to him, just put him in a villa, and brought his wife and kids.⁹⁴¹

Sure enough, 11 months later two different groups associated with Belhadj, *Ansar al-Sharia* and the February 17th Brigades, were both involved in the September 11, 2012 attacks, on supposedly opposing sides. Once again, given Saif al-Islam's words to "give them a couple of months, or max one year, and you will find out the reality," it is hard to say that the world was not warned

Conclusion

This chapter has provided historical precedent and context for the underlying motivating factors behind the adoption of constructive instability in Libya, and detailed the fundamentally destabilizing American relationship with jihadist terror networks, before, during, and after OUP. Muhammad Ali's Egyptian industrial developmentalist regime challenged the pan-European world's

⁹⁴¹ Saif al-Islam Gaddafi, "Libya: Saif al-Islam Gaddafi warns captors about Islamist leader in new video," *The Telegraph*, YouTube video, November 22, 2011, 1:40-3:11, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yJ87DR1j_lc.

continued domination of the region, and threatened the interests of regional rivals that collaborated in a nineteenth century campaign that was repeated in the twenty first century destruction of neighboring Libya. From then on, besides Nasser's relatively brief attempt to assert Egyptian and pan-Arab will, pan-European economic domination forced Egypt into compliance with the West. All of which likely reinforced Gaddafi's anti-imperialist conviction, pan-Arabism that transformed into pan-Africanism, and his suspicion of pan-European corporate interests. Gaddafi's domestic and pan-African policies intended to consolidate Libyan and African sovereignty to stand against the continued pan-European imperial projects in Africa came to the fore while the United States-led international economic system was in crisis. This provided the motive for the destabilization of Libya without recuperating material interests in the aftermath of OUP. Finally, American relations with Islamist terrorist networks and the creation of an uniquely jihadi-friendly environment in post-Gaddafi Libya, along with scholars and the media's seemingly willful ignorance of Gaddafi's anti-Islamist history or the NTC rebels Islamist ties, and the continued effort to cultivate ties with such groups to send into Syria, all run counter to a strategy designed to secure investments in Libya and constitute a major core aspect of a strategy of constructive instability.

The following chapter examines the global and international ramifications of OUP and dynamics on the international stage during the decline of American hegemony. Concluding to the contrary of Jason Pack's assertion that a period of

interregnum rather than multipolarity is more likely to solidify and define the emergent post-2011 era in favor of a world-system more resembling multipolarity.

CHAPTER FIVE:

MULTIPOLARITY OR INTERREGNUM

“The spuriousness of the legal justification for the Iraq intervention together with the failure of the intervention on policy grounds have had long lasting implications for the West. Together with Kosovo it arguably emboldened President Putin to annex Crimea and weakened the reaction of the West. The experience of Libya confirmed Chinese skepticism regarding R2P.”

- Professor Shirley V. Scott of the University of New South Wales, *Rethinking Humanitarian Intervention in the 21st Century*, 2017.⁹⁴²

Since 1991 - maybe a little earlier, it's [the United States that has] kind of run the world. I think most people kind of intuitively know what that means, that's the world we all grew up in.... But that's changing, and it was always going to change as China rose and so on - but in my mind it wasn't going to change for some time, maybe 2050, or something like that. But it's changing much more rapidly, and the catalyst for it has been the war in Ukraine, effectively...

To provide the definition, multipolarity is a world in which there is no unipolar power, and there is certainly no absolute dominant power. But beyond that, it's not clear that there's even two superpowers like we saw in the Cold War. You have multiple powers, The United States it's not going away, it's a big country it's important. Um, we'll see what happens with Europe. You have China...obviously... Russia's clearly proved itself now as a military power... What we're seeing in the Middle East right now is that Iran wields a lot more power than people previously thought...

It's a world where power is distributed, I wouldn't say evenly distributed, but its distributed... I don't think we've seen anything like it since the nineteenth century. And this is a very different version than that, because in the nineteenth century we were dealing with something resembling multipower within a small part of

⁹⁴² Shirley V. Scott, foreword in *Rethinking Humanitarian Intervention in the 21st Century*, xiii.

the world, which is Europe... Today we're seeing that all across the world, which is a new system that we're moving into.

- British Macroeconomist Philip Pilkington, 2024.⁹⁴³

In 2015, Saif al-Islam, who escaped the fate of his father, brother Mutassim, and many of his other family members in NATO's 2011 campaign, received the death penalty in a trial undertaken by the Libya Dawn Militia in absentia, as another competing militia held him prisoner.⁹⁴⁴ Damian Grenfell notes, "That the son of the former and executed dictator faced a death penalty that could not be fulfilled due to competing militias speaks to the violent dystopia that Libya has become."⁹⁴⁵ OUP turned Libya into a chaotic violent dystopia, rather than a liberal democracy. Grenfell continues, noting that, "Libya had come to resemble the very thing the UK Prime Minister David Cameron sought to avoid in 2011, namely 'a pariah state festering on Europe's border, a source of instability, exporting terror beyond her borders'."⁹⁴⁶

The competing militia groups armed and empowered by NATO predictably ripped through the power vacuum of post-Gaddafi Libya and after a single election, fractured the country as the low-intensity conflict that continued unabated from 2011 exploded into the Second Libyan Civil War. ISIS and

⁹⁴³ Pilkington, "Everything You're Told About The Global Economy Is Wrong," 3:20-5:35.

⁹⁴⁴ Damian Grenfell, "Rethinking Humanitarian-Military Interventions: Violence and Modernity in an Age of Globalisation," 15.

⁹⁴⁵ Grenfell, "Rethinking Humanitarian-Military Interventions," 15.

⁹⁴⁶ Grenfell, "Rethinking Humanitarian-Military Interventions," 15.

al-Qaeda-linked groups seized control of almost every city or town of significance in this chaos. Contingents from dozens of countries' armed forces and proxies flooded in, while the European NATO allies, never unified by a shared goal or plan, funded opposing factions. Khalifa Haftar, who lived comfortably in Langley, Virginia before the uprisings in 2011, emerged in Libya as one of the most powerful warlords.⁹⁴⁷ Haftar has been accused or alleged to be combating terrorism, collaborating with ISIS, being an American proxy, to having Russian backing.

United States Hegemony: Liberal Hegemony or Settler-Colonizer Hegemony

This is the chaos Jason Pack observed and then concluded Libya was a representative microcosm of the breakdown of world order. Pack explains the dynamics of the Global Enduring Disorder are self-reinforcing and without significant changes to the international legal system, geopolitical realities, incentive structures, or modalities of thought to interpret all of these differently, even then it will be unlikely that any semblance of post-WWII Pax Americana will return in the foreseeable future.⁹⁴⁸ Despite Pack's fairly obvious ideological leanings towards the Democratic Party and lengthy critiques of the Trump

⁹⁴⁷ Andrea Beccaro, "Russia: Looking for a Warm Sea," in *Foreign Actors in Libya's Crisis*, edited by Karim Mezran and Arturo Varvelli, (Milano: Ledizioni Ledi Publishing, 2017), 79. In 2017 Beccaro wrote in this Atlantic Council commissioned study of Haftar's alignment with Russia was due to shared "concerns about the role of Islamist militias in Tripoli and the increasing role of the Islamic State in the region at the time; Haftar presents himself as a bulwark against Islamist terror organizations."

