LIBYAN VOLTE-FACE POLITICS
An Analysis of Qaddafi Libya’s Oscillating Foreign Policy toward the United States

MASTER THESIS

MA International Relations and International Organization – University of Groningen

Supervisor: Prof. dr. J.H. de Wilde
Student: Jort van Oosterhout
Student number: 1482343
Date: August 28, 2012
Word count: 25.672
Contents

Introduction.......................................................................................................................................................... 4

Chapter I: Foreign Policy Analysis: a general overview and Carlsnaes’ tripartite approach........... 7
  1.1 FPA: origins and area of research........................................................................................................... 9
  1.2 Efforts toward synthesis ......................................................................................................................... 10
    1.2.1 Allison’s complementary FPA models .......................................................................................... 11
    1.2.2 Carlsnaes’ FPA conception ......................................................................................................... 13
    1.2.3 Carlsnaes’ FPA synthesis ............................................................................................................ 23
    1.2.4 Applying Carlsnaes’ model to the Libyan case ........................................................................... 25

Chapter II: Libyan revisionist policies toward the US during the 1970s and 1980s ...................... 29
  2.1 Policy actions ......................................................................................................................................... 31
  2.2 Intentional dimension ............................................................................................................................ 36
  2.3 Dispositional dimension ....................................................................................................................... 39
    2.3.1 Liberal analysis of Qaddafi’s revisionist policies ........................................................................ 39
    2.3.2 Cognitive-psychological approach of Qaddafi’s revolutionary leadership ......................... 48
  2.4 Structural dimension ............................................................................................................................ 49
  2.5 Conclusion ........................................................................................................................................... 51

Chapter III: Libyan policy change toward the US during the 1990s and 2000s...................... 53
  3.1 Policy actions ......................................................................................................................................... 55
  3.2 Intentional dimension ............................................................................................................................ 61
  3.3 Dispositional dimension ....................................................................................................................... 63
    3.3.1 Liberal analysis of Qaddafi’s foreign policy transformation ..................................................... 64
    3.3.2 Cognitive-psychological approach of Qaddafi’s diplomatic transformation ................. 73
  3.4 Structural dimension ............................................................................................................................ 74
  3.5 Conclusion ........................................................................................................................................... 76

Conclusion ...................................................................................................................................................... 78

Bibliography .................................................................................................................................................. 84
Introduction

The armed struggle in Libya that ensued from the massive civil uprisings throughout the Arab world in 2011 terminated the leadership of the flamboyant but authoritarian Muammar al-Qaddafi. After his violent oppression of civil opposition following public demonstrations in February 2011, coupled with his threat to relentlessly exterminate his opponents, a coalition of international actors – including the United States – decided to protect the Libyan civilians through military intervention. Their actions subsequently contributed to the removal of the Libyan regime. Up until then, the Libyan leader had ruled his country for more than forty years, during which time he managed to transform from an ‘international pariah’ into a useful ally of the United States (US) and other Western nations.

During the 1970s and 1980s, Qaddafi and his revolutionary cohorts challenged the US from their stronghold of Tripoli. US policymakers labeled the Libyan leader as a sponsor of global terrorism due to his alleged support for violent anti-Western militias. Moreover, his close cooperation with Moscow during the Cold War, coupled with his quest to annihilate Israel and to acquire nonconventional weaponry, increasingly disquieted the White House. Eventually, Libyan hostility toward the US culminated into alleged acts of state terrorism, reaching its pinnacle with the fatal bombing of Pan American Flight 103 over the Scottish town of Lockerbie in 1988. After the imposition of a unilateral US embargo and a comprehensive multilateral United Nations (UN) sanctions regime during the 1990s, Libya increasingly sought to redress its belligerent policies toward Washington and seek reintegration into the international community. After a manifold of secret diplomatic negotiations, Libya effectively established a resolution with the US over the Lockerbie crisis; terminated its support for radical subnational movements; ceased its obstructionism of the Middle East peace process; relinquished its pursuit for a military

---

nuclear capability and dismantled its weapons of mass destruction (WMD) program.\textsuperscript{5} Importantly, the Libyan leadership actively joined the US in their post-9/11 \textit{Global War on Terror}.\textsuperscript{6} Also, the country was removed from the US State Department’s terrorist blacklist in 2006, and sanctions by then had been permanently lifted. Eventually, in 2007, diplomatic and commercial relations were fully reestablished with the appointment of a US ambassador to Libya.\textsuperscript{7}

Walter Carlsnaes, professor of political science at the Swedish Uppsala University, constructed a Foreign Policy Analysis (FPA) framework that seeks to unravel and explain a state’s foreign policy actions. Carlsnaes conceptualized a synthetic theoretical model that integrates different foreign policy perspectives into a tripartite approach. This framework consists of an intentional, a dispositional and a structural dimension.\textsuperscript{8}

To what extent can Libya’s oscillating foreign policy toward the US, and its eventual conversion to moderation, be explained through analyzing agential, societal, international, and systemic forces affecting its policymaking process by utilizing Carlsnaes’ FPA approach? In order to be able to understand Libya’s capricious policy actions within the international environment, and its eventual diplomatic overture, a thorough analysis of its foreign policy process is requisite. In this way, the intentional, dispositional and structural factors that have impacted upon Libyan decision-making toward Washington can be discerned. Ultimately, this research aims to gain insight into why and how the Libyan leadership transformed its hostile policies and subsequently rejoined the international community.

First, with regard to the intentional dimension, Carlsnaes analyzes the goal or intention informing a certain policy undertaking. A given policy action is chosen to achieve a certain goal; thus, it answers an ‘in order to’ question. Second, through the dispositional dimension, Carlsnaes tries to answer why a certain policy action was chosen and not a different one. Why is an actor disposed to make a particular choice rather than another? Thus, causality enters into the picture since a ‘because of’ instead of an ‘in order to’ question is posed. Finally, within the structural dimension, Carlsnaes discusses factors that contribute to the specific dispositions of


policymakers. For example, in the case of Libyan decision-making toward US, one can imagine Libya as a small state located within a regional and international system dominated by the US hegemony and all that this entails. Carlsnaes asserts that these three dimensions should be regarded as closely linked in such a way that they constitute a step-by-step approach that eventually results in increasingly exhaustive explanations to foreign policy actions.

Carlsnaes’ approach will subsequently be utilized within a research of secondary sources written by renowned Libya experts. Even though some of these scholars originally descended from Arab educational backgrounds, all of them eventually developed their academic careers within Western institutions. Thus, caution is recommended as to the inherent subjectivity of this research. Hence, the inferences drawn from this foreign policy analysis can be regarded as valid insofar as the consulted sources adhere to the truth and to their scholarly principles of objectivity. Also, throughout the analysis, explicit reference will be made to the sources consulted. Where such references remain absent, one may infer that the consulted sources agree on that particular statement.

The next chapter will initially discuss different perspectives and theories that have been presented by scholars in order to grasp the main elements of FPA. Thereafter, it will illustrate the complexity of this field of study by elaborating upon efforts toward theoretical integration. Eventually, through discussing an interview this author conducted with Carlsnaes, coupled with analyzing his theoretical publications in scholarly articles, his research model will be conceived of as a suitable approach to foreign policymaking.

Chapter II will subsequently apply Carlsnaes’ framework on Tripoli’s revisionist foreign policy agenda during the first two decades of Qaddafi’s leadership. Why did the Libyan leader choose to thwart US interests and indulge his country into a confrontation with the White House? Within this chapter, the intentional, dispositional and structural factors that have informed the Libyan leadership’s antagonistic policies will be analyzed and explained. In this way, the historical contingency of Libya’s eventual conversion can be better understood. Thus, within this research it is assumed that accounting for the causes that provoked foreign policy change involves an examination of how this policy has evolved over the years.

Within Chapter III, this research will subsequently seek to distinguish the main causal

---

9 Walter Carlsnaes, interview conducted by author, March 30, 2011 (transcripts available).
factors behind Libya’s external transformation. Which developments drove the regime to alter its policymaking toward Washington and forfeit its revisionist principles? Again, Carlsnaes’ model will be applied in order to answer this question.

Finally, within the concluding section, the main findings of this research will be elaborated upon. Furthermore, a commentary on Carlsnaes’ theory will be included in order to determine to what extent his approach has been to any merit. In addition, some remarks with respect to prospective Libyan foreign policy will be incorporated.

Chapter I

Foreign Policy Analysis: a general overview and Carlsnaes’ tripartite approach

The essence of ultimate decision remains impenetrable to the observer – often, indeed, to the decider himself. There will always be the dark and tangled stretches in the decision-making process – mysterious even to those who may be most intimately involved.

Former US President John. F. Kennedy

In order to be able to furnish a complete and thorough analysis of a state’s foreign policy actions, a theoretical framework is required that offers the tools capable of covering the most critical elements of the extensive field of foreign policy decision-making. Scholars operating within the International Relations (IR) subfield of FPA attempt to provide such theories. The complexity of the foreign policy enterprise calls for multi-dimensional and multi-scalar approaches, rendering research within this area far from succinct and clear-cut.

The foreign policy sub-discipline represents a constitutive element of the study of IR. A

---

vast amount of scholars and students initially chose to indulge themselves into IR because of their interest in foreign policy. Consequently, many scholars are preoccupied with the study of foreign policy in numerous ways. This has led to a wide array of diverging definitions, ontological positions, epistemologies, methodologies, and thereby to a broad spectrum of theoretical models. Like in any other social science, FPA scholars are divided along various lines such as contrasting strands of intellectual affinity – for example constructivists who adhere to different ontological and epistemological preferences than Realists – and differences between geographic locations – for example the diverging American and British orientations toward FPA, as extensively elaborated upon by political scientist Steve Smith. Thus, it remains problematic to encapsulate the extensive and complex field of FPA and subsequently integrate its main components in order to develop straightforward theoretical frameworks. Nonetheless, various scholars have attempted to formulate FPA theories aiming to explain the foreign policymaking process of states and their subsequent external behavior. This chapter will introduce the FPA sub-discipline by elucidating on some of its foundational works that subsequently prove to be relevant for Carlsnaes’ synthesis. Moreover, in order to grasp the complexity of integrating the FPA field of research, an elaboration of Graham Allison’s foreign policy models will be incorporated. Some of the issues dealt with by Allison subsequently prove to be useful for understanding Carlsnaes’ approach.

Thus, through analyzing these theoretical proceeds, a current state of the art will be provided. As will be argued below, however, Carlsnaes’ FPA model constitutes a more comprehensive approach to foreign policy actions. It combines numerous theories that each adhere to different ontological and epistemological positions, thereby generating increasingly exhaustive explanations to state behavior. Therefore, his framework will be extensively explored and analyzed in order to be able to apply it to Libyan foreign policymaking toward the US. Crucially, in order to be able to grasp the dispositional factors affecting Libyan policymaking, Carlsnaes’ model will be complemented with the liberal agency-based theory of professor of political science, Andrew Moravcsik. Also, a study on Qaddafi’s cognitive belief system will be included to determine the potential psychological impact on Libyan foreign policy. Finally, the

---

neorealist approach of John Mearsheimer, a notable professor of IR, will be utilized to analyze the structural dimension within Libyan decision-making.

1.1 FPA: origins and area of research

Valerie Hudson defines the FPA explanandum as “decisions taken by human decision makers with reference to or having known consequences for entities external to their nation state. Such decisions may include inaction and indecision. Usually such decisions directly target external entities in the form of influence attempts, but may include decisions that target domestic entities but have ramifications for external entities. One may be examining not a single decision, but a constellation of decisions taken with reference to a particular situation.” In contrast to this comprehensive definition, James N. Rosenau, a notable scholar of FPA, depicts foreign policy as “processes of trying to control the actions and attitudes of other actors in the more remote environment.” Rosenau subsequently states that FPA pertains to a wide range of issues to such an extent that “little of human behavior falls outside the scope of the analysis of foreign policy phenomena.”

Hudson identifies several key works that paved the way for the current state of the art. Interestingly, she emphasizes the work of Richard C. Snyder in his book *Decision-Making as an Approach to the Study of International Politics*. As opposed to a traditional black-box approach, Snyder encouraged scholars to look below the level of the nation-state by stressing the importance of sub-state factors and societal processes. The foreign policy decision-making process (FPDM) constitutes the main focus of Snyder’s analysis as opposed to foreign policy outcomes, and he subsequently posits that this process is subject to various unit-level and societal constraints. Characteristics of the various actors, communication and information flows, motivations of the players involved, and organizational behavior are some of the typical

---

explanatory variables frequently applied by Snyder. In this way, Snyder enriched the field of FPA by, in contrast to treating the state as a black-box, underlining the importance of agential factors and societal dynamics that impact upon foreign policymaking.

Also, Hudson considers the scientific proceedings of Harold and Margaret Sprout in their book *Man-Milieu Relationship Hypotheses in the Context of International Politics* as crucial to the development of the FPA field of study. Harold and Margaret Sprout claimed that understanding foreign policy outcomes requires an understanding of foreign policy undertakings. According to them, drawing an analysis of these undertakings necessitated the inquiry of the ‘psycho-milieu’ of individuals and groups involved in FPDM. The Sprouts illuminated their understanding of the psycho-milieu by stating that it pertained to the international and operational context as perceived by individuals and groups; their interpretation of events is subject to cognitive constraints. Discrepancies between the perceived and actual environment are the result of human failure which results in less than optimal outcomes. Thus, the Sprouts enlarged the FPA field of study by adding psychological and cognitive factors to the research agenda.

In general, scholars like Rosenau, Snyder and the Sprouts were undeniably of importance to the development of FPA through explicating their insights and subsequently inciting further theoretical research. More specifically, they laid the foundations for future integrative endeavors. Surely, if their research had proven one thing, it was that efforts toward integrating theories between various disciplines operating at different levels of analysis was mandatory if one was eager to develop a robust theoretical framework capable of analyzing and explaining the foreign policy actions of nation-states.

### 1.2 Efforts toward synthesis

First, the integrative efforts of Graham Allison, professor of international affairs, will be discussed. Allison has extensively elaborated upon three distinct models that, once incorporated into a single framework, produce a gripping synthesis. Second, Carlsnaes’ comprehensive

---

research to identify the key approaches within FPA and subsequently integrate them into an all-encompassing analytic model will be discussed in detail. It incorporates many of the factors as discussed by Allison and the beforementioned scholars. Thereafter, this framework will be utilized in order to analyze and explain Libya’s foreign policy actions toward the US.

1.2.1 Allison’s complementary FPA models

In *Essence of Decision*, Allison devotes extensive attention to the US and Soviet decision-making process prior to and during the Cuban Missile Crisis. First, Allison discusses the initial Soviet operation to deploy military equipment on Cuba, *Operation Anadyr*, followed by an extensive analysis of Washington’s perception of Soviet actions, coupled with US crisis decision-making. Notwithstanding the empirical insights, Allison’s discussion becomes theoretically more interesting after claiming that these events unveil a more complex conceptual substructure.

Allison introduces three distinct theoretical models through which political analysts can explain certain events. Allison eventually deems these models to be complementary and thereby asserts that together they can provide more exhaustive explanations to foreign policy actions.¹⁸

First, Allison discusses the well-known Rational Actor Model (RAM) and subsequently relates this model to the Cuban Missile Crisis. The RAM explains foreign policy in terms of purposive acts conducted by unitary states. With respect to the Soviet decision to deploy strategic missiles on Cuba, RAM analysts would focus on questions such as: What is the Soviet Union’s utility function? What are its main objectives? The analyst ought to explain how such an act could be conceived of as reasonable given Moscow’s goals. Next, US policy decision-makers should make rational calculations based upon the available information. Thus, the RAM includes both objectives and calculations of the situation in which the actor is located into the analysis. Allison notes that the environment contains both threats and opportunities which he subsequently translates into pros and cons. On the basis of this straightforward analysis, actors choose the largest utility-maximizing policy option at their disposal.¹⁹

Secondly, Allison elaborates upon the Organizational Behavior Model (OBM). The RAM does not sufficiently provide attention to internal actors and processes while these unambiguously bear upon the foreign policy process. OBM analysts emphasize the importance of substate entities and structures. “If organizations produced an output of a certain kind at a certain time, that behavior resulted from existing organizational structures, procedures, and repertoires.”\(^{20}\) The event is subsequently explained when the analyst “has identified the relevant Soviet organizations and displayed the patterns of organizational behavior from which the action emerged. Predictions identify trends that reflect existing organizations and their fixed procedures and programmes.”\(^{21}\) Thus, OBM analysts allow for substate actors to alter government policy through producing outputs that conform to certain established routines, norms and institutions. In contrast to the RAM, where governments are perceived as monolithic and having a personality of their own, the OBM centers on the operation of organizations that make up the government and on their regular patterns of behavior.\(^{22}\)

Finally, Allison presents his last model, the Governmental Politics Model (GPM). This model criticizes both the RAM and the OBM by arguing that neither unitary choice nor organizational outputs shape state-policy. Policy is the result of political bargaining and interaction among different actors within government. With regard to the Cuban Crisis, the appropriate question such an analyst would ask is: which games of bargaining produced which decisions and actions prior to and during the crisis? Key actors and their interests, perceptions, personalities, motivations and objectives, and the way these are shaped, constitute the focal point of interest. Moreover, the procedures for resolving competing preferences and the subsequent performance of these actors form part of the analysis likewise.\(^{23}\) “[The] analyst has explained this event when he/she has discovered who did what to whom that yielded the action in question. Predictions are generated by identifying the game in which an issue will arise, the relevant players, and their relative power and bargaining skill.”\(^{24}\)

To conclude, Allison notes that none of these models can satisfactorily explain foreign policy actions when applied individually. Each model only generates partial explanations. Subsequently, Allison claims that, when utilized concurrently, these models prove to be

\(^{21}\) As cited by Allison in Steve Smith and others, *Foreign Policy: Theories, Actors, Cases*, 275.
\(^{24}\) As cited by Allison in Steve Smith and others, *Foreign Policy: Theories, Actors, Cases*, 275.
complementary and thereby better capable of explaining foreign policy actions. Carlsnaes, however, succeeded in developing a more extensive framework that encapsulates an even larger area of FPA. In his effort to incorporate the insights discussed earlier, however, Carlsnaes forfeits the parsimony of less comprehensive, and possibly more straightforward, theories. Nevertheless, the foreign policymaking enterprise covers a broad spectrum of issues and Carlsnaes’ approach provides the opportunity to give due attention to widely diverging causal factors impacting upon a given state’s FPDM process, thereby yielding increasingly exhaustive explanations to foreign policy actions.

1.2.2 Carlsnaes’ FPA conception

Within various scholarly articles, Carlsnaes extensively explicates the metatheoretical debate surrounding the agency-structure problem and its ramifications for FPA. He asserts that two fundamental dilemmas have predominantly characterized the social sciences debate, and thereby FPA theorizing. The first question is concerned with where the dynamic foundations of social systems are located.\(^{25}\) Is this dynamism the outcome of individual decisions and actions, or does it have its origins in some incrementally evolving and self-reproducing structure? This discussion has led to the well-known theoretical distinction between ‘individualism’ and ‘holism’. Secondly, the epistemological discussion on the application of an ‘objectivistic’ or an ‘interpretative’ perspective constitutes another point of contestation. The first perspective is closely associated with natural sciences and is founded upon deterministic and mechanistic analyses of the ‘rational agent’ and the ‘dictating structure’, whereas the latter argues for the existence of a social realm based on norms, rules and intersubjective understandings and meanings.\(^{26}\) Carlsnaes eventually connects these separate viewpoints and introduces four different FPA perspectives accordingly. All four of these perspectives are thus founded upon a different ontology-epistemology connection and together form a fourfold matrix as outlined below.

\(^{25}\) Carlsnaes, *Handbook of International Relations*, 335.

Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th><strong>Objectivism</strong></th>
<th><strong>Interpretativism</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Holism</strong></td>
<td>Structural perspective</td>
<td>Social-institutional perspective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Individualism</strong></td>
<td>Agency-based perspective</td>
<td>Interpretive actor perspective</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

First, Carlsnaes elaborates upon three distinct approaches that together constitute the structural perspective: realism, neoliberal institutionalism, and organizational process approaches. As regards (neo)realism, Carlsnaes distinguishes between the theoretical configurations of aggressive or offensive neorealists, defensive neorealists, and neoclassical realists. Not surprisingly, Carlsnaes refers to Mearsheimer as the main proponent of offensive neorealism.\(^{27}\) Mearsheimer, professor of political science at the University of Chicago, argues that the bipolar world structure and the accompanied distribution of power that characterized international politics during 1945-1990 resulted in relative peace and stability. In “Back to the Future: Instability in Europe after the Cold War”, which was publicized in 1990, Mearsheimer elaborates upon systemic factors that influence a country’s foreign policy actions. Mearsheimer’s main assertion boils down to the observation that the international system, due to its anarchic nature, provokes aggressive behavior. The lack of any overarching global authority ensuring stability and security means that states remain vulnerable to the offensive actions of other states. Hence, Mearsheimer posits that states must care for their own survival. Thus, a government is required to maximize its relative power capabilities in order to fortify its security position; aggression may in that case be a rational way to gather power at the expense of potential rivals.\(^{28}\)

Crucially, Mearsheimer claims that states will tend to act in response to a potential aggressor. Weaker states may try to offset any power asymmetries with possible rivals by balancing.\(^{29}\) “The distribution of power between states tells us how well-positioned states are to commit aggression, and whether other states are able to check their aggression,” thus

---

Mearsheimer states. The strength of alliances, however, is hampered by geographic factors and problems of coordination. These problems could be so severe that states may choose to bandwagon with an adversary instead when they perceive unilateral action to be unviable.

In addition, Mearsheimer deems WMD to decrease the likelihood of being attacked by an offensive state because of the devastating effects such an action could incite. “This gives defenders the advantage, because defenders usually value their freedom more than aggressor’s value new conquest,” thus Mearsheimer stipulates. Hence, he claims WMD to constitute the most effective deterrent.

Thus, military power capabilities and its distribution are conceived of as crucial to foreign policy. Therefore, Mearsheimer argues that the structure of the international system and a country’s position within that system informs state behavior to a larger extent than unit-level factors. Interestingly, Veronica Nmoma, scholar of African studies, discusses the critique of Robert Keohane on this one-dimensional view of international politics. Keohane, professor of international affairs, contends that realists fail to distinguish between power as a resource and power as the capability to influence behavior. Moreover, factors such as economic power, natural resources and geographic factors also add to a state’s aggregate level of power besides mere military capabilities. In addition, she cites Kenneth Waltz, a well-known scholar of politics, when stating that “(…) power is to apply one’s capabilities in an attempt to change someone else’s behavior in certain ways.” With respect to Libya, Nmoma posits that it sought to maximize its capabilities in order to counterbalance US influence in the region and subsequently pursue its distinct objectives. In this sense, power is not conceived of as an end in itself, but as a means to reach certain goals. Thus, she claims that Libya reacted to clear structural factors, but in a less simplistic way as posited by Mearsheimer.

Defensive neorealists like Stephen Walt, on the other hand, disagree with the view of international politics as entertained by balance-of-power theorists. Instead of over-emphasizing

---

37 As cited in Nmoma, “Power and Force: Libya’s Relations with the United States,” 138.
the importance of relative capabilities, Walt, professor of international affairs at Harvard University, opts for a focus on sources of threats. According to Walt, states do not choose their friends and foes on the basis of mere balance of power considerations; they predominantly base such decisions on the potential existence of some threatening agent. While South Korea, for example, is aware of China’s formidable military superiority within Asia, it is nevertheless far more wary of North Korea and subsequently adjusts its security policy accordingly. This analysis is purely founded upon Seoul’s perception of Pyongyang’s intentions. Thus, Walt is far less pessimistic by claiming that conflict can only be instigated by acute threats and that timely and pragmatic balancing against a threatening agent will usually preserve relative peace and stability. 39 “Foreign policy activity, in this view, is the record of rational states reacting properly to clear systemic incentives, coming into conflict only in those circumstances when the security dilemma is heightened to fever pitch,” thus political scientist Gideon Rose concludes. 40

Neoclassical realists, Carlsnaes asserts, partly support the neorealist premises. Indeed, systemic considerations constitute the main input to foreign policy. Nevertheless, the foreign policy process is far more intricate than neorealists postulate it to be and systemic factors only bear upon it in an indirect fashion. Neoclassical realists claim these factors to have an impact solely through existing intervening variables found at the unit level of analysis. As a consequence of these rather ad hoc variables, Carlsnaes states that research within this paradigm has led to ‘theoretically informed narratives’ and a large array of separate case studies. 41

Moreover, Carlsnaes identifies neoliberal institutionalism as another pivotal structural approach to foreign policy. While it allies with neorealists on the presupposition of self-interested and utility-maximizing states as the primary actors operating within an anarchic structure, neoliberal institutionalists simultaneously relegate relative power considerations in favor of efforts to overcome this anarchic uncertainty. Institutional cooperation encouraging the establishment of common rules and norms, and fostering the free flow of information could possibly mitigate the security dilemma and thereby curtail the foreign policy of states toward cooperation, thus neoliberal institutionalists like Keohane contend. 42

Lastly, Carlsnaes emphasizes the significance of organizational process approaches as

41 Carlsnaes, Handbook of International Relations, 336-337.
42 Carlsnaes, Handbook of International Relations, 337.
structural perspectives toward foreign policy. Interestingly, in contrast to the beforementioned systemic level perspectives, organizational process approaches operate at the sub-systemic level. These approaches are customized toward explicating the relationship between a state and its agencies; or between agencies and the individuals which they are comprised of. In both instances, these approaches seek to explain how the latter party conforms to the prescriptions of the former. Thus, a clear similarity can be drawn with Allison’s OBM model as discussed earlier. Also, notions such as ‘groupthink’, as put forward by Irving Janis, which entails an analytical discussion on the interplay between group dynamics and organizational cultures and the accompanied socialization process, belong to this approach.\textsuperscript{43}

Second, Carlsnaes discusses two closely related approaches that fall within the spectrum of the social-institutional perspective. In contrast to the structural approaches, which are holistic by nature but also adhere to an objectivistic epistemology, social-institutional theories can clearly be conceived of as interpretative approaches. Thus, these theories stress the need to interpret every phenomenon as socially constructed. More specifically, social-institutional approaches view structures as crucial to the way states behave, but at the same time they regard these structures as constructed from within through social rules and practices, intersubjective meanings and identities.\textsuperscript{44}

The social-constructivist worldview constitutes one of the social-institutional perspectives. Given the fact that social constructivism as such, due to its metatheoretical character, is not readily applicable to foreign policy analysis, Carlsnaes boils this approach down to the modernist notion of constructivism. This line of thought consists of two related pillars; one containing a distinctive normative character, whereas the other accentuates the role of identities. The first line of thought asserts that the ‘real’ world of international relations and human action are intertwined in such a way that they constitute an intersubjective world that is given meaning through rules and practices that are reproduced by human interaction. The second strand stresses the ‘constitutive’ role identities perform in spelling out appropriate behavior through the application of social norms and ideas.\textsuperscript{45} Thus, Carlsnaes perceives these approaches to be preoccupied with unraveling the knowledge systems that underlie foreign policymaking and state behavior. Structures are not perceived to be merely monolithic, but are depicted as social realms

\textsuperscript{43} Carlsnaes, \textit{Handbook of International Relations}, 337.
\textsuperscript{44} Carlsnaes, \textit{Handbook of International Relations}, 335 and 339-340.
\textsuperscript{45} Carlsnaes, \textit{Handbook of International Relations}, 340.
constructed through distinct patterns of interaction.