⁹⁴⁸ Pack, *Global Enduring Disorder*, xliv.

Administration, he said in 2021 “For those in America and abroad who think that Joseph Robinette Biden Jr. has been anointed by the accidents of history as the centrist Messiah” who could bring stability to the world stage, or even the United States alone, “I have bad news.”⁹⁴⁹ Pack notes of the first few months of the Biden Administration coming to a close at time of writing, “an escalation of the feud with China” and rhetorically invoking a NATO response to “Russian and Chinese threats,” while the first move of any significance he made was to withdraw from Afghanistan, which Pack thinks “diminishes America’s global leadership credentials.”⁹⁵⁰ Compared to events unfolding in 2024, what Pack described in 2021 sounds rather quaint.

It is no surprise that the United States’ leadership Pack laments is no more, has diminished in lockstep with the decline of American hegemony. It was always pure military and economic power. Whatever, if any of the “leadership credentials” Pack believed still existed to be diminished by 2021 was but the ghost of a fictional character.⁹⁵¹

To Pack in 2021 the emerging geopolitical world order is not just more likely to be a period of interregnum, he says that we have left the post-Cold War and post-9/11 periods and “have already entered an interregnum of global order.”⁹⁵² Without American leadership providing “values-based tenants of an

⁹⁴⁹ Pack, *Global Enduring Disorder*, 345.

⁹⁵⁰ Pack, *Global Enduring Disorder*, 345.

⁹⁵¹ Pack, *Global Enduring Disorder*, 332. The faltering American leadership more like the ghosts in the metaphorical ghost ship that Pack invokes in comparison to the United States than he realized.

⁹⁵² Pack, *Global Enduring Disorder*, li.

American-led Cold War world order,” the whole international system will collapse in on itself and the annihilation of global leadership or order would come as truly devastating global catastrophes appear on the horizon.⁹⁵³ There would be no multipolar world order, evident in the inability of major and minor actors to cooperate on the global stage for mutually beneficial outcomes. Despite “each” instance of “early post-Cold War American leadership—in the Balkans, Afghanistan, and Iraq,” which were (Pack says “might” have been) “undertaken for the wrong reasons or the exit strategy poorly thought out,” the simple fact the United States was exerting its will seems to count as leadership in his formulations.⁹⁵⁴ Pack supposes that the chaos of post-Gaddafi Libya is a symptom and representative of the systematic incentive structures and geopolitical dynamics on the international stage that systematically create the chaos found in Libya (and Syria, Yemen, and Ukraine), and is “a leading indicator for the spread of a new type of post-conflict outcome, which unfolds from the conditions of the Enduring Disorder.”⁹⁵⁵ All while the Libyan chaos then bleeds into the international system further eroding the already damaged institutions, weak because of the decline of American hegemony which is then pushed further down the drain. If so this should be hyper-alarming to any observer or strategist interested in preserving life more than prestige.

⁹⁵³ Pack, *Global Enduring Disorder*, 9.

⁹⁵⁴ Pack, *Global Enduring Disorder*, 10.

⁹⁵⁵ Pack, *Global Enduring Disorder*, 43.

The declining American empire's belligerence is only liable to create more crises as its leaders become more insecure and hyper-perceptive of threats, real and imagined. If the American foreign policy elite continues to reflexively reach for interventionism, proxy war, and the manipulation of the international financial and legal systems in reaction to any perceived threat then the policymakers have relinquished control that diplomatic approaches could divert from the chasm that the pursuit of full spectrum dominance has routed as the United States' final destination.

Now consider, in 2021, Pack contended that the conflict in Ukraine at that point was very similar to Libya and that you can expect similar results if the same perceived incentive structures and modes of thought continue.⁹⁵⁶ None of the perceived incentive structures or modes of thought have changed for the better and the worst tendencies have been exaggerated in the wake of the 2022 Russian invasion of Ukraine. The United States appears to have as little appetite for peace or negotiation with Russia than ever before, with relations seemingly worse than those with the USSR throughout most of the Cold War because of truly perverse modes of thought, and a catastrophic failure has occurred somewhere in the process of identifying structural incentives. The point is that the United States has no legitimate national security interests or reason to insist NATO belongs in the Russian sphere of influence for no discernable reason other than blind convictions of anti-Russian hatred, or belief in American moral

⁹⁵⁶ Pack, *Global Enduring Disorder*, 43.

supremacy, or delusions of grandeur that overestimate the United States capability as a declining hegemon.⁹⁵⁷ Tim Beal noted that, “The military situation in Ukraine is likely to swing further against Kyiv. For Russia the struggle is existential, for the United States it is peripheral and the difference in commitment will be crucial.”⁹⁵⁸

Every other administration and most of their foreign policy apparatus since WWII have understood spheres of interest as largely structural and that great power competition was undesirable and counterproductive, if not suicidal in the nuclear age. As of mid-2024, Ukraine is no closer to being in NATO, in fact, official statements have always upheld that it does not qualify for NATO membership. Despite that the “open door policy” had to be maintained for its own sake. In the process, the United States has destroyed its hegemonic image forever, as its actions precipitated the creation of an entirely new system of relations. The tendency to discount diplomacy entirely and rely on hard power via kinetic strikes or attempts to use sanctions in illegal international economic lynchings while forcing others to comply, to snuff the last breath from Cuba in the

⁹⁵⁷ Pack, *Global Enduring Disorder*, 43. This study diverges sharply from Pack here when he calls Ukraine “wealthy and geostrategically important,” and there appears to be little evidence given as to why it that land sitting on Russia’s border is geostrategically important to the United States. And with greater hindsight and significantly emptier national pockets it should be asked why the United States needed to shovel money into the Ukrainian maw for it to simply not implode. Compared to the Libyan state, which did not survive under fire as long, but had no international backing and the most powerful members of NATO currently backing Ukraine directly attacking it, equating the two does not add up.

⁹⁵⁸ Tim Beal, “Weaponizing Europe, Countering Eurasia: Mackinder, Brzezinski, Nuland and the Road to the Ukraine War,” 59.

1960s, or Iran at the turn of the 1980s, then Iraq and Libya through the 1990s, and Venezuela and China in the 2000s to 2010s.⁹⁵⁹

When the unipolar moment hit at the end of 1991, and there was no longer a countervailing force to the United States, instead of engaging with the world as a liberal democracy in the era of liberal hegemony (as described by Glenn Diesen) the supposed free market was instantly disposable once it was perceived (often wrongly) to be in the interest of the United States.⁹⁶⁰ Any ideal became disposable, free markets, human rights, and democratic institutions because these were never of actual concern, but, as chapter one demonstrated, all formed interlinking webs of rhetorical justification and abstraction for self-interested parties and exploitative core-periphery dynamics (imperialist and interventionist foreign policy, neocolonial and neoliberal economics, .