In addition, Carlsnaes deems theories within the discursive approach to represent a second pivotal branch within the social-institutional perspective. Crucially, this approach assigns primary importance to the role of language and claims it to have an inner dynamic. Carlsnaes discusses the work of Henrik Larsen and subsequently states that discourses play an essential role within the foreign policy process. Foreign policy is shaped within a specific discursive setting which articulates and promotes certain beliefs, identities and interests. Thus, discourses represent a ‘framework of meaning’ capable of acting like a powerful enabling or constraining force. The ‘securitization framework’, as outlined by Barry Buzan, Ole Waever and Jaap de Wilde, clearly conforms to this approach. Within this framework, special emphasis is provided to the ‘speech act’ which entails the utterance and framing of a specific actor or phenomenon. The securitization mechanism, subsequently, pertains to a linguistic process through which such an actor or phenomenon eventually becomes part of a state’s security agenda. After successful completion of the securitization process, support is mobilized and social power enlarged.46

As regards approaches based on an individualistic ontology, Carlsnaes discusses two domains; one utilizing an objectivistic epistemology, also referred to as the agency-based perspective. The other one applies an interpretative epistemology and pertains to interpretative actor approaches. Within the agency-based perspective, Carlsnaes distinguishes between three approaches; the liberal approach, the bureaucratic politics approach, and cognitive and psychological approaches. All three approaches thus revolve around an individualistic-objectivist viewpoint but focus on different aspects.

Carlsnaes identifies Moravcsik, a much-celebrated professor of political science, as the main protagonist of a liberal approach to IR.47 Moravcsik explains state behavior by elaborating upon the domestic and transnational forces that influence underlying state preferences. He does so by posing three core assumptions which define the nature of subnational actors, the state, and the international system.

The first assumption revolves around the notion of ‘primacy of societal actors’. Here, Moravcsik seeks to understand under which social conditions the behavior of self-interested actors converges toward cooperation or conflict. These individuals and private groups, which are

47 Carlsnaes, Handbook of International Relations, 339.
socially differentiated through their diverging tastes, resource endowments, and social commitments, represent the most fundamental actors in international politics. They pursue their differentiated material and ideational interests through political exchange and collective action under the constraints imposed by material scarcity, diverging values, and variations in societal influence. Crucially, Moravcsik depicts three associated factors that determine the potential existence of conflictual societal demands and the subsequent tendency toward coercion in the pursuit of them: divergent fundamental beliefs; conflict over scarce material goods; and inequalities in political power. The first potential source of conflict pertains to deep and irreconcilable differences in beliefs about the provision of public goods such as borders, culture, ideology, basic political institutions, and social practices. In addition, Moravcsik assumes that material scarcity tends to exacerbate conflict over resources by increasing the willingness of social actors to apply coercion in the pursuit of them. Third, large inequalities in societal influence provoke conflict as well.48 “(…) where power asymmetries permit groups to evade the costs of redistributing goods, incentives arise for exploitative, rent-seeking behavior, even if the result is inefficient for society as a whole,” thus Moravcsik contends.49 He assumes that such behavior increasingly fuels civil unrest that could potentially unfold into violent conflict.50

The second assumption maintains that: “States represent some subset of domestic society, on the basis of whose interests state officials define state preferences and act purposively in world politics.”51 State preferences and representation thus constitute the two core theoretical concepts at this stage of the analysis. Moravcsik perceives the state not as an actor but as “(…) a representative institution constantly subject to capture and recapture, construction and reconstruction by coalitions of social actors.”52 State preferences are defined as the set of fundamental interests as articulated by representative state institutions. These institutions constitute a ‘transmission belt’ through which preferences and social power are transformed into government policy. Thus, policymaking is constrained from below by the underlying interests, power, and identities of substate actors.53 Interestingly, Moravcsik notes that states are differentiated by various levels and ways of representation: “(…) representation might empower

---

a narrow bureaucratic class or even a single tyrannical individual, such as an ideal-typical Pol Pot or Josef Stalin.”

Representation pertains to all stable features of the policy process that favor particular subnational interests, formal as well as informal. Patrimonial and authoritarian ruling elites may privilege those with kinship or other ties to the regime over other societal groups and thereby foster an inegalitarian allocation of property and power. Subsequently, Moravcsik distinguishes between two ways of external representation: unitary and disaggregated representation. The former is associated with a disproportionate accumulation of power and thereby to unitary policy articulation; the second pertains to different semi-autonomous entities conducting foreign policy within their legal confinements. To summarize, Moravcsik stipulates that states “(…) are, in Waltzian terms, ‘functionally differentiated’; that is, they pursue particular interpretations and combinations of security, welfare, and sovereignty preferred by powerful domestic groups enfranchised by representative institutions and practices.”

Crucially, Moravcsik’s theory focuses on the impact that shifts in fundamental preferences have on state behavior.

Finally, Moravcsik poses his third assumption by arguing that “The configuration of interdependent state preferences determines state behavior.” This presupposition boils down to the notion that “(…) each state seeks to realize its distinctive preferences under varying constraints imposed by the preferences of other states.” Crucial to this assumption is the theoretical concept of ‘policy interdependence’. It pertains to the costs and benefits created for foreign societies when dominant societal groups seek to satisfy their own preferences; in other words, it constitutes the transnational externalities of efforts toward realizing national preferences. Subsequently, Moravcsik depicts three categories of externalities: compatible preferences that incite cooperation; zero-sum preferences that increase the risk of interstate conflict; and mixed preferences that, through mutual policy concessions, can still lead to welfare gains for both societies. Crucially, Moravcsik argues that conflict requires a revisionist state that furthers preferences to which other states are unwilling to comply with or to succumb to. Its revisionist quest for an alteration of the status quo, coupled with foreign resistance, results in

---

conflict.\textsuperscript{60}

Furthermore, Carlsnaes discusses the bureaucratic politics approach. This approach neatly corresponds with the GPM model as outlined by Allison. It centers on “players who make government decisions not by a single, rational choice but by the pulling and hauling that is politics.”\textsuperscript{61} The outcome of such ‘chess games’ completely depends on “the power and performance of proponents and opponents of the action in question.”\textsuperscript{62} Crucially, the ‘interests’ involved do not merely represent those adhered to by specific individuals, but refer to the interests of individuals as bureaucracy-representatives. “Where you stand depends on where you sit”, thus the familiar aphorism goes. Conceptual and empirical difficulties, however, continue to hamper this domain of research. Nevertheless, Carlsnaes claims this approach to be vital to FPA.\textsuperscript{63}

Cognitive and psychological theories represent the last agency-based perspective. These approaches contradict sharply with theories of neoliberal institutionalism and neorealism in that they deem individuals to be largely unsusceptible to the ‘constraints’ imposed by reified structures. These theories depict the individual as problem-solver rather than as malleable agent. Carlsnaes deems operational code analysis to constitute a suitable approach to analyze the psychological and cognitive factors affecting foreign policymaking.\textsuperscript{64} Interestingly, Kelly O’Reilly, assistant professor of political science, conducted a thorough and comprehensive research analysis on Qaddafi’s cognitive world view and belief system.\textsuperscript{65} In his research, O’Reilly applies operational code analysis: “(…) operational code analysis considers the importance of internalized rules of conduct and norms informing leaders’ views of the world around them and how these beliefs may steer decision-making.”\textsuperscript{66} Through analyzing public statements made by Qaddafi, O’Reilly attempts to unravel his philosophical beliefs (the perceived nature of the universe) and instrumental beliefs (the requisite means to attain one’s political goals). Eventually, he seeks to identify possible learning patterns as a result of changing

\textsuperscript{60} Moravcsik, “Taking Preferences Seriously: A Liberal Theory of International Politics,” 520-521.
\textsuperscript{61} As cited by Allison and Zelikow, \textit{Essence of Decision}, 255.
\textsuperscript{62} As cited by Allison and Zelikow, \textit{Essence of Decision}, 256.
\textsuperscript{63} Carlsnaes, \textit{Handbook of International Relations}, 338-339.
\textsuperscript{64} Carlsnaes, \textit{Handbook of International Relations}, 337-338.
\textsuperscript{66} As cited by O’Reilly, “Turning Over a New Leaf in Tripoli? Lessons from Libya’s Transformation,” 278.
beliefs.\textsuperscript{67} O’Reilly claims that this approach “(…) permits examination of key theoretical questions of whether external or internal stimuli prompt decisions: do decision makers base their actions on circumstances or dispositions?”\textsuperscript{68} O’Reilly employed the Verbs in Context System (VICS) to generate inferences about Qaddafi’s operational code through analyzing verbs in his rhetoric. These verbs display beliefs about self and other in the political environment founded upon cooperative and conflictual attributions.\textsuperscript{69} Eventually, the results were divided into two categories: philosophical and instrumental beliefs. Moreover, O’Reilly pays due attention to the applicability of the ‘frustration-aggression hypothesis’. This theory claims that frustration rather than genuine hostility informs an individual’s antagonistic behavior.\textsuperscript{70} “Growing frustration increases the likelihood of aggressive behavior. In terms of the operational code, an individual’s perception of a hostile world, pessimism about realizing political goals, and a lack of control over events are suggestive of frustration likely leading to aggressive behavior.”\textsuperscript{71}

Finally, Carlsnaes discusses approaches founded upon an interpretative actor perspective. He clearly distinguishes this perspective from the holistic-institutional approaches as discussed earlier by stating that the former conforms to a bottom-up conception of state behavior whereas the latter addresses it through a top-down approach. Thus, interpretative actor approaches focus on the actions of individuals, accompanied by their deliberations, reasons and intentions. Instead of focusing on the ‘rationality’ of decision-making, these theorists emphasize the ‘reasoned’ character of policy choices.\textsuperscript{72} Interestingly, Carlsnaes cites the work of IR scholars Steve Smith and Martin Hollis:

Understanding proceeds by reconstructing at an individual level. This Weberian line has been much used in International Relations, especially in the sub-field known as Foreign Policy Analysis. Here the concern is to understand decisions from the standpoint of the decision-makers by reconstructing their reasons. The foreign policy behavior of states depends on how individuals with power perceive and analyze situations. Collective action is a sum or combination of individual actions.\textsuperscript{73}

\textsuperscript{68} As cited by O’Reilly, “Turning Over a New Leaf in Tripoli? Lessons from Libya’s Transformation,” 280.
\textsuperscript{69} O’Reilly, “Turning Over a New Leaf in Tripoli? Lessons from Libya’s Transformation,” 281.
\textsuperscript{71} As cited by O’Reilly, “Turning Over a New Leaf in Tripoli? Lessons from Libya’s Transformation,” 284.
\textsuperscript{72} Carlsnaes, Handbook of International Relations, 341.
\textsuperscript{73} As cited in Carlsnaes, Handbook of International Relations, 341.
Carlsnaes typifies the interpretative actor perspective as one that stresses the importance of the reasoning of individual policymakers based on certain perceptions of the international environment and on how they assess the role of their own state within that context. Thus, a much-discussed concept such as the ‘national interest’ is not conceived of as an ‘objective truth’ but as a mere policy priority formulated by reasoned decision-makers. In addition, Carlsnaes provides a counter-factual argument which, in fact, touches upon the core of interpretative actor approaches. This argument poses the question that: if the individuals involved in decision-making were not present or would have made different choices, would history have unfolded in the exact same fashion? Carlsnaes rightly notes the lack of theoretical substance given this perspective’s descriptive character but nevertheless refuses to neglect such approaches. Purposive behavior represents an integral part of foreign policy and thus no analysis would be complete without it.\textsuperscript{74}

1.2.3 Carlsnaes’ FPA synthesis

Eventually, Carlsnaes conceptualizes a synthetic theoretical framework that integrates the beforementioned perspectives into a tripartite approach to foreign policy actions. This framework consists of an intentional, a dispositional and a structural dimension.