As Diesen explains, liberal hegemony created one of the most intolerant homogeneous policing systems on the world stage wherein any deviation from the liberal democratic (neoliberal) prescriptions became justification for war variably invoked in an arbitrary fashion.⁹⁶¹ The degree to which a country violated these supposed principles was irrelevant since these justifications were used in an arbitrary fashion as a legitimization of the United States' pursuit of full spectrum dominance via the manipulation of the rules-based order. There could be no clearer demonstration than the disparity on show between how the United

⁹⁵⁹ The level of self-awareness lacking in trying to blacklist a whole swath of the nations with the most lucrative proven oil reserves may backfire.

⁹⁶⁰ Diesen "Decline of the West and the Liberal Order," epub.

⁹⁶¹ Diesen "Decline of the West and the Liberal Order," epub.

States rhetorically responds to Russian aggression in Ukraine and to Israeli aggression in Gaza.

The Source of the Rot

Jason Pack contends that the next world order would be an interregnum because of the supposed incapability of any other power to fill the United States' previous unipolar role. In 2024 the stronger argument leans towards multipolarity. In this conception, the source of the rot is the United States, where Pack places it in the international system itself, and then grants the United States some mythical power to provide good leadership.⁹⁶² This leadership was only ever driven by pure power which bends all others to ride in its wake or face an insurmountable tidal wave. Without a materialist-driven perspective ideology and convictions becomes more useful, not because it aligns with reality, but because it aligns with the precepts individuals have been conditioned into thinking are reality through systems of structural incentives that ensure the individual continues to propagate that belief system.

Rather, everything Pack identified is happening but it is happening to the United States, which the phenomena of BRICS has brought to the fore. The United States-led international order, the rules-based international order, is rotten, not the concept or practice of international law.⁹⁶³ Pack's Atlanticist bias, an American exceptionalist to the core, preempts his observations from reaching

⁹⁶² Pack, *Global Enduring Disorder*, xliii, 43.

⁹⁶³ Diesen "Decline of the West and the Liberal Order," epub.

the logical and insightful observations, research, and conclusions he has provided. Which are only slightly off mark.

In his conception of the Global Enduring Disorder, the creation of an alternate BRICS-led system would most likely still be subject to the same structural dynamics, for it is the international order that is creating the structural forces that destroy international cooperation and unending conflict.⁹⁶⁴ However, identifying the United States as the source of the rot, who nobody trusts to do business with out of fear they will be sanctioned next. It is the institutions the United States has tried to pass off as international that are delegitimized, as Pack fundamentally recognizes about the United Nations, for it “lacks an independent political will...constructed to provide legal cover for sovereign states’ actions to deal with geopolitical issues,” without recognizing the benefits of this system are not distributed equally even among the Permanent Security Council members.⁹⁶⁵

As long as the United States remains at the core of the world-system and international institutions to an inordinate degree, and structural changes are not made, or modalities of thinking change to interpret these incentive structures differently, the rot will continue until the initial vector of spread is quarantined. This is key, every post-WWII international institution is linked to the United States economy or state legitimacy somehow, and have structural incentives to bend to the United States’ will or can often be unilaterally forced into compliance or

⁹⁶⁴ Pack, *Global Enduring Disorder*, li. Pack does note in the preface that “theoretically” the chaos “could rapidly culminate in a Chinese-led world order.”

⁹⁶⁵ Pack, *Global Enduring Disorder*, 336-337.

outright overruled by the United States. So, the United States' adoption of full spectrum dominance and constructive instability, which manifested the age of American hegemonic decline as proxy wars of choice in Libya, Ukraine, and Syria, are more than symptoms of the chaos and disorder they are the primary cause.⁹⁶⁶

As it has been laid out, the structural impediments, perverse incentive structures, and unwillingness to invest trust in either the individual states in bilateral relations or international institutions have forced those who have trust in each other, but none in the United States or United States-led financial markets, to come together. Identifying the source of the rot in the United States leadership of the world-system and destabilizing foreign policy as the structural source of disorder in an adaptation of Pack's Global Enduring Disorder, then Pack's general idea holds and the international systems wither. As such this study asserts that it is possible for another hegemonic power or power bloc to provide everything the hegemonic United States did. The chaotic and corrosive dynamics that have come to define the international system and spread outward from the core of the rot inside it, creating the dynamics that enable protracted conflicts wherein international powers are not willing or incapable of collective action

⁹⁶⁶ For example, if the United States was not one of the prime players in Ukraine, for an indeterminate and counterproductive reason, there would have been peace secured well before. Either the United States would have 1) not pushed NATO expansion, 2) not provided the funding, weaponry, or training to convince Ukraine to fight a much larger foe, 3) early peace negotiations between Russia and Ukraine would not have been sabotaged by pan-European actors and would have been worked out based on the nationalist interests of the two parties.

towards a unified goal, emanates from the United States pursuit of full spectrum dominance in the absence of a geopolitical rival that previously justified Cold War-era belligerence. At the peak of the United States' global power, war with Iraq and Afghanistan squandered much of the political capital, goodwill, and hegemonic soft power the United States generated over the last half-century. Then it doubled and tripled down. Now that the United States is in decline, that it is picking fights with superpowers is insanity. While Obama previously said Russia was not worthwhile to even legitimate with hostilities in 2016, now in 2024 that the United States tried to wage an economic war and lost, it overplayed the United States hand and legitimized Russian influence on the world stage.

Once again, the United States did not provide any kind of leadership in and of itself, it was just the one with the nation with the most money and biggest army during a period when every other state's ability to project hegemonic power was greatly diminished and homefront ravaged by WWII. Pack mistakes this hegemonic command as leadership, the ability to bend the will of all in the world-system like gravity, occurring simply because of a structural alignment of interests and incentives. It does not have to be pre-agreed upon in forms of international collective action which Pack laments have become nigh impossible.

This study has been adapting Pack's Global Enduring Disorder paradigm away from the perceived hollowness of liberal ideology which believes the United States has provided morally "good" effectual international leadership, which Pack misidentifies as separate from pure hegemonic power to suggest the world is

going into an interregnum rather than an era of multipolarity. The United States simply used to be host to the most vibrant economy and the largest most advanced military, so the world was generally subservient to its interests. The core-periphery relations demand the periphery listen because, as for most of history, their nonexistent sovereignty can be void at will and their people slaughtered in fashions resembling the holocaust in what could better be called settler-colonial hegemony than liberal hegemony.

BRICS

Australian Professor Warwick Powell, author of *China, Trust and Digital Supply Chains: Dynamics of a Zero Trust World* (2022) details China's economic growth, the Chinese role inside of BRICS, their attempts to de-dollarize, as well as the disparities between the Chinese system of international governance and the United States.⁹⁶⁷ Warwick Powell notes that in the span of some 40 years, China has significantly raised the standards of living of "over four hundred million people" through the development of "economic ecosystems" designed to produce industrial goods that people need rather than market interests suggest would be most profitable.⁹⁶⁸ China today is now "the world's only manufacturing superpower" says Powell, and the PRC's "manufacturing net value added contributes about twenty-nine percent of global manufacturing output, and in

⁹⁶⁷ Warwick Powell, "China: Economic & Industrial Rise, West Asia Geopolitics, BRICS Blockchain | Prof. Warwick Powell," YouTube video, June 1, 2024, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BxDTE2fjT-Q&ab_channel=LenaPetrova.

⁹⁶⁸ Warwick Powell, "China: Economic & Industrial Rise, West Asia Geopolitics, BRICS Blockchain | Prof. Warwick Powell," 3:50-4:20.

gross terms, it contributes about thirty-five percent, so one in every five or one in every three units of value of manufactured output globally.”⁹⁶⁹

Powell then notes the economic dysfunction of the United States economy and the disparity between their productive capabilities to China and BRICS more broadly. Of particular note is that the United States’ defense spending in 2024 has come close to 900 billion dollars a year, cumulating over 16 trillion in the last 20 years, as overwhelming military might became the lone diplomatic tool in pursuit of full spectrum dominance.⁹⁷⁰ Despite this, Powell details the dismal return on investment and failure to achieve the goals this behemoth budget is supposedly intended to achieve

The [American] defense industry, from a manufacturing point of view, is actually one of the least competitive and least productive of them all. Much of the defense industry in the United States remains locked into technologies that look more like the 1960s factory than a 2020 factory, and much of the more modern elements...from the defense industry is overpriced and overengineered with poor implementation and poor market fit... in a military sense, the poor market fit is evidenced by military equipment that's not doing its job in the environment that was designed for namely combat. From the point of view of US defense industry the experiences in Ukraine at the moment, together with some of experiences in the Middle East, in particular the Red Sea, is showing that the investments that it has made in the defense industry aren't delivering a product market fit. And that is actually meaningful and transforming that requires not just more money.⁹⁷¹

⁹⁶⁹ Powell, “China: Economic & Industrial Rise,” 5:40-6:02.

⁹⁷⁰ Powell, “China: Economic & Industrial Rise,” 36:45-37:05.

⁹⁷¹ Powell, “China: Economic & Industrial Rise,” 36:45-38:50. Beal, “Weaponizing Europe,” 79. Tim Beal reinforces this notion, “American soldiers are more expensive than Russia ones, so the same expenditure expressed in exchange dollars puts less troops in the field. American weapons are famously over-priced, unreliable and under-performing.”

And for all the money spent on weapons-petrodollar coalition, as LeVine called it, the only time these American made weapons seem to truly dominate is when they are deployed against largely unarmed civilian populations, observable in the disparity between the Ukrainian war and the Israeli war on Gaza. The United States' steadfast commitment to Israel's near ten month long killing spree in Gaza, and the blatant weaponization of what international law may still exist outside and independent of the corrosive shadow of the so-called rules-based international order, has alienated much of the world. To win back significant portions of the world's population the United States would need to be able to offer lucrative trade deals or outright bribes, which even then would likely only regain a fraction of the standing the United States had in 2014 and do little to reassert the unipolar dominance of 1992. The real productive capacity of the United States economy and the forecast for the value of the dollar suggest the American foreign policy elite should look elsewhere to secure their future. The pursuit of full spectrum dominance via sheer military might, or diplomacy through economic stranglehold, has failed.

Even if the value of the dollar survives the failure of a set of sanctions that the foreign policy elite very publicly stated were intended to be overwhelming and crippling is a sorry enough display. However, that has rapidly advanced the timeline of the consolidation of a rival bloc in the BRICS nations, which are arguably creating the groundwork for a whole new international financial and legal system outside the commandeering auspices of the United States. BRICS

is even beginning to outperform the wealthy pan-European core in almost any metric.

Beyond that, under the guiding hand of the hegemonic United States, the Middle East has been engulfed in a near century-long conflagration of American and Israeli design.⁹⁷² Powell spoke of the better alternative that BRICS offers for the Middle East or West Asia, as compared to the United States, “In the last seven decades or so the region has actually very rarely experienced sustained peace and stability. And the outbreak of the terrible war that is happening at the moment in Gaza is a symptom of a political economy and geopolitical set up that seems to promote instability rather than stability. And the Arab states have reached a point where they have had enough of that.”⁹⁷³ If peace and stability are radical propositions, it is only because the United States has pursued their polar opposites, or its leaders have consistently been so confoundingly incapable and inept they belong in an institution.

Delegitimization of (Global) NATO and International Law

As Geir Ulfstein and Hege Christiansen concluded in “The Legality of the NATO Bombing in Libya,” the military overreach of the NATO-allied forces from the bounds explicitly defined in UNSCR 1973 may have long-term delegitimizing effects on the view of the Western NATO allies as well as principles of

⁹⁷² Future research will further incorporate Israeli geostrategic policy, particularly the Israeli government’s cultivation of Hamas, with the concept of constructive instability as Mark LeVine does in *Why They Don’t Hate Us*.

⁹⁷³ Powell, “China: Economic & Industrial Rise,” 17:50.

international humanitarian law (IHL), such as the Responsibility to Protect (R2P).⁹⁷⁴ They, along with Andrew Wedgwood and A. Walter Dorn, rightfully point to the vote abstention from certain BRICS powers during United Nations Security Council Resolutions 1970 and 1973 as potentially ominous.⁹⁷⁵ These scholars themselves likely had little to no idea just how prescient their conclusions were (evident in the way they are presented as secondary to more positive appraisals of Operation Unified Protector).

Article Five of the 1949 North Atlantic Treaty, NATO's founding document and functional charter, declares that:

an armed attack against one or more of them [members of NATO] in Europe or North America shall be considered an attack against them all and consequently... each of them, in exercise of the right of individual or collective self-defense recognized by Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations, will assist... including the use of armed force, to restore and maintain the security of the North Atlantic area.⁹⁷⁶

In NATO's history, Article Five has only been declared once, immediately after the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center on September 11, 2001, in defense of New York City. From Russia to Iraq, to Iran, to Libya, almost the entire world expressed sympathy and solidarity with the United States after the attacks, and then cooperated to various degrees in military and intelligence operations in the War on Terror (as Gaddafi did). In 2001 the United States had been the

⁹⁷⁴ Ulfstein, Christiansen, "The Legality of the NATO bombing in Libya," 169-170.

⁹⁷⁵ Ulfstein, Christiansen, "The Legality of the NATO bombing in Libya," 169-170; Wedgwood, Dorn, "NATO's Libya Campaign 2011: Just or Unjust to What Degree?," 346.