![Figure 2: Tripartite approach to foreign policy](image)

Although analytically autonomous, Carlsnaes asserts that these three dimensions should be regarded as closely linked in such a way that they constitute a step-by-step approach that results

\textsuperscript{74} Carlsnaes, \textit{Handbook of International Relations}, 341.
in increasingly exhaustive explanations to foreign policy actions.\textsuperscript{75} Figure 2 schematically clarifies this approach. Carlsnaes contends that all four rock-bottom perspectives as discussed earlier can be applied within this synthesis. The structural and social-institutional approaches when analyzing the causal patterns between the structural and dispositional dimension; the agency-based theories when elaborating upon the causal connection between the dispositional and intentional dimension; and the interpretative actor perspective when grasping the teleological link between intentions and foreign policy actions.\textsuperscript{76}

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{figure3.png}
\caption{Explaining foreign policy action}
\end{figure}

If this model is to be applied to explain policy transformation, however, a mechanism needs to be incorporated that both signifies foreign policy change over time and incorporates a feedback link.\textsuperscript{77} Carlsnaes opts for a twofold strategy. First, a descriptive analysis is requisite in order to determine which actions have taken place during a specific time frame in order to signify any changes; second, ascertaining the causes underlying policy change requires an examination of how policymaking has altered through the years. This second component represents an analytical endeavor aiming to explain whether these changes are caused by factors unrelated to the FPDM process or whether they are the outcome of previous policies. Hypothetically, policy choices could, for example, change as a result of negative feedback thereby leading to a dismissal and to a subsequent modification of the foreign policy process.

\textsuperscript{75} Carlsnaes, \textit{Handbook of International Relations}, 341-344.
\textsuperscript{76} Carlsnaes, \textit{Handbook of International Relations}, 343.
Besides such adaptive policies, Carlsnaes contends that innovative policies can bring about ‘feedforward’ processes consisting of sustained positive feedback. Arguably, the glasnost and perestroika policies of former Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev and the subsequent rapprochement between Washington and Moscow represent the most notable empirical example of such a case. Such innovative and evolutionary policies, as anticipated by Gorbachev, could transform a constraining structural context into an enabling one. Carlsnaes thus contends that structure and agency are mutually constitutive, thereby calling for a dynamic approach to FPA.78

Figure 3 outlines such a dynamic model. The three ovals represent foreign policy actions over time while the two boxes constitute the FPDM process. The descriptive element thus consists of an examination of the three ovals while the explanatory component determines whether these changes have been caused by the FPDM process and where these causes might be located.79

![Figure 4](image)

Figure 4 A dynamic model for analyzing foreign policy change

1.2.4 Applying Carlsnaes’ model to the Libyan case

Carlsnaes asserts that this synthesis can be applied in various ways through the usage of different theories operating within the three distinct dimensions.80 Since an application of every single of the beforementioned perspectives far exceeds the limits of this research, a well-founded selection of theories will be made through which the three different dimensions – purposive behavior; dispositional factors; and structural phenomena – within Libyan foreign policymaking will be
analyzed. In this way, a model will be presented that conforms to the tripartite approach as outlined in figure 1. Yet, it also means that certain factors will be left out of the analysis which, through the intricate processes that constitute international politics, could also have affected Libyan policymaking. Nevertheless, through presenting a solid theoretical model that conforms to Carlsnaes’ approach, and through subsequently applying it within an empirical inquiry of secondary sources written by renowned and scholarly Libya experts, this research seeks to increasingly lay bare the elements that have given shape to Libyan US-policy, and ultimately explain Tripoli’s diplomatic overture.

As regards the intentional or teleological dimension, the focus will lie on the policy goals that directly informed Libyan decisions. A given policy action is chosen to achieve a certain goal; thus, it answers an ‘in order to’ question.\textsuperscript{81} The empirical analysis will elaborate upon the reasoned character behind Qaddafi’s purposive behavior by investigating secondary sources and determining the intentions they claim to have critically guided his policymaking. To which specific goals do the consulted sources point when explaining Qaddafi’s decisions? What were the Colonel’s main preferences and objectives? Though lacking a certain degree of theoretical anchorage, a teleological explanation solely in terms of intentions is fully feasible.

With respect to the dispositional dimension, Carlsnaes poses the critical question of: how has a particular intention become a particular actor’s intention? The explanation is deepened by providing a causal determination of policy in which factors affecting the intentional dimension are discussed. Thus, a ‘because of’ rather than an ‘in order to’ question is addressed.\textsuperscript{82} The empirical research will analyze the factors that have informed Qaddafi’s policies from a liberal agency-based perspective and from a cognitive-psychological viewpoint.

As discussed earlier, Moravcsik addresses this dimension of foreign policymaking by theorizing on the construction of underlying state preferences. His theory seeks to discover how particular preferences shared among societal agents transform into state preferences, and how these are subsequently constrained through subnational and international forces. Thus, politics is conceived of as an area of competition between various actors who operate at different levels and who each seek to satisfy their self-interest. Through explicitly applying Moravcsik’s three core assumptions as outlined earlier to Qaddafi’s Libya, this research seeks to analyze the

\textsuperscript{81} Carlsnaes, interview conducted by author, March 30, 2011.
\textsuperscript{82} Carlsnaes, interview conducted by author, March 30, 2011.
dispositional determinants behind the Colonel’s fluctuating decision-making process. Moravcsik’s theory can potentially explain the Libyan leadership’s behavior by elaborating upon factors such as beliefs and ideology; values and perceptions; the provision of material goods; the distribution of political power throughout society; identities and interests; and the configuration of interdependent state preferences. How have ideological notions informed Qaddafi’s actions toward Washington? To what extent has the distribution of political power and material welfare within Libyan society incited a foreign policy transformation? How have transnational and international preferences affected Libyan decision-making toward the US during Qaddafi’s tenure? In sum, Moravcsik’s theory focuses on the impact that shifts in fundamental preferences have on state behavior.\textsuperscript{83}

In addition, the psychological approach of O’Reilly will be integrated within this dimension as well. O’Reilly’s operational code analysis allows for drawing inferences from Qaddafi’s cognitive belief system. How did the Colonel’s perception of the political universe affect Libya’s external behavior? To what extent did possible changes within his worldview prompt a fundamental modification of Libya’s foreign policy? Did a sincere change of heart or experiential learning alter his diplomatic outlook or was it merely instigated by opportunist pragmatism? While Moravcsik pays due attention to societal and international forces affecting the construction of state preferences, O’Reilly’s approach complements it by emphasizing the potential effect of psychological factors on foreign policy. Thus, both the innate characteristics of the policymaker himself, as well as the societal and international forces to which he is exposed are incorporated into the analysis.

Finally, to complete the model, Carlsnaes asserts that structural factors also need to be taken into account. For example, he mentions that the US has been a superpower since the end of the Second World War. This position has unambiguously impacted upon the relations it has maintained with other states. How has the US hegemony impacted upon Libyan policymaking?\textsuperscript{84} Instead of directly causing certain behavior, systemic factors provide the constraining and enabling conditions in which actors maneuver.\textsuperscript{85} Within this dimension, theoretical emphasis will be put on the neorealist proceeds of Mearsheimer. Qaddafi’s revisionist policy actions mainly manifested themselves during the Cold War era. After the dissolution of the Union of Soviet

\textsuperscript{84} Carlsnaes, interview conducted by author, March 30, 2011.
Socialist Republics (USSR), Libya’s confrontation with the US seemed to subside throughout the 1990s, followed by increasingly normalized relations after the turn of the century. In light of Tripoli’s close cooperation with the Soviet Union prior to its demise, it would be interesting to analyze how Qaddafi’s policies were influenced by the bipolar constellation of power during the Cold War. Even more interesting would be to discuss to what extent Libya’s diplomatic transformation was instigated by the Soviet implosion and the subsequent US unipolarity. How have balance of power considerations and the structure of the international system impacted upon Tripoli’s foreign policy actions toward the White House? One can imagine a small state like Libya located in an area dominated by US interests and all that this entails. This research allies with Nmoma in that economic welfare, natural resources and geographic factors also add to a state’s aggregate level of power. Moreover, power is not merely depicted as a resource, but as a capability to influence the behavior of others. Therefore, in contrast to defining Libyan objectives solely in terms of an accumulation of power, these are conceived of as a more nuanced and intricate set of policy goals. Thus, while the structural dimension of this model will basically conform to the neorealist premises of Mearsheimer, noteworthy deviations to his approach are instituted.

The following two chapters will analyze Libyan foreign policy actions toward the White House by applying Carlsnaes’ dynamic model as outlined in figure 3. Chapter II will seek to explain Libya’s revisionist behavior toward the US throughout the 1970s and 1980s. During these two decades, Qaddafi sought to confront and thwart US interests, eventually culminating into the Lockerbie airplane bombing of 1988. After this incident, Libya’s hostility declined and it increasingly pursued constructive relations with the US and reintegration into the international community. Chapter III therefore focuses on Tripoli’s policymaking toward Washington during the post-Cold War era, thereby seeking to explain its policy change toward normalization.

---

Chapter II

Libyan revisionist policies toward the US during the 1970s and 1980s

We see that the Arabs have been wronged and humiliated by Zionism and imperialism.

Muammar al-Qaddafi\(^87\)

On 1 September 1969, the Libyan Free Unionist Officers Movement successfully executed a bloodless coup d’état against the pro-Western and authoritarian monarchy of King Idris Sanusi, who had ruled Libya since 1951.\(^88\) The group of junior military officers who ousted the fragile 79-year-old king was led by Captain Qaddafi, who was promptly promoted to the rank of Colonel as he assumed power of the Revolutionary Command Council (RCC) and became the de facto head of state.\(^89\) The revolutionary zeal of the movement was embedded within its primordial socio-political vanguards: freedom, socialism and unity. Qaddafi stated that, in contrast to a mere coup d’état, his revolution entailed a transformation of society. The *al-fitah*, the Koranic name of the revolution which literally means ‘opener’ or ‘conqueror’, was to reshape the entire Libyan value system according to a new philosophy. This philosophy, based on principles of anti-imperialism, Arab nationalism and Islamism, was intended to guide Libya through a two-staged transformation process: the Nasserist phase – referring to the Egyptian leader Gamal Abdul Nasser, who represented a revolutionary example to Qaddafi – pertained to transforming the country from a feudal society to a state-controlled capitalist society; the second phase, the socialist *jamahiriya* or ‘era of the masses’ entailed the final transformation into a collective political and economic system.\(^90\) On March 2\(^{nd}\), 1977, the country was renamed the Socialist People’s Libyan Arab Jamahiriya (the People’s State). Two years later, Qaddafi wrote

---

the Green Book through which he explicated his ‘Third Universal Theory’; a peculiar blend of capitalism and socialism. From 1989 onwards, Qaddafi relinquished his formal official prerogatives and subsequently adopted the role of ‘Guide of the Revolution’. In practice, these measures proved to be merely cosmetic and Qaddafi remained the effective head of state.91

On the international level, the Colonel proclaimed Libya to be neutral in great power quarrels and was quick to note that the country vehemently opposed any form of colonialism or imperialism, and would therefore promote Third World causes. Moreover, he stated Tripoli would actively seek and embrace Arab nationalism and therefore support the Palestinian struggle against Israel.92 During the regime’s infant years, the US remained relatively optimistic about the Qaddafi leadership due to its disinclination toward international communism and ‘Soviet imperialism’.93 However, soon this optimism vanished after Libya actively repudiated Western, and especially US, ‘imperialistic’ values likewise. Subsequently, Qaddafi steered the country out of the Western camp and into the Arab world. Not long after its inception, it actively attempted to rid the country of Western influences, promoted moves toward fostering Arab unity, and mobilized Arab and African support toward isolating Israel.94 Qaddafi envisaged his country to become, just like Nasserist Egypt, a leader of pan-Arabism, and a main advocate of the Palestinian cause.95

Crucially, six distinct elements can be identified which characterize Libya’s confrontational policy line toward the US during the first two decades of Qaddafi’s rule. First, the Colonel’s policies toward nationalizing American and other Western companies operating within Libya’s oil sector, and subsequently utilizing its energy resources to bolster its obstinate position toward Washington, signified the start of mutual animosities. Second, the regime’s regional proactivism and interventionism critically severed relations with the White House. These policies included deliberate attempts toward Arab unification; efforts intended to isolate and annihilate the ‘Zionist regime’ of Israel; military ventures within its geopolitical neighborhood; and diplomatic and subversive endeavors aimed at diminishing US influence within the Arab world. Third, the regime’s active support and sponsorship of ‘national liberation

94 Nmoma, “Power and Force: Libya’s Relations with the United States,” 138-141.
movements’, of which most were designated as terrorist organizations by US policymakers, eventually provided Libya a place on Washington’s terrorist blacklist. Fourth, rapprochement between Tripoli and Moscow during the Cold War further complicated mutual relations. Fifth, various attempts toward acquiring WMD provided an additional concern for US policymakers which lasted throughout the 1990s. Finally, Tripoli’s alleged acts of state terrorism, most notably the Lockerbie airplane bombing, represent the pinnacle of Libya’s bellicose attitude toward the US, after which Libyan hostility decreased.

To what extent can Libya’s revisionist policy actions toward the US be explained by utilizing Carlsnaes’ FPA model? In conformity with the dynamic approach as outlined in Chapter I, figure 3, the following section will provide a descriptive analysis of Libyan policy actions toward the US throughout the first two decades of Qaddafi’s rule. This analysis will facilitate the examination in Chapter III on whether foreign policy change has taken place. Subsequently, an explanatory analysis will be incorporated that applies Carlsnaes’ tripartite approach to Libyan foreign policymaking toward the US during this period. Each dimension of the policy process will be extensively discussed in order to determine where the causes of the Qaddafi regime’s confrontational policy line toward the White House are located.