⁹⁷⁶ North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), "Collective defence and Article 5," online, last updated July 4, 2023, https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_110496.htm.

unquestionable sole superpower on the globe for roughly a decade (since the fall of the USSR). One decade later, in 2011, and the United States crossed the hegemonic Rubicon into Sisyphean-damnation as described by Wallerstein in *The Decline of American Power*.

The evocation of Julius Caesar's famous statement and the Romans is intentional. The United States founding fathers derived many of its legal formalities from the ancient Romans, and its ideological stalwarts have historically likened the United States to the Roman empire. So those who invoke such analogies, the concept of Western Civilization, and those who take seriously their dimwitted but intellectualized Huntingtonesque *Clash of Civilizations* orientalist identitarian framework, should take note of this gaping disparity. The *Pax Romana*, remembered as the highlight of over a millennium of Roman history, the very peak of an idealized civilization, lasted for roughly 200 years of peace and prosperity. The United States was formulated, entered, and exited its zenith in a little under 250 years. In this time it observed roughly 20 disparate cumulative years of peacetime and 20 years of consecutive violent unipolar hegemonic dominance. To compare the two civilizations is a denigration of Roman statehood and longevity.

At the least the Romans successfully integrated Carthaginian / Phoenician Libya into the Roman empire, while the United States stubbed its toe on an independent Libya, and was sent into a bipartisan psychosis in a last-ditch effort to prove themselves free of "Vietnam syndrome." Proximity is likely the key. The

Romans dominated their known world-system of the Mediterranean from the Mediterranean Sea, just north of Libya. The United States and NATO attempted to do so, but from an ocean away. OUP manifested from the heights of imperial hubris and resulted in a chain of confrontations that now define an era of United States imperial overreach and hegemonic decline.

The lengths to which NATO went post-9/11 are explainable in the context of NATO's commanding and justifying imperative, to protect the Global North/pan-European world. New York City is an economic hub host to some of the heaviest trafficked air and seaborne trade routes on the globe, on the Northwestern tip of the Atlantic Ocean inside NATO's legitimate jurisdiction. That NATO forces went to Asian landlocked Afghanistan in search of Osama Bin Laden is, arguably, rational and aligns with Article 5. That NATO acted in former-Yugoslavia, after the fall of the USSR but inside Europe, is arguably rational and in coherence with the defensive facade Article Five presents.

NATO operations inside of Libya, across the Mediterranean Sea outside of Europe or North America, while no NATO members were attacked, stretch the claims that NATO is a defensive alliance past their breaking point. The geographic realities of OUP contradict the eponymous jurisdiction of NATO. That is to say if the United States and NATO forces otherwise acted entirely within the bounds of international law, NATO had still egregiously overreached. That NATO allies and the United States cooperated with jihadi elements to remove the

unacceptable secular nationalism of Gaddafi and then Assad, after the fall of their supposed existential enemy the USSR, is contradictory and confounding.

The levels of destabilization that spread outward from the toppling of the Gaddafi regime and the enablement of international jihadi networks proved to be utterly disastrous and uncontrollable. As LeVine noted on chaos theory in 2004, and still applies to contemporary analysis, the exact motives and intentions of those purposely fanning the flames of destabilization are difficult to ascertain for certain. They may intend to keep the chaos at a controllable level indefinitely (to bleed enemies ala “The Bleeders” of the Carter Administration that supported Afghan Arabs in the 1970s), or intend a more limited use with the intent to create a more desirable order in the wake of destabilization (The Jakarta Method). However, through analyzing the geopolitical blowback from NATO’s operation in Libya roughly 13 years after Gaddafi was murdered, it seems most likely that the levels of reverberating destabilization caused were unintended, and have certainly damaged United States interests. The radical upheavals in the region and international geopolitics attendant to Operation Unified Protector and its consequences are so widespread and continuous that it can be seen as the end of both the overlapping, but distinct, post-9/11 and post-Cold War eras of unipolar American supremacy.

Before Gaddafi’s death, Obama claimed, “there is no question that Libya - and the world - would be better off with Qaddafi out of power. I, along with many

other world leaders, have embraced that goal.”⁹⁷⁷ Beyond an open admission to regime change as the underlying motive of OUP, this proved to be disastrously incorrect and the blowback from this regime change operation was tremendous. The power vacuum left in the wake of Gaddafi’s murder sucked the country into years of civil war. The country that previously boasted the highest GDP per capita in Africa was now home to open-air slave trade. Rebel forces acquired massive stockpiles of high-grade military equipment and training from NATO-aligned special forces and intelligence agencies, as well as jihadist groups, who then poured into Syria to join in the fight against Assad.⁹⁷⁸ Many more weapons, refugees, and militants, poured into the neighboring regions and contributed to their destabilization. After they were done, they came back to Libya for even more fighting.

Across Africa, and particularly in the states bordering Libya in the North African Maghreb, anti-Western sentiment and political crises have been sparked. Many African leaders fault Western foreign policy and the intervention in Libya for the increase in the spread of Islamist jihadi terrorism in the region. States such as Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, and Sudan have all experienced hardship born of fighters and weaponry pouring across Libya’s borders. French security forces have been excised from much of the region and these states have developed deeper ties with Russian forces, who have also been active inside Libya, ostensibly attempting to mirror their security arrangement with the Syrian

⁹⁷⁷ Forte, *Slouching Towards Sirte*, 88.

⁹⁷⁸ Oyeniyi, *The History of Libya*, 206.

government. The Russian position inside Syria is itself a consequence of NATO's handling of OUP.⁹⁷⁹

Furthermore, Russia's annexation of Crimea in 2014, and subsequent invasion of Ukraine in 2022 are both influenced by NATO's handling of the Libyan crisis.

Throughout this string of conflicts, it appears Russia has emerged more influential, resilient economically, and effective militarily rather than ground down and excised into irrelevance.

Since OUP both Russia and China have been pushed together into explicitly stated alliances of increased economic and security ties with Iran and North Korea as well, metastasizing the potentially existential threat of an alliance of mutual grievance Zbigniew Brzezinski warned of. Along with the growing influence and prestige of the BRICS partnership, the contours of the new multipolar world (or a period interregnum as Jason Pack contends) are emerging as the once-dominant position of the United States over the GNCWS diminishes.

As Immanuel Wallerstein predicted, the United States appears to now be stuck in a violently self-defeating cycle of economic decline, imperial overreach, and diminished international legitimacy as it thrashes to retain its grasp on global hegemony.⁹⁸⁰ Unfortunately, the pan-European world seems determined to bring down the legitimacy of the entirety of international post-WWII order, including

⁹⁷⁹ Wedgwood, Dorn, "NATO's Libya Campaign 2011: Just or Unjust to What Degree?," 352.