2.1 Policy actions

During the 1970s, US – Libyan relations deteriorated swiftly as Qaddafi increasingly sought to thwart US interests.\(^96\) Not surprisingly, directly after its inception the RCC leadership was keen on ejecting US forces out of Libya and particularly on reasserting control over Wheelus Field; an important US military airbase in Libya from where Washington could safeguard its interests within the Arab world.\(^97\) Typical for the regime’s revolutionary and nationalistic trinity, the day the American forces evacuated Wheelus Field, later Ukba ben Nafi airbase, was declared an official day of national celebration.\(^98\)

In addition, the regime was intent on seizing control over the country’s oil sector through

nationalizing Western- and American-owned oil companies operating within the country, such as ESSO and Occidental.\textsuperscript{99} Already by 1973, Qaddafì had nationalized 51\% of the foreign oil companies in Libya.\textsuperscript{100} In addition, the Colonel fulfilled a pioneering role within the oil boycott enacted by the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) in 1973 as a result of US military assistance for Israel during the Yom Kippur War.\textsuperscript{101} Crucially, Libya was excluded from the war effort by Egypt and Syria but still fiercely opposed US-initiated peace efforts after physical hostilities had terminated.\textsuperscript{102}

Furthermore, US suspicion toward the revolutionary government heightened when Tripoli purchased a vast amount of Soviet arms in 1974 and Libyan – Soviet rapprochement began to materialize, culminating into Washington’s conception of Libya as a ‘Soviet satellite’.\textsuperscript{103} Although Qaddafì explicitly rejected Soviet communism, he increased mutual arms deals and accepted Soviet support for its military operations in the region. In addition, the Kremlin provided Tripoli with a nuclear reactor, research center and power plant, thereby leaving Western policymakers suspicious. Also, the Colonel made several state visits to Moscow and in 1979 he even threatened to join the Warsaw Pact.\textsuperscript{104} Thus, Libya’s position of neutrality and non-alignment was severely compromised due to its close cooperation with the USSR.

Also, on multiple occasions Qaddafì displayed his proactive, and in some instances expansionist, regional aspirations. He actively pursued regime change in southern neighboring Chad, where the Tombalbaye administration, and later President Hissène Habré, secured French influence in the region and was unwilling to cede the Aouzou Strip, over which Tripoli maintained a historic claim of sovereignty, to Libya. The dispute eventually led to a Libyan military incursion into Chad in the mid-1970s, followed by a long-lasting armed struggle. Due to military reversals and the heavy domestic and international costs associated with the conflict – Qaddafì faced internal socio-economic unrest and a growing international anti-Libyan alliance –, added by US assistance to the Chadian government, the Colonel decided to negotiate a
humiliating ceasefire by 1987. Moreover, Libya fulfilled a pivotal role in two coup attempts against the pro-American Sudanese administration in 1975-1976; allegedly attacked Tunisia in 1980; was named in assassination attempts against the pro-Western Jordanian, Saudi, and Moroccan political leaders; and increasingly allied with the radical regime of Ayatollah Khomeini in Iran. Moreover, the Libyan administration orchestrated numerous attempts toward Arab unification: in 1969 with Egypt and Sudan (the Tripoli Charter); in 1971 with Egypt and Syria (Benghazi Treaty); in 1972 with Egypt; in 1973 with Algeria (Hassi Messaoud Accords); in 1974 with Tunisia (Djerba Treaty); in 1981 with Chad (Tripoli Communiqué); and in 1984 with Morocco (Oujda Treaty). Finally, Libya participated in the Treaty of the Arab Union which espoused the creation of the Great Arab Maghreb, but failed to meet its initial aims.

Furthermore, in 1973 Libya declared that the entire Gulf of Sirte belonged to its territorial waters. Various states, including the US, denounced these claims as illegitimate and the Pentagon subsequently conducted several military exercises near the Gulf. Eventually, these endeavors led to the first direct military confrontation when the US shot down two Libyan jet-fighters about one-hundred kilometers off its coast.

Throughout the 1970s, Qaddafi increasingly acted antagonistic toward the Egyptian administration of President Anwar Sadat, who had succeeded Nasser in 1970. According to Qaddafi, Sadat conducted a far too limited Arab – Israel agenda and allied with the US, while Libya maintained its rejectionist position and continued to support the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), who was chaired by Yasser Arafat and which was designated by the US as a terrorist organization. The Colonel attacked both the US and Arab states that endorsed Sadat’s policies through inflammatory rhetoric and attempts at subversion. Interestingly, the regime created the Libyan Anti-Imperialist Centre which became the main support structure for its proactive international ‘terrorist’ policies. These policies included providing technical,
logistical and financial support to radical non-state entities.\textsuperscript{113} In 1977, the US Carter administration discovered evidence of a projected Libyan-sponsored assassination attempt against Herman Frederick Eilts, the US ambassador to Egypt. US President Jimmy Carter personally contacted Qaddafi and informed him of the details to corroborate the allegation and disseminated US disenchantment. Even though the plan was aborted at a later stage, Libya started to occupy an increasingly prominent position on the US State Department’s terrorist blacklist by then.\textsuperscript{114}

After 1979, US – Libyan relations decayed further as a result of Qaddafi’s intervention in the Ugandan – Tanzanian War aiming to uphold the Idi Amin regime. More importantly, however, was the sacking of the US embassy in Tripoli by infuriated demonstrators. Libyan students rebelled in support of the Iranian militants during the US hostage crisis in Tehran. According to Carter, Qaddafi had failed to utilize the instruments that could have prevented the incident. Consequently, the US closed its embassy in Tripoli in 1980, expelled members of the Libyan embassy in Washington after accusing them of persecuting dissident expatriates, and thereby severed diplomatic relations with the Libyan \textit{Jamahiriya} substantially.\textsuperscript{115}

Also of importance was the regime’s intention to acquire WMD by the late 1970s. At the end of the 1980s, Qaddafi had succeeded in developing a rudimentary capability to produce chemical and biological weapons (CBW).\textsuperscript{116} In addition, the regime attempted to obtain a nuclear capability as well. During the first two decades of Qaddafi’s reign, the country attempted to, first, purchase the building blocks of an ostensibly ‘civil’ nuclear capability which included uranium exploration and the construction of reactors and research centers for reproducing plutonium. Later, it sought to acquire fissile material required for nuclear weapons. It both tried to procure a capability ‘off the shelf’ by approaching China, France, India and the Soviet Union throughout the 1970s; and by seeking a manufacturing capacity of its own by partially benefiting from the proliferation network of the Pakistani scientist Abdul Qadir Khan.\textsuperscript{117}

After the inauguration of US President Ronald Reagan in 1981, the relationship between

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{113} Martinez, “Libya: the Conversion of a ‘Terrorist State’,” 151-153.
\item \textsuperscript{114} St. John, \textit{Libya and the United States: Two Centuries of Strife}, 109-110.
\item \textsuperscript{117} Wyn Q. Bowen, \textit{Libya and Nuclear Proliferation: Stepping Back from the Brink}, (New York: Routledge, 2006): 7-10.
\end{itemize}
Libya and the US altered significantly. While Carter attempted to curb Qaddafi’s policies through soft diplomacy, Reagan explicitly vilified Qaddafi as an international pariah and, in line with his ‘rollback’ approach toward Soviet communism, embarked upon a confrontational policy line, exploring avenues which could effectively lead to the termination of his regime. Besides the military contentions in the Gulf of Sirte mentioned earlier, Reagan installed unilateral commercial and technological trade restrictions with Libya and imposed an oil embargo. Crucially, Tripoli did not concede to US pressure but instead began to invigorate its support for radical violent organizations such as the PLO, the Abu Nidal Organization, the Somali Salvation Front, and even the Irish Republican Army (IRA). The increasing military edge of mutual confrontational policy actions reached its pinnacle after the 1986 terrorist attack on discotheque La Belle in the German capital of Berlin; an establishment that was regularly visited by US military personnel. The assault resulted in two US soldiers dead and 79 Americans injured. Reagan responded vigorously by executing operation El Dorado Canyon, which was the codename for the April, 15th 1986 US air bombardments of Tripoli and Benghazi. The military operation also included an air raid over Qaddafi’s residence, Bab al-Azizia, which, according to Tim Niblock, professor of Arab and Islamic Studies, constituted a clear assassination attempt against the ‘Brother Leader’.

During the three years that followed this US military endeavor, two incidents would prove decisive and constitutive in Libya’s relations with the West in general, and the US in particular. On 21 December 1988 an explosion on Pan Am Flight 103 caused the airplane to crash down in the Scottish town of Lockerbie, killing 270 people of which 179 were American. A controversial investigation process under the auspices of US and UK authorities eventually led to the identification of two Libyan officials in a 1991 indictment: Abdelbaset al-Megrahi and al-Amin Khalifa Fahima. Moreover, an explosion on the French Union de Transports Aérients (UTA) Flight 772 en route to Paris was also attributed to Libya by French and British

---

121 Niblock, “Pariah States” and Sanctions in the Middle East: Iraq, Libya, Sudan, 30-32
investigation teams. The downing of the plane, which crashed in Niger, led to 170 fatal casualties of which 57 were French.

Thus, US – Libyan relations worsened substantially throughout the first two decades of Qaddafi’s leadership. Why did the Colonel conduct such a confrontational policy line toward Washington? Carlsnaes’ model allows us to analyze the policies Qaddafi entertained toward the US by analyzing the intentional, dispositional and structural factors that impacted upon the Libyan foreign policy decision-making process.

2.2 Intentional dimension

The empirical explanatory analysis will commence with a discussion of the Libyan leadership’s intentions and goals behind its anti-American policy actions as outlined in the preceding section. In particular, attention will be given to the goals and intentions informing the six clusters of policy undertakings referred to above. Since these policy actions, and the intentions informing them, largely coincide, they will be fused together to a large extent.

Geoff Simons, a British journalist who wrote numerous scholarly books on Libyan policy under Qaddafi, claims that at the heart of Libya’s anti-US posture was its rejection of US imperialism in the Arab world which demonstrated itself through the presence of the Israeli state and the reactionary pro-US governments in countries like post-Nasser Egypt, Sudan, Chad, Tunisia, Jordan, Saudi Arabia and Morocco. Its support for extremist groups, its efforts toward forging Arab unity, its promotion of Palestinian and Third World causes, and even its pragmatic cooperation with the Soviet Union (besides buttressing the regime’s power base through arms procurements), was intended to eradicate US power and influence in the region. Niblock adds that Qaddafi’s goal was to attain true freedom and well-being for Libyans and other Arabs alike, and therefore to make an end to the forces of neocolonialism and imperialism. Since the US and Israel were perceived to be compromising that liberty through the divisive effects of their presence, radical promotion of Arab and Third World interests combined with complete

---

125 Ronen, Qaddafi’s Libya in World Politics, 54-56.
independence was deemed indispensable.\textsuperscript{127} Yehudit Ronen, Israeli scholar of Middle Eastern and African studies, adds that the ‘restoration’ of the Arab-Islamic identity was perceived to be instrumentally obligatory to arrive at this condition.\textsuperscript{128}

As regards the Colonel’s attempts toward Arab unification, Ronald Bruce St. John, scholar of international affairs and notable Libya expert, argues that it was informed by a desire to solve the most delicate Arab problem: the liberation of Palestine. \textit{Jihad} was perceived to be the action element of Arab nationalism through which unification was to be attained. “(...) any contribution to liberate the world from imperialism should be considered as an integral part of jihad,” thus Qaddafi stated.\textsuperscript{129} St. John asserts that the most practical expression of jihad was Libyan support for Palestinian liberation movements such as the Fatah wing of the PLO. Moreover, he claims that alleged subversive liquidation attempts on the political leaders of countries such as Jordan and Morocco were intended to remove the obstacles that forestalled Arab unification.\textsuperscript{130}

Interestingly, the Colonel’s continuous anti-US rhetoric also served domestic purposes. Ronen asserts that Qaddafi had to examine rational ways to legitimize his coup and mobilize popular domestic support since his predecessor was “(...) considered by many Libyans to be a source of national pride and a symbol of postcolonialism.”\textsuperscript{131} Thus, Ronen contends that, through his rejectionist US agenda, Qaddafi provided the politically heterogeneous Libyan society with a new common interest. In that way, he effectively made the fragmented and tribal population rally around his leadership and ‘cushion’ socioeconomic divisions.\textsuperscript{132} Furthermore, St. John claims that Qaddafi’s support for extremist groups was born out of the Colonel’s desire to increase his legitimacy in the region by bolstering his international reputation.\textsuperscript{133} Thus, consolidating domestic power and enhancing regional appeal represented important goals of the Qaddafi leadership during this period.

Moreover, Ronen asserts that Libya’s pursuit for closer ties with the USSR during the 1970s merely derived from strategic calculations. Qaddafi intended to countervail the increasing

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{127} Niblock, \textit{“Pariah States” and Sanctions in the Middle East: Iraq, Libya, Sudan}, 19-21.
\item \textsuperscript{128} Ronen, \textit{Qaddafi’s Libya in World Politics}, 10-13.
\item \textsuperscript{129} As cited in St. John, \textit{Libya: Continuity and Change}, 115. Moreover, Qadhafi’s call for \textit{jihad} during this period was anti-imperialist and Arab nationalist by nature; to be distinguished from religious \textit{global jihad}.
\item \textsuperscript{130} St. John, \textit{Libya: Continuity and Change}, 114-116.
\item \textsuperscript{131} As cited by Ronen, \textit{Qaddafi’s Libya in World Politics}, 11.
\item \textsuperscript{132} Ronen, \textit{Qaddafi’s Libya in World Politics}, 10-13.
\item \textsuperscript{133} St. John, “Redefining the Libyan Revolution: the Changing Ideology of Muammar al-Qaddafi,” 93.
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
external pressures that he felt from the US and pro-US regimes in adjacent countries through strategic bandwagoning with the Soviets and thereby to deter intervention.\textsuperscript{134} Another instrument of deterrence was the espoused WMD capability. Målfrid Braut-Hegghammer, assistant professor of international security, conducted research on Libya’s WMD program through examining scholarly works and conducting interviews with key Libyan officials involved in the enterprise.\textsuperscript{135} She argues that the program served three goals: deterrence from external intervention (most notably the US and Israel); elevating Libya’s regional and international role; and acting as a powerful symbol of modern statehood.\textsuperscript{136}

Crucially, a nuclear weapons capability particularly served the need for an ‘indirect’ strategy in the Arab-Israeli conflict according to Qaddafi:

\begin{quote}
(…) to gain victory over Israel is not impossible. We can face the world with a fait accompli, as Israel has done to us. To realize this objective we have to enter into a full battle with the enemy. The problem of Arabs is that they want again and again to enter into a quarter of a battle, half a battle, two-thirds of a battle. Of course, this is unacceptable in the concept of war aimed at a complete victory. (…) There are new theories which say a direct strategy could lead to victory with conventional weapons, but with the modern weapons at hand indirect strategy will achieve the required success. (…) Head-on clashes involving modern weapons are unacceptable in our present age. The Arabs are still participating in a direct strategy. (…) Israel is always adopting the method of indirect strategy and avoiding direct clashes.\textsuperscript{137}
\end{quote}

In sum, various goals prompted the Qaddafi leadership to maintain a foreign policy line that impeded with Washington’s interests in the Arab world. The presence of pro-US elements within the region which sustained ‘neo-imperialist’ practices – most notably the Israeli state – were perceived to be frustrating the ultimate goal of true independence for Arab and other Third World countries. Thus, counterbalancing and eradicating US influence in the Arab world constituted the primary aim in Libya’s confrontation with the White House. Also, the more pragmatic aims of regime survival and self-perpetuation informed Tripoli to bolster its domestic and regional leadership and mobilize popular support through conducting a revisionist agenda. In addition, Soviet support and the espoused WMD capability were mainly required to deter potential Western or Israeli aggression against the Jamahiriya.

\textsuperscript{134} Ronen, \textit{Qaddafi’s Libya in World Politics}, 81-89.
2.3 Dispositional dimension

Within the dispositional dimension, Carlsnaes seeks to explain why the abovementioned goals and preferences are implicated in the first place. How have these intentions become the Qaddafi regime’s intentions? According to Carlsnaes, various ‘bottom-up’ theories can discern the dispositional factors that bear upon the policymaking process. Here, the three liberal assumptions as put forward by Moravcsik as discussed in the preceding chapter will be applied, added by the cognitive-psychological insights of O’Reilly.

2.3.1 Liberal analysis of Qaddafi’s revisionist policies

As regards Moravcsik’s first assumption, ‘primacy of societal actors’, an insightful analysis can be made. Moravcsik claims that individuals and private groups pursue their ideational and material interests through political exchange and collective action under constraints imposed by material scarcity, conflicting beliefs, and variations in societal influence. Conflictual societal demands and the willingness to employ coercion in the pursuit of them are understood to be closely associated with these three constraints.138 How have these societal processes affected Qaddafi’s ascendency to power and his subsequent policies?

According to Dirk Vandewalle, professor of political science with an expertise in Libyan politics, Qaddafi’s rise to power was born out of domestic frustration with the ill performance of the Sanusi monarchy. He claims that state building was hampered by fragmented state governance, corruption and personal aggrandizement, political exclusion, and an atomization of political and economic interests among tribal groups. Of course, this lack of national cohesion constituted, to a large extent, a remnant of the country’s colonial past. Vandewalle asserts that the Sanusi leadership proved incapable of establishing effective state institutions to address the social, economic and political challenges Libya faced. Crucially, he posits that the army, from where Qaddafi’s revolution originated, represented the only state institution where corporate

---

interests could be developed.\textsuperscript{139}

Qaddafi and the Free Unionist Officer’s Movement were thus endowed with the necessary coercive resources and subsequently developed an ideological ardor to mobilize support for their revolution and leadership. According to Vandewalle, the members of the RCC were military individuals who came from rural tribes and segments of society that were largely neglected by the Sanusi regime. They claimed that Libya, and the Arab world as a whole, had lost its grandeur, vision and fortitude. Vandewalle contends that Qaddafi and his affiliates were appalled by the prevalent Western political and economic influence throughout the country and the wider region. Libya’s natural resources, most notably oil, were required to augment the revolutionary government’s grip on power and enhance its ability to meet its ideological commitments. Moreover, Vandewalle notes that, due to the country’s colonial heritage and political inexperience, the population stood largely apathetic and indifferent to the new ruling elite.\textsuperscript{140} Thus, in Moravcsik’s terms, Qaddafi and his associates maintained different beliefs about Libyan and Arab leadership; had a keen interest the country’s natural riches; and were dissatisfied with their political marginalization during the Sanusi reign. The conflict over fundamental beliefs and values, however, seems to have predominantly fueled their seizure of power.\textsuperscript{141}

Wyn Bowen, professor of international security, adds that Qaddafi sought to utilize the country’s oil revenues to cultivate a welfare state in which basic needs such as food, clothing and housing would be provided for.\textsuperscript{142} Moreover, power within the Jamahiriya was ostensibly located in the hands of the people through the dispersion of ‘people’s committees’ throughout the country. These committees were made up local representatives that reported to the General People’s Congress (GPC), which constituted the state’s official parliament. As will be argued later, however, the GPC remained a fairly impotent institution. Hence, this ‘direct’ system of policy formulation practically reinforced Qaddafi’s grip on power by thwarting governmental checks and balances.\textsuperscript{143}

In sum, through the abovementioned policy changes, Qaddafi attempted to minimize the

\textsuperscript{139} Vandewalle, \textit{Libya since Independence: Oil and State-Building}, 59-63.

\textsuperscript{140} Vandewalle, \textit{Libya since Independence: Oil and State-Building}, 61-74.

\textsuperscript{141} Vandewalle, \textit{Libya since Independence: Oil and State-Building}, 61-74.

\textsuperscript{142} Bowen, \textit{Libya and Nuclear Proliferation: Stepping Back from the Brink}, 11-12.

three categories Moravcsik claims to foster internal conflict: creating a common goal and belief by pursuing Arab nationalism and opposing US imperialism; diminishing material scarcity through large-scale welfare redistribution; and, cosmetically or not, divide political power equally among the populace through an alleged system of direct democracy.

Second, Moravcsik presupposes that “states represent some subset of domestic society, on the basis of whose interests state officials define state preferences and act purposively in world politics.” As mentioned in Chapter I, state policymaking is constrained by the underlying identities, preferences, and power of individuals and groups. Representation may vary from a pluralist democracy applying rule of law to an authoritarian dictatorship upholding a system of patrimonial clientelism. Moreover, state preferences constitute the set of fundamental interests transmitted by representative institutions. These aggregated preferences subsequently inform and constrain the state’s foreign policy. Representation and preferences thus constitute the two critical subnational factors affecting state policymaking. How has Qaddafi’s accumulation of power and his fundamental set of interests impacted upon his US-policy?

As regards representation, George Joffé, professor of political science at the University of Cambridge, and Emanuela Paoletti, research fellow at the University of Oxford, have conducted scarce research on Qaddafi’s foreign policy apparatus and its policy implementation process. The obscurity surrounding the regime’s policy formulation, however, continued to hamper research. Yet, Joffé and Paoletti partially found their outcomes on numerous anonymous interviews conducted with Libyan officials in Libya, London and New York. Thus, their findings provide an interesting and unique insight into Libyan decision-making from 1969 onwards.

Joffé and Paoletti distinguish between formal institutions and informal actors. In a formal sense, Libya maintained a similar set of policy institutions as most other states, even though they did not derive their legitimacy from electoral processes. There was a central government consisting of ministries, with ministers answerable to the premier. The GPC was officially designated as seat of policy formulation. Yet, they only met sporadically and therefore could not have any substantial impact upon foreign policymaking. Furthermore, foreign policy was expressed through representations abroad made up of diplomatic personnel. While in the 1970s

---

and 1980s these ‘people’s bureaus’ were utilized as revolutionary vehicles disseminating Qaddafi’s ideals, they later transformed into more conventional diplomatic missions. During the first two decades of the Colonel’s tenure, the Revolutionary Committee Movement attained a crucial position within the foreign policymaking system. Ministerial and diplomatic staffs were accompanied by members of the movement who took precedence in giving direction to foreign policy. Hence, the movement enjoyed some latitude vis-à-vis the central government to conduct an independent role in international affairs. It was erected to robustly safeguard the revolution’s continuity and was utilized to execute the regime’s ‘dirty work’ such as persecuting potential opponents. Notwithstanding their officially recognized role within policy formulation, the movement can better be characterized as an informal institution according to Alison Pargeter, political analyst of Middle Eastern and North African affairs. Their non-specified paramilitary security function within state governance was not bound by any official protocol. Crucially, from the 1990s onwards, the movement was increasingly run over by reformist forces led by Qaddafi’s son, Saif al-Islam al-Qaddafi. This has led to official policymakers and diplomats (re)gaining their conventional competency.

Thus, the complex foreign policy process was only partly affected by the proceeds of formal institutions. Braut-Hegghammer claims that: “Libyan governance and policy-making is characterized by impotent formal institutions and the stark concentration of power in the hands of few individuals and informal networks.” Joffé and Paoletti agree that the essential focus of foreign policy decision-making revolved around Qaddafi. The policy process and environment could be characterized as intensely informal and heavily personalized around the ‘Brother Leader’. In his Green Book, Qaddafi himself implicitly coalesced with this view when stating that: “Theoretically, this is the genuine democracy. But realistically, the strong always rule, i.e. the stronger part in the society is the one that rules.”

Nevertheless, his decisions were mediated to some extent through interaction with formal

---

and informal advisers. Joffé and Paoletti characterize these councilors as ‘temporary elites’ in that their contribution depended entirely upon the Guide’s personal interests. When his ideas and preferences shifted, they forfeited their membership of this ‘advisory assembly’, regardless of their position or degree of personal intimacy with Qaddafi.\(^{154}\) “(...) the process is individualized, as might be expected in a country such as Libya, where patronage-clientage links are crucial pathways within the bureaucracy. Thus, within the foreign ministry itself, for example, the actual rank of an individual is not the dominant issue; it is his personal access to the structured environment in which policy is actually formulated that is crucial,” thus Joffé and Paoletti assert.\(^{155}\) Political stakeholders thus constituted all individuals who enjoyed personal access to the Colonel, whether these were family, friends or other forms of kinship.\(^{156}\) Inherent to this type of representation is that: “the personalized nature of the decision-making process increases the risk that the calculations involved can reflect more prejudice than objective evaluation,” thus Joffé and Paoletti claim.\(^{157}\)

In sum, with respect to Moravcsik’s theory, a similarity can be drawn with the ‘narrow bureaucratic elite or single tyrannical individual’ type of representation. As a consequence of this accumulation of power, Libya’s external representation can be characterized as fairly unitary. Nevertheless, the obscurity and informality that surrounded the policy process makes it hard to accurately determine to what degree certain policy undertakings conformed to the Guide’s preferences. Braut-Hegghammer depicts this clearly when stating that: “Qadhafi’s spoken words constitute de facto Libyan policy, which is one of the reasons why Libyan politics has at times seemed mercurial and unpredictable. Moreover, the Leader’s indirect influence on policy-making can take the form of verbal messages to be interpreted by regime officials.”\(^{158}\) Pargeter adds that: “Indeed, one of Qadhafi’s favored methods of ensuring his wishes are carried out is simply to ‘advise’ and drop hints as to what policies should be implemented.”\(^{159}\)

As regards state preferences, various scholars, through interviews with Libyan state officials coupled with research on Qaddafi’s written works and speeches, succeeded in expounding the revolutionary leadership’s normative values and adhered to ideology that

\(^{154}\) Joffé and Paoletti, *Libya’s Foreign Policy: Drivers and Objectives*, 15-17.
\(^{155}\) As cited by Joffé and Paoletti, *Libya’s Foreign Policy: Drivers and Objectives*, 16.
\(^{156}\) Joffé and Paoletti, *Libya’s Foreign Policy: Drivers and Objectives*, 14-18.
\(^{157}\) As cited by Joffé and Paoletti, *Libya’s Foreign Policy: Drivers and Objectives*, 12.
\(^{158}\) As cited by Braut-Hegghammer, “Libya’s Nuclear Turnaround: Perspectives from Tripoli,” 57.
\(^{159}\) As cited by Pargeter, “Libya: Reforming the Impossible?” 226.
affected its foreign policy decisions. Thus, in contrast to the scarce literature on state representation, the number of secondary sources discussing the Jamahiriya’s preferences is far more extensive.