⁹⁸⁰ Wallerstein, *World-Systems Analysis*, 58-59.

humanitarian law, along with the United States' fleeting grasp on any notion of moral supremacy in Israel's unprecedented bloodbath in Gaza.

Delegitimization of International Humanitarian Law:

the Israeli-Gaza "Conflict"

"There is no question, and this crisis makes it manifestly clear that Israel is an albatross around our neck. Both from a strategic point of view and a moral point of view."

-John Mearsheimer, 2024.⁹⁸¹

In March of 2024, Ralph Nader suggested that the official death toll in Gaza based on the Gaza Health Ministry's numbers was severely unrepresentative of the scale of the slaughter in Gaza.⁹⁸² This has been upheld by a number of area experts' testimony on the destruction of health care facilities, and the simple fact that there is no heavy machinery in Gaza that Palestinians could use to clear the rubble, leaving the vast majority of those who have died under rubble uncountable. Some Palestinians have also buried their neighbors in makeshift graves due to the risk of traveling in Gaza. Simple movement throughout Gaza, even in Israeli designated "safe zones," is inordinately risky for

⁹⁸¹ John Mearsheimer, "Prof. John J Mearsheimer: How the West Provoked Russia," YouTube video, March 22, 2024, 7:50, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AeAMSMhMrJQ&t=475s&ab_channel=JudgeNapolitano-JudgingFreedom.

⁹⁸² Ralph Nader, "Stop the Worsening UNDERCOUNT of Palestinian Casualties in Gaza," nader.org, March 5, 2024, <https://nader.org/2024/03/05/stop-the-worsening-undercount-of-palestinian-casualties-in-gaza/>.

Palestinians who, by virtue of being seen, are liable to be targeted by drone strikes, suicide drones, as well as quadcopter drones that shoot conventional ammunition, Israeli snipers, ground forces (who have killed multiple unarmed civilians armed with nothing more than a white flag including three escaped Israeli hostages), or a Merkava tank.⁹⁸³ If Israeli forces do not kill them outright then they risk being held indefinitely in administrative detention without charge or trial and subjected to various forms of torture including rape, or be used as a live cadaver for medical students.⁹⁸⁴ Some of the Abu Ghraib-like abuse is recorded and displayed, “often gloatingly by Israeli news channels who broadcast scenes of the abuse” in what *Mondoweiss* and *Truthout* have compared to “snuff films.”⁹⁸⁵

+972 *Magazine*, a joint Israeli-Palestinian run outlet, produced a report “in partnership” with the Hebrew language outlet Local Call based on testimony from six Israeli soldiers backed up by Palestinian eyewitnesses and doctors titled “‘I’m bored so I shoot’: The Israeli army’s approval of free-for-all violence in Gaza.”⁹⁸⁶

⁹⁸³ *Al Jazeera English*, “War on Gaza: Footage shows summary executions of Palestinians by Israeli soldiers,” *Al Jazeera English*, YouTube video, 0:00-0:30, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tmvnGk-7uV8&rco=1&ab_channel=AlJazeeraEnglish. This report plays a video documenting three separate occasions Israeli soldiers executing unarmed Palestinians without provocation on “a coastal road connecting north and south Gaza. Israel has designated it as a safe zone for Palestinians wanting to move between the areas.”

⁹⁸⁴ Qassam Muaddi, Mondoweiss, “Palestinians Face Torture, Starvation and Sexual Violence in Israeli Prisons,” *Truthout*, June 8, 2024, <https://truthout.org/articles/palestinians-face-torture-starvation-and-sexual-violence-in-israeli-prisons/>.

⁹⁸⁵ Qassam Muaddi, Mondoweiss, “Palestinians Face Torture, Starvation and Sexual Violence in Israeli Prisons.”

⁹⁸⁶ Oren Ziv, “‘I’m bored so I shoot’: The Israeli army’s approval of free-for-all violence in Gaza,” +972 *Magazine*, July 8, 2024, <https://www.972mag.com/israeli-soldiers-gaza-firing-regulations/>.

The article details how Israeli forces are “authorized to open fire on Palestinians virtually at will,” which “has enabled Israeli units to kill Palestinian civilians even when they are identified as such beforehand,” and leave the bodies to decompose in the streets.⁹⁸⁷ Throughout Gaza “The whole area was full of bodies” in civilian clothing that Israeli soldiers would then, according to one of the Israeli reservists, bury “with a tank...under the rubble,” which then “flips [them] aside so that the convoys don’t see it—[so that] images of people in advanced stages of decay don’t come out.”⁹⁸⁸ This deceives the world by hiding the visage of rotting corpses, but also forever obscures the reality of how many people have been killed when, or if, bodies under the rubble are attempted to be recovered.

Nader proposed a death toll of 200,000 while five months into the slaughter, and the conditions in Gaza have only deteriorated even further.⁹⁸⁹ Nader’s proposed figure has been reaffirmed in a July 5, 2024 report by the highly respected medical journal, *The Lancet*, which concluded that “up to 186 000 or even more deaths could be attributable to the current conflict in Gaza.”⁹⁹⁰ Many of the same invertebrates in Washington who pretended to have seen similar evidence, or ignored that there was no such evidence in the case of

⁹⁸⁷ Oren Ziv, “free-for-all violence in Gaza.”

⁹⁸⁸ Ziv, “free-for-all violence in Gaza.”

⁹⁸⁹ Ralph Nader, “Stop the Worsening UNDERCOUNT of Palestinian Casualties in Gaza.”

⁹⁹⁰ Rasha Khatib, Martin McKee, Salim Yusuf, “Counting the Dead in Gaza: difficult but essential,” *The Lancet*, July 5, 2024, [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736\(24\)01169-3](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(24)01169-3).

Gaddafi's mass murder of civilians, now pretend they do not see the abundant evidence of Israeli crimes of a far higher magnitude.

In light of the Atlanticist governments' reactions to the Israeli military operation and starvation of Gaza in retaliation to the October 7, 2023 attack, it is apparent, as Glenn Diesen notes, that the "rules-based international order" masquerading as international law is a flexible and inconsistent tool. The Atlanticist's dedication to the protection of civilians is a complete falsehood, or inexplicably variable when juxtaposing the accusations of genocide leveled at the Gaddafi regime in 2011 and those leveled against Israel in 2023. Comparison between not just the speed on which accusations were leveled, but the weight of the charges in the numbers of alleged victims, and the level of scrutiny upon which evidence is subjected demonstrates an irreconcilable inconsistency on the principles and application of IHL in the cases of OUP and Israel's war on Gaza.