Interestingly, Mary-Jane Deeb, scholar of Middle Eastern studies, approached Libya’s foreign policy agenda by utilizing a pyramid model. During the 1970s and 1980s, the neighboring states in North Africa were at the peak, followed by the broader Arab and Islamic world, then the developing, mainly Sub-Saharan nations, and finally the industrialized Western world at the bottom. The more trivial an issue was with respect to the Jamahiriya’s essential interests, the more ideologically infused foreign policy would be. Thus, when following Deeb’s logic, policy toward the US was primarily ideologically driven.\(^\text{160}\) Yahia Zoubir, professor of international relations who wrote various scholarly articles on Qaddafi’s Libya, allies with Deeb when stating that the regime’s foreign policy during this period was strongly embedded within ideological beliefs such as anti-imperialism, freedom from foreign domination, pan-Arabism, and Islamic socialism.\(^\text{161}\)

The Green Book, which explicates Qaddafi’s Third Universal Theory, constitutes the basic ideological input to reorganizing the Libyan state. Crucially, the document provides attention to the aspiration of Arab unity. This issue, Joffé and Paoletti assert, predominantly stems from Nasserist Arab nationalism.\(^\text{162}\) Nasser, the driving force behind the 1952 Egyptian revolution, adhered to an anti-imperialist and Arab nationalist foreign policy agenda.\(^\text{163}\) Qaddafi had long admired Nasser for his revolutionary efforts to redress Arab subordination toward the Western world and bring back the vigor and dignity it had once possessed.\(^\text{164}\) According to St. John, the messianic Qaddafi considered himself the heir of Nasser in bringing the Egyptian revolution to Libya, promoting sanctified Arab values, galvanizing the Arab world, and recognizing the wish for pan-Arab unity. Qaddafi was intent on lifting the country and the wider region out of its backwardness which was allegedly caused by centuries of foreign domination and exploitation.\(^\text{165}\) Joffé and Paoletti stipulate that “one of the key elements has been his attitude toward the colonial experience in Libya and elsewhere. He (Qaddafi) sees this as having been a


\(^{162}\) Joffé and Paoletti, *Libya Foreign Policy: Drivers and Objectives*, 5-7.


They argue that he perceived both neocolonialism and imperialism as extensions of the region’s colonial legacy. Qaddafi subsequently combined these notions with an enduring conviction in national unity founded upon shared cultural paradigms. Nationalism was not conceived of in territorial terms but in cultural ones, while cultural factors deduced their legitimacy from shared Arab linguistics. In addition, Qaddafi perceived Libya to constitute the nucleus of Arab nationalism:

We were not born to beg from anyone. We represent the pride of the Arab nation. We represent the dignity of the Arab nation. We are the heart of the Arab nation. We are the vanguard of the Arab nation. We are the hope of the Arab nation. We are the revolution of the Arab nation. We are the custodians of Arab nationalism and we are the custodians of Arab unity, brothers.

Neocolonialism and imperialism, in combination with Zionism, were perceived to be thwarting the developmental process. “Unity is thus a recognition of the implicit threat to developmental objectives that postcolonial interference represents,” thus Joffé and Paoletti conclude. “Europe and America colonized Africa and plundered its riches. They left it to its diseases and its backwardness, which we now have to combat,” thus Qaddafi stated.

In sum, Libyan preferences and subsequent policies toward the US and pro-US entities within the region were primarily ideologically driven. The Qaddafi regime strictly adhered to an anti-imperialist and Arab nationalist foreign policy agenda. These ideological notions meant that Qaddafi’s grand strategy, which was thus revisionist by nature and which partly provided his leadership with a moral purpose, stood in direct conflict with US political and commercial interests within the Arab world.

Third, Moravcsik posits that “the configuration of interdependent state preferences determines state behavior.” Within international politics, each state seeks to pursue its preferences under the constraints imposed by the preferences of other states. As mentioned

---

before, policy interdependence constitutes a pivotal analytical concept within this analysis. Crucially, three distinct patterns of interdependence can subsequently be distinguished: compatibility of preferences; zero-sum preferences; and mixed preferences which, through an exchange of policy concessions, can improve the welfare of both parties.¹⁷¹ How did Qaddafi’s revisionist interests relate to US preferences? To what extent have US, and possibly other, fundamental state interests affected Libyan preferences and subsequent policies?

Ronen argues that the practical translation of Libya’s opposition toward the US into removing US forces out of the country and terminating Washington’s oil concessions; negating the right of the Israeli state to exist and pursuing its isolation through Arab unification; subverting pro-US regimes in the region; supporting anti-Western extremist entities; and cooperating with the Soviet Union, collided with Washington’s preference to contain, and later diminish, Soviet global influence; to maintain a steady supply of energy resources; and to safeguard the security of its Israeli ally. Indeed, in 1977 the US Defense Department ranked Libya fourth in its annual report of potential enemies; after the Soviet Union, China and North Korea, while being positioned higher than Cuba who ranked fifth. In conformity, former US President Gerald Ford cited Qaddafi’s support for terrorist organizations and his attempts to overthrow pro-Western regimes to constitute a threat to US interests.¹⁷² Later, the conflicting preferences of both states led Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) chief, William Casey, to call for the removal of Qaddafi: “No course of action short of stimulating Qaddafi’s fall will bring significant and enduring change in Libyan policies.”¹⁷³

Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, Libyan state behavior remained recalcitrant and bellicose toward the US. In contrast to ceding to US coercion – which, prior to operation El Dorado Canyon, manifested itself mainly through unilateral sanctions and indirect military opposition – Qaddafi invigorated his support for radical anti-Western movements.¹⁷⁴ Yet, Libya’s pan-Arab ideals eventually remained unaccomplished. Its attempts toward Arab unification and its regional interventionism failed partly due to the obstructionism of states like Sadat’s Egypt, Sudan, Chad and Jordan; countries who each received substantial support from

¹⁷² Ronen, Qaddafi’s Libya in World Politics, 13-17.
the White House. Consequently, the Jamahiriya’s ability to meet its ideological commitments was severely compromised due to the configuration of US interests, increasingly leading to regional and global isolation.

To conclude, in Moravcsik’s terms, it does not require much contemplation to ascertain that Qaddafi’s revisionist preferences and subsequent policies toward altering the status quo in the region hampered the advancement of US interests, eventually leading to interstate conflict. The US was unwilling to submit to Libyan idealist preferences. Moreover, Libya’s strategic alignment with the USSR flagrantly opposed Reagan’s rollback policy throughout the 1980s. At the same time, Washington’s refusal to accommodate Libyan interests, particularly under the Reagan administration, prompted the Qaddafi regime to invigorate its opposition, which eventually culminated into alleged acts of state terrorism. In sum, Qaddafi’s preferences created a pattern of transnational externalities to which the US was unwilling to comply. Thus, when following Moravcsik’s logic, the increasing violent character of the ‘unresolved transnational distributional conflict’ came as no surprise. Later, however, US preferences and subsequent policies increasingly constrained Libya’s external behavior, resulting in a position of diplomatic isolation.

Also, Soviet and Libyan preferences seriously started to conflict. St. John claims that, already throughout the 1980s, Soviet support for the Qaddafi regime could be described as erratic due to policy differences and Soviet irritation over the Colonel’s mercurial nature. Soviet aloofness regarding Tripoli’s conduct within international affairs was aptly displayed when Qaddafi’s deputy, Abdel Salam Jalloud, visited Moscow. St. John states that “When (…) Jalloud, visited the Soviet capital in May 1986, the Soviets proved reluctant to extend additional arms credits or to conclude a mutual defense treaty. Instead, they reportedly emphasized the ongoing confusion that existed in differentiating between Libyan support for revolution and terrorism.” Thus, Tripoli’s alliance with the Kremlin steadily crumbled; further constraining their foreign policy and subsequently leaving the Jamahiriya more vulnerable to US unilateral power.

175 Nmoma, “Power and Force: Libya’s Relations with the United States,” 137-155.
178 St. John, Libya and the United States: Two Centuries of Strife, 140-141.
179 As cited by St. John, Libya and the United States: Two Centuries of Strife, 141.
2.3.2 Cognitive-psychological approach of Qaddafi’s revolutionary leadership

As mentioned before, O’Reilly conducted a thorough research analysis on Qaddafi’s belief system and cognitive view of the political universe. Since Libyan policymaking toward the US was largely ideological in character and heavily personalized around its leader, one would hint Qaddafi’s world view to be determinative with regard to Libya’s external behavior. Therefore, it is useful to elaborate upon Qaddafi’s philosophical and instrumental beliefs, and to analyze how they impacted upon Libya’s relationship with Washington. Unfortunately, O’Reilly’s research covers the period 1980-2005, thereby omitting the first ten years of Qaddafi’s leadership. Nevertheless, the 1980s can unambiguously be characterized as a decade of polarization between the revolutionary leadership in Tripoli and the White House.

O’Reilly states that, during the 1980s, Qaddafi viewed world politics and the political universe in distinct conflictual terms. Moreover, the Colonel considered non-cooperative tactics to be more effective in reaching his objectives as opposed to a benign approach. Thus, his philosophical belief system was conflictual while his instrumental beliefs were antagonistic and hostile. During the 1980s, when Qaddafi came to grips with the difficulty of Arab unification, he became progressively pessimistic about attaining his goals.\textsuperscript{180} In accordance, James Phillips, senior research fellow for Middle Eastern affairs, posits that throughout the 1970s and 1980s, Qaddafi became increasingly frustrated with neighboring Arab leaders. Their opposition to Libya’s efforts toward unification and frequent defiance of Qaddafi’s yearning for regional hegemony incited the Guide to support radical subnational movements instead.\textsuperscript{181} This frustration eventually led to Libya becoming “(…) the Mecca to which a wide spectrum of anti-Western terrorist groups made pilgrimage in search of money, arms, and training.”\textsuperscript{182} Indeed, O’Reilly notes that the data affirms the eligibility of the ‘frustration-aggression hypothesis’. Subsequently, O’Reilly states that Qaddafi exhibited two pivotal ‘frustration’ characteristics: hostile view of the international system; and pessimistic about attaining political goals. Moreover strategies adopted by other actors in the international system, in particular a ‘disproportionately strong state’ like the US applying policies aimed at isolation, could potentially exacerbate this frustration and give rise to aggressive acts; in this particular case, such conduct may well include

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
\item[\textsuperscript{182}] As cited by Phillips, \textit{Moscow’s thriving Libyan Connection}, 4.
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
acts of state terrorism.\textsuperscript{183}

Thus, O’Reilly points to a conflictual configuration of philosophical and instrumental beliefs when explaining Qaddafi’s confrontational policy line. More specifically, the Libyan leader perceived the international political universe in conflictual terms and maintained a strong belief in the efficacy of conflict-oriented strategies and tactics. In addition, O’Reilly asserts that ongoing frustration has predominantly fueled Qaddafi’s conflictual belief system; his research data therefore suggests the applicability of the frustration-aggression hypothesis.

2.4 Structural dimension

As regards the structural dimension, Carlsnaes contends that contemporary forms of realism fit the structuralist explanation of foreign policy best.\textsuperscript{184} As mentioned before, he extensively touches upon the theoretical proceeds of Mearsheimer. The following section will utilize Mearsheimer’s approach to explain Libyan policy toward the US, coupled with the additional theoretical insights as put forward by Nmoma. In that way, the structural elements that have constrained and enabled Libya’s revisionist conduct will be mapped out and analyzed. To what extent have balance of power considerations and Libya’s place within the international system impacted upon its policymaking?

As mentioned before, Mearsheimer contends that the distribution of power within the international system ultimately determines a state’s foreign policy and its subsequent behavior.\textsuperscript{185} According to St. John, Libyan positive neutrality and military non-alignment during the 1970s ensued from the bipolar distribution of power. Yet, he argues that Libya’s revisionist regional strategy resulted in an unbalanced implementation of neutrality because of the added anti-Western sentiment of this endeavor. St. John argues that, even though ideological issues such as anti-imperialism, anti-Zionism, and Arab nationalism were at the heart of the deterioration of US – Libyan relations, the bipolar international system provided Tripoli with the opportunity to reinforce its position by wriggling against the Soviet Union. St. John points out that,

\textsuperscript{184} Carlsnaes, \textit{Handbook of International Relations}, 336.
\textsuperscript{185} Mearsheimer, “Back to the Future: Instability in Europe after the Cold War,” 11-20.
notwithstanding Qaddafi’s aversion toward Soviet communism, he pragmatically utilized Moscow’s support for Palestine. Interestingly, engagement with the Kremlin, while being elicited by Soviet opposition toward Israel and the US, as well as by arms sales and atomic energy cooperation, even led Qaddafi in 1978 to publicly note that it was time for Libya to officially ally with the USSR. Ronen adds that both saw the regional balance of power threatened by the US buildup in the Middle East and Africa. They were eager to see regime change in Cairo and Khartoum, where the pro-US governments of Sadat and al-Numayri respectively secured US influence.