The initial UNSCR 1970, later reinforced by UNSCR 1973, was passed only eleven days (February 26) after the initial reports of conflict, with the Office of the Prosecutor at the ICC initiating preliminary investigations into cases of crimes against humanity two days later. In its first report on May 4th, 2011 the ICC announced preparations to submit an application for arrest warrants, which was carried out by May 16. On June 27, five months after the initial reporting of atrocities on February 15, the ICC arrest warrants were officially issued for Gaddafi and Saif al-Islam.⁹⁹¹ The underlying charges were based on an estimate

⁹⁹¹ International Criminal Court (ICC), "First Report of The Prosecutor of The International Criminal Court To The UN Security Council Pursuant To UNSCR

that, according to the ICC, “500 to 700 persons died, only in February. On 15 March, Muammar al Qadhafi estimated the number of people killed at “only 150 or 200... and half of them were from the security forces.”⁹⁹² This claim originated earlier and not March 15, as the outlet *France 24 English* uploaded their interview with Gaddafi on YouTube on March 7, the anchorman announced at the top of the program, “Only around 150 people have died as small Libyan army units battle the units of al-Qaeda,” which he seems to express doubt over and it cuts to Gaddafi saying, “On both sides, the Libyan army and police on one, and the insurgents on the other, only about 150 to 200 people were killed, but it’s claimed there were thousands.”⁹⁹³ At the time Gaddafi made that claim, he certainly was closer to the right number than the thousands claimed in the West, but NATO bombs and extension of the conflict ensured they would die. The ICC noted that by the date of publication in May the death toll was “up to 10,000 according to the Libyan Interim National Council (INC),” and in 2023 Moussa Ibrahim, Gaddafi’s ex-spokesperson, suggested a figure of over 30,000 civilians were “directly killed by NATO’s attacks.”⁹⁹⁴

1970 (2011),” May 4, 2011, 4.

<https://www.icc-cpi.int/sites/default/files/NR/rdonlyres/A077E5F8-29B6-4A78-9EAB-A179A105738E/0/UNSCLibyaReportEng04052011.pdf>.

⁹⁹² ICC, “First Report of The Prosecutor of The International Criminal Court To The UN,” 4.

⁹⁹³ Muammar Gaddafi, “Exclusive - Libya: Muammar Gaddafi speaks to FRANCE 24,” *France 24*, YouTube video, March 7, 2011, 1:00-1:30, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mCuZeKB19iQ&ab_channel=FRANCE24English.

⁹⁹⁴ ICC, “First Report of The Prosecutor,” 4. Ibrahim, “NATO’s Invasion of Libya,” 1:00-1:06. The ICC report also suggested “between 327,342 and 475,000 Libyans were displaced due to the conflict.”

While the International Court of Justice (ICJ) found South Africa's charge of Israel's mass slaughter rising to the level of genocidal conduct plausible, and the International Criminal Court (ICC) signaled the possibility of arrest warrants for Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu and Defense Minister Golant being issued, the Atlanticist powers insist Israel "has a right to target those civilians," in the words of United States State Department Spokesman Mathew Miller.⁹⁹⁵

Faced with the prospect of under 1,000 people killed by Gaddafi in one month Western officials felt perfectly comfortable assuming the role of judge, jury, and executioner based on preliminary and unverified reports, many of which were later retracted or debunked as fabricated. In light of the dearth of verified reporting, video and photographic evidence of atrocities committed against the Gazan population, practically live-streamed across social media platforms, dozens of eliminationist statements from ranking Israeli officials and soldiers, and a body count in the tens of thousands if not hundreds of thousands, United States officials claim South Africa's charge of genocide is "meritless."⁹⁹⁶ When asked on January 26, 2024, if the Biden administration still stands by their initial statement characterizing the allegation as "meritless, counterproductive, and completely without any basis and fact whatsoever," even after the ICJ ruling in

⁹⁹⁵ Mathew Miller, "US Spokesperson: 'Israel has a right to target civilians'," YouTube video, June 28, 2024, 0:00-0:30, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YhUjp-Qc7jl&ab_channel=MEMO.

⁹⁹⁶ Middle East Eye staff, "US doubles down on dismissing genocide claim despite ICJ ruling," Middle East Eye, January, 26, 2024, <https://www.middleeasteye.net/news/us-doubles-down-dismissing-genocide-claims-despite-icj-ruling>.

favor of South Africa, national security spokesperson John Kirby affirmed the position.⁹⁹⁷

In the emerging world order defined by the decline of United States/pan-European dominance and the hypocritical destruction of IHL by the depraved conduct of pan-European militaries, the pan-European powers should hope the emerging hegemonic powers act with the humanity and goodwill the colonial powers lack entirely. From the first Iraq War of 1991, the rematch in 2003, 2011s war on Libya, through to the Israeli mass slaughter of Gazans and systematic destruction of every hospital that served 2.3 million Gazans in 2024, each display of violence was built off dozens of verifiable outright lies. In 1991 the deaths of fictional incubator babies drove the United States to bomb and sanction Iraqi civil society into a blighted land, in 2024 dozens of documented instances of Palestinian babies killed and left to decompose in their incubators is not even cause enough for verbal condemnation, let alone enough to force compliance with domestic United States and international law outlawing the sale and transfer of weapons to actors that violate IHL and cease the flow of weapons to Israel.

The veritable self-ordained free-range the pan-European actors subject Arab, Islamic, and African governments (but the Global South generally), destroying their civilian infrastructure, and their people's lives in violations of IHL has deeply jeopardized the national security of the pan-European world. By placing the systematic targeting and destruction of hospitals, ambulances, and

⁹⁹⁷ Middle East Eye staff, "US doubles down on dismissing genocide claim despite ICJ ruling."

what Israel calls “power targets” (such as “private residences as well as public buildings... intended to harm Palestinian civil society: to “create a shock” that, among other things, will reverberate powerfully and “lead civilians to put pressure on Hamas” according to +972 Magazine) on the table as *de facto* legal and acceptable targets, what higher or moral authority could be appealed to when Israeli, Saudi, German, French, British, or American hospitals are targeted.⁹⁹⁸ Especially since, as the British came to see in the aftermath of the May 22, 2017 Manchester bombing of an Ariana Grande concert by a former LIFG affiliate, the “allies” the West has trained, armed, and enabled are some of the very people most likely to carry out such attacks.⁹⁹⁹

As of Russia’s 2015 military mobilization in defense of Syria, while Assad was almost universally unpopular throughout the region and in the West, there is plenty of motive among the MENA states to take note of Russia successfully defending the Syrian government. Especially from the vantage point of 2024, as the expansion of AFRICOM and American presence through Africa coincided with a suspiciously timed wave of jihadi terrorism, the United States has turned betraying the Kurds into a veritable national pastime, the regime it cultivated in

⁹⁹⁸ Yuval Abraham, “‘A mass assassination factory’: Inside Israel’s calculated bombing of Gaza,” *+972 Magazine*, November 30, 2023, <https://www.972mag.com/mass-assassination-factory-israel-calculated-bombing-gaza/>. *+972 Magazine* is, according to their “About” webpage, “an independent, online, nonprofit magazine run by a group of Palestinian and Israeli journalists. Founded in 2010, our mission is to provide in-depth reporting, analysis, and opinions from the ground in Israel-Palestine. The name of the site is derived from the telephone country code that can be used to dial throughout Israel-Palestine.

⁹⁹⁹ Pack, *Global Enduring Disorder*, 129.

Afghanistan over twenty years crumbled in days, *NBC* reported that in the year of 2018 “Only 2 Iraqi translators who worked with U.S. troops got U.S. visas.”¹⁰⁰⁰

One of the United States’ longest partners in the region is alleged, with some good reason, to have coordinated the largest attack against the United States in its history, Georgia and Ukraine have both been used as metaphorical human shields put in the crossfire of great powers, and despite all the bluster and billions of dollars sent to Ukraine it finds itself in an unenviable geostrategic position, nor seems to be any closer to joining NATO. None of which paints a picture of a grand payout at the end of a rainbow.

Conclusion

Two intertwined theses have been advanced throughout this study. First, NATO’s 2011 war on Libya marks a distinct new geopolitical era of multipolarity and declining United States hegemony. In the transition period, the world has been and will continue to be subjected to ever more latent chaos as the rules-based order regime collapses and the United States lashes out violently on the world stage in a doomed attempt to retain the United States uniquely advantageous position at the end of the Second World War in 1945. The policy of full spectrum dominance, adopted in the unipolar era, sowed the seeds of decline, as it mandated the use of military might and economic strangleholds to

¹⁰⁰⁰ Dan De Luce, “Only 2 Iraqi translators who worked with U.S. troops got U.S. visas last year,” *NBC News*, August 23, 2019, <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/world/only-2-iraqi-translators-who-worked-u-s-troops-got-n1035661>.

attempt to hold the majority of the world and post-colonial states in a state of underdevelopment indefinitely, the United States foreign policy elite seemingly lost strategic and diplomatic skills observable in their predecessors like George Kennan, as they played a high stakes game of whack-a-mole with no end in sight or achievable goal.

Second—constructive instability, a geopolitical strategy of intentional destabilization in the pursuit of full spectrum dominance—best describes the United States’ *modus operandi* in NATO’s war on Libya, before and after Operation Unified Protector. The Western coordination of Islamist terrorism inside Libya since at least the 1990s, and then instrumentalization of such groups as ground troops in OUP and empowerment of thousands of militant organizations, along with and continued cultivation of jihadist terrorists in post-Gaddafi Libya, essentially preclude any practical approach to secure material interests inside Libya. This was not the United States’ prime motive in their war effort, but rather the destruction of Libya’s economic sovereignty and developmental policies aimed at empowering the African continent to shut out pan-European powers, and potential competitor powers, such as China, would be shut out in the destabilized power vacuum. The embrace of constructive instability in Libya likely proved too volatile, and both precipitated and reinforced the hegemonic decline of the United States in the processes noted above.

Jason Pack’s *Libya and Global Enduring Disorder* provides a very similar frame of analysis from differing points of view, primarily the perception of the

United States' role in the world-system. The prime dividing line is that this study actively tried to incorporate the study of international terror networks from Operation Gladio and Condor, in the intentional mass murder of civilians as part of what Vincent Bevins calls The Jakarta Method, and the Islamist terror networks born out of the anti-Soviet Afghan Jihad. This was then synthesized with concepts from world-systems analysis to explain the utility and cohesion in what appears to be contradictory policies from an ideological, rather than materialist, frame of analysis.

To say that the American foreign policy elite's formative and guiding motivations were informed by a policy of constructive instability is not necessarily a claim to knowledge on behalf of the intentions and state of mind of individual policymakers unless immediately evident and explicitly stated as such. The claim is that the historical experience of centuries of pan-European colonial domination form currents of thought, or geoculture as Wallerstein would call it, along with material interests and hierarchical relationships defined by competition (for survival, resources, hegemony) in the interstate system. These relationships logically inform and realistically constrain a state's options in the face of any decision. In other words, the racist and violent history of pan-European colonialism subconsciously informs Western powers generally, but especially the UK and the United States as the latest (and only) truly global hegemonic powers. For example, the United States' inheritance of the Saudi and Israeli client-states from their original British colonial stewards demonstrates the close ties of the

Anglo-American relationship and the inescapable gravity of pan-European colonial history which inform and constrain nations' paths of feasible and logical actions and relationships.

There is future research to be done to incorporate all of these aspects to a deeper degree, and continue building on the work done by the likes of Jason Pack, Horace Campbell, Maximillian Forte, and Mark LeVine. World History and United States foreign policy development from the death of Ambassador Stevens in late 2012 up to the present in this frame of analysis, which continues Horace Campbell's, Alan J. Kuperman, and Maximilian Forte's work on the NATO intervention against Libya, Vincent Bevins' *The Jakarta Method* analysis of world history and United States foreign policy in the Cold War, or Mark LeVine's *Why They Don't Hate Us* post-Cold War analysis of American foreign policy and the development of chaos theory, creative destruction, or constructive instability.

If Jason Pack is correct that Libya provides insight into the dysfunction of the international system to be expected from future conflicts, particularly the war in Ukraine, the future is bleak, especially for Ukraine which, as Tim Beal puts it, is "both complicit in and the principal victim of the war."¹⁰⁰¹ If Ukraine is like Libya, and the United States' strategy of constructive instability in Libya mirrored that of the anti-Soviet jihad in Afghanistan, Beal is connecting the same dots as the present study, writing that "Despite important differences there are obvious parallels between the utilization of Afghanistan against the Soviet Union and that

¹⁰⁰¹ Beal, "Weaponizing Europe," 78.

of Ukraine against the Russian Federation... The Anglo-American nightmare from Mackinder through to Brzezinski and beyond has been not only a Russia-China partnership but also the melding of Europe into the rest of Eurasia.”¹⁰⁰² Counter to Pack, who suggested Ukraine is of some outsized geopolitical importance to the United States, Brzezinski saw Ukraine, like Afghanistan as “pawns to be used when possible and sacrificed when necessary.”¹⁰⁰³

This study’s conclusions and the strategy of constructive instability would suggest that the fact Ukraine is rapidly depleting its manpower is of little concern in Washington. If the logic of constructive instability is applicable the United States elite likely knew some time ago that Ukraine stood little chance of winning, but, “limited war would drain Russia, both materially and mentally, causing the desired collapse. Ukraine is particularly suitable for this role, being on Russia’s border and having the largest troop levels in Europe.”¹⁰⁰⁴ It would seem that somewhere along the way Ukraine got added to the shortlist of seven countries Wesley Clark warned the United States was planning to “take out” in five years, or has willingly become collateral damage along the way.¹⁰⁰⁵

¹⁰⁰² Beal, “Weaponizing Europe,” 78.

¹⁰⁰³ Beal, “Weaponizing Europe,” 78.

¹⁰⁰⁴ Beal, “Weaponizing Europe,” 78.

¹⁰⁰⁵ Wesley Clark, “We’re going to take-out 7 countries in 5 years,” 0:02-02:05.

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