Indeed, Nmoma posits that Tripoli was confronted with a power imbalance in the region. She states that Chad, for example, constituted a security problem to Libya since it could potentially serve as a center for US expansionist policies. In addition, the Chadian government did provide sanctuary to some of Qaddafi’s adversaries who organized raids in southern Libya. According to Nmoma, intervention in Chad thus represented an attempt to offset US influence in the area. In response, the US government provided military and financial assistance to N'Djamena and offered to provide support to countries willing to resist Libya’s regional policies.

In addition, Nmoma states that Libya’s vast oil resources provided the Qaddafi regime with the power to sustain its regional activism and maintain its rejectionist position toward the US. Its revenues were used to buttress its own military capabilities, support its military operations within the region, and aid subnational ‘revolutionary’ groups.

Crucially, Braut-Hegghammer states that the Jamahiriya was seeking regional hegemony in the Middle East and North Africa. She argues that Qaddafi perceived Israel to represent a regional security dilemma because of its nuclear superiority and due to the support it received from Washington. “The most important factor was Israel’s nuclear weapons,” thus a Libyan Foreign Ministry official declared when asked about Libya’s early nuclear ambitions. Subsequently, Braut-Hegghammer states that strategic and military motives predominantly

---

187 Ronen, *Qaddafi’s Libya in World Politics*, 82-84.
188 Nmoma, “Power and Force: Libya’s Relations with the United States,” 145.
189 Nmoma, “Power and Force: Libya’s Relations with the United States, 146-147.
incited the quest for a nuclear capability throughout the 1970s and 1980s.\textsuperscript{192}

Libya’s vast territory, porous borders and relatively small population made it vulnerable to foreign intervention. Bowen contends that the Libyan leadership perceived nuclear weapons to constitute the ultimate deterrent against a direct or indirect – for example on its oil resources which constituted a vital element of Qaddafi’s constellation of power – attack against the regime by the US, Israel, or other pro-US states in the region. Moreover, the Colonel believed that the image such a capability would cultivate, namely that of a powerful and unpredictable regional player, enhanced regime security even further.\textsuperscript{193}

To conclude, clear structural factors as expounded by Mearsheimer can be discerned that have impacted upon Libya’s policies toward the US during this period. Notwithstanding the ideological fervor inciting Qaddafi’s revisionism toward the West, various structural elements have modified its conduct. First, the bipolar international system and the ongoing struggle for power between Washington and Moscow made it possible for Tripoli to bandwagon with the Kremlin and thereby to offset the regional power asymmetry with the US and to deter potential intervention. Moreover, the Jamahiriya’s quest for a WMD capability – which neatly corresponds with Mearsheimer’s credible deterrent argument – was initially intended to augment its defensive capabilities and to deflect US or Israeli aggression. Crucially, the benefits Qaddafi’s Libya could reap from its lucrative oil and gas industry enabled it to maintain its unrepentant conduct. Nevertheless, diverging ideological interests were at the root of Libya’s obstinate behavior toward the US. Later, opportunist pragmatism took precedence over ideological interests and thereby increasingly determined Libyan policy actions.

\textbf{2.5 Conclusion}

Through applying Carlsnaes’ approach to Libyan revisionist policy actions during the first two decades of Qaddafi’s tenure, solid conclusions can be drawn. With regard to the teleological dimension, two main policy goals are distinguished by the consulted sources that informed Qaddafi’s opposition toward Washington: diminishing US influence within the Arab world

\textsuperscript{193} Bowen, “Libya and Nuclear Proliferation: Stepping Back from the Brink,” 19-22.
coupled with increasing his domestic and regional power. Particularly the first intention critically informed Tripoli’s competitive behavior. When returning to Carlsnaes’ model as outlined in Chapter I, figure 2, dispositional variables prove to be determinative with respect to Libya’s confrontational policy actions.

Within section 2.3.1, Moravcsik’s theory aptly shows that ideological concepts stemming from Nasserist Arab nationalism primarily incited Libyan policies toward the US. This ideology was founded upon notions of anti-imperialism, anti-colonialism, and pan-Arabism. Since the Jamahiriya perceived the US to be thwarting national self-determination and true liberty for Libyans and other Arab nationals through the divisive effects of their ‘exploitative’ influence within the area, Tripoli actively sought to oppose their power. In Moravcsik’s terms, the revolutionary leadership’s fundamental adherence to pan-Arab ideological preferences served as the main impetus to its revisionist policy actions. The foreign policy process, which was strongly authoritarian and heavily personalized around the Colonel, could be characterized as fairly unitary, rendering Qaddafi’s perception of the international environment of paramount importance. According to O’Reilly, the Guide’s view of the international system was conflictual. Also, he strongly believed in the efficacy of non-cooperative tactics and strategies in reaching his objectives.

Indeed, the conflictual philosophical belief system neatly corresponds with the Colonel’s revisionist preferences. Since Libya’s ideologically induced objectives directly impeded with Washington’s political and commercial interests, they could be characterized as zero-sum with respect to those of the White House. While the US had a keen interest in regional stability in order to safeguard a steady supply of natural resources – most notably oil and gas – and the security of its Israeli ally, Tripoli sought to thwart such ‘plundering’ and frustrate the Arab-Israeli peace process since it directly conflicted with their Arab nationalist ideals. In Moravcsik’s terms, this conflictual configuration of interdependent state preferences increasingly fueled mutual tensions.

With respect to the structural dimension, some additional insights are gained. When applying Mearsheimer’s approach to Libyan US-policy, Tripoli’s cooperation with the Soviet Union, coupled with its quest for a WMD capability, are conceived of as strategic decisions. US global power and its political and military buildup within the Middle East and North Africa compromised Libyan pan-Arab ideals. The bipolar international system, however, enabled Libya
to partially bandwagon with the Kremlin and thereby to counterbalance US influence within the region. Moreover, cooperation with Moscow, coupled with its WMD program, also served the need to deter potential US or Israeli aggression. Thus, the Jamahiriya’s pursuit of WMD and its cooperation with the USSR were mainly instigated by structural factors.

Nonetheless, through employing Carlsnaes’ and Moravcsik’s theoretical insights to the consulted sources, agential factors operating at the state bureaucracy level predominantly explain Libya’s tenacious behavior. The regime’s fundamental adherence to Nasserist pan-Arabism critically informed its policies toward Washington. Later, during the 1990s, the Libyan leadership gradually adjusted to the international realities. During the post-Lockerbie era, pragmatism and ‘Realpolitik’ considerations increasingly determined the Libyan foreign policy agenda.

Chapter III

Libyan policy change toward the US during the 1990s and 2000s

The world has changed radically and drastically. The methods and ideas should change, and being a revolutionary and a progressive man, I have to follow this movement.

Muammar al-Qaddafi

After the alleged acts of state terrorism with the downing of Pan Am 103 and UTA 772, Libya’s violent hostility toward the US seemed to decrease. After the mid-1990s, secret diplomatic negotiations between Libyan and US officials commenced aimed at resolving mutual differences. Eventually, US – Libyan relations tangibly improved, resulting in a termination of Tripoli’s post-Lockerbie position of international isolation.

---

Crucially, Libya experienced severe economic setbacks from the late 1980s onwards. Also, Qaddafi’s revolutionary ideals looked increasingly tarnished and the Colonel faced insurmountable difficulties in rejuvenating support and legitimacy for his rule. Subsequently, the Libyan leader executed some tentative socio-economic reforms, stimulating private sector initiatives and seeking foreign investment. In order to be able to address the socio-economic needs of its people, the regime deemed annulment of the multilateral sanctions package – which was installed after Libyan non-compliance with the Lockerbie investigation – and the US embargo to be requisite. In that way, the leadership became increasingly aware of the need to satisfactorily accommodate the US in the Lockerbie affair.

Eventually, the Jamahiriya radically transformed its foreign policy by effectively settling the Lockerbie crisis; refuting terrorism and ceasing its support for violent anti-Western movements; abandoning WMD and dismantling its nonconventional weaponry program; and ending its obstructionism of the Middle East peace process. Interestingly, the regime even decided to bandwagon with the White House in their post-9/11 Global War on Terror. Why did the Libyan regime, after twenty years of ideological militancy toward the US, seek reconciliation with Washington during the post-Cold War era? To what extent can this policy change be explained by utilizing Carlsnaes’ FPA framework?

The following section will analyze Libyan policy actions in further detail. Thereafter, Carlsnaes’ synthesis will be applied to unravel the causal factors behind Libya’s controversial transformation. When analyzing the literature, regime survival and Qaddafi’s increasing ability to come to grips with post-Cold War international realities seems to have critically impacted upon its about-face politics toward the Washington.

3.1 Policy actions

With the inception of the US Bush administration in 1989, Qaddafi seemed cautiously optimistic about the prospect of improving bilateral relations through political dialogue. He invited Bush to travel to Tripoli to discuss and address issues that worried both parties. Moreover, on 13 January 1989, the Libyan leader conveyed his nascent conciliatory intent when providing the Vatican with the corpse of a US fighter jet pilot who was shot down during the 1986 bombardment. The US, however, maintained and even expanded its economic and diplomatic sanctions against the Jamahiriya. The Bush administration continued to designate the regime as a sponsor of global terrorism and denounced Libyan endeavors toward acquiring chemical weapons.\(^{203}\)

Not surprisingly, Qaddafi condemned US operations against Iraq after Saddam Hussein’s invasion of Kuwait in 1990. He claimed that the American intervention constituted an imperialist plot intended to safeguard and exploit the region’s oil resources, and that an Arab solution to the predicament instead of Western interference was obligatory. Nevertheless, Qaddafi deemed the annexation by the Saddam regime as illegitimate and pressed the UN to prohibit any US war effort beyond forcing back Iraqi forces out of Kuwait, thereby implicitly justifying its liberation.\(^{204}\)

Also, support from Moscow increasingly subsided by the end of the 1980s. Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev’s ‘new political thinking’, which pertained to a reliance on international institutions to provide a resolution to quarrels before resorting to military means, forced Qaddafi to alter his traditional Cold War strategies. The Kremlin’s shift in attention away from North Africa and the Middle East, and its eventual collapse further enticed a structural modification of Libyan security policy.\(^{205}\)

Notwithstanding continued Libyan efforts to bolster its WMD capability, St. John states that Tripoli initiated various acts toward regional reconciliation. For example, it sought cooperation with European and North African countries aimed at fostering economic development and stability throughout the Mediterranean area in October 1990. More importantly however, St. John points to the resumption of friendly relations between Qaddafi and the Egyptian administration of President Hosni Mubarak to the extent that bilateral relations were


\(^{204}\) Ronen, *Qaddafi’s Libya in World Politics*, 41-43 and 123-124.

\(^{205}\) Ronen, *Qaddafi’s Libya in World Politics*, 41-43.
thriving by the end of 1990. It signified the regime’s willingness to moderate its agenda for the Arab world and to alleviate its isolation, thus St. John argues.\textsuperscript{206} Also, Qaddafi attempted to propel economic development and revitalize support for his leadership through colossal endeavors such as the Great Manmade River (GMR). This twenty-five billion dollar project was intended to supply desert water to the densely populated coastal regions of the country.\textsuperscript{207}

In 1991, the completion of US and UK investigations concerning the Lockerbie bombing resulted in an indictment in November that explicitly identified two Libyan suspects. In response, the Libyan secretariat for foreign liaison dismissed any Libyan involvement. The US, UK and France subsequently issued a tripartite declaration demanding the Jamahiriya to extradite the alleged offenders of the Lockerbie and Niger bombings for judicial proceedings. Moreover, Libya was expected to assume complete civil responsibility for the acts of its officials and cooperate with the trial investigation. Libya rejected these demands and, on its turn, stated that the declaration exposed explicit political motives. Interestingly, Tripoli invoked the 1971 Montreal Sabotage Convention – of which Libya, the US, the UK, and France were signatories – which provided the opportunity to submit such cases to the competent authorities in the territory on which the suspect is found. In that way, Qaddafi asserted to have complied with the prescriptions of international law. Nevertheless, the issue was presented to the UN Security Council which subsequently passed Resolution 731 on 21 January 1992. The Resolution demanded full responsibility by the Libyan state for the acts committed and thereupon obliged Tripoli to immediately abide by the requests made by the US, the UK and France and thus to hand over the accused.

The Libyan government subsequently refused to comply with Resolution 731. Qaddafi claimed to be willing to cooperate with the Security Council, but he staunchly refused to hand over the Libyan suspects to be tried in the US and the UK. In contrast, he was willing to concede to French demands for settling the Niger issue. In addition to promising an end to his engagement with terrorist activity, Qaddafi opted for a Libyan court and Libyan judges to handle the Lockerbie affair. Later, Qaddafi approached the UN Secretary-General to install a legal committee to decide whether the allegations were well-established.

Notwithstanding Libyan efforts to reach some kind of understanding, the Security

\textsuperscript{206} St. John, \textit{Libya and the United States: Two Centuries of Strife}, 163-165.
\textsuperscript{207} St John, \textit{Libya and the United States: Two Centuries of Strife}, 163-164.
Council, on 31 March 1992, passed Resolution 748 which entailed mandatory multilateral sanctions until Tripoli fully complied with Resolution 731. Among others, it included a prohibition on military cooperation, a prohibition to provide service to Libyan aircraft and a restriction on Libyan air travel, and a reduction of Libyan diplomatic presence abroad. Due to Libya’s continued rejection of compliance, Resolution 748 was complemented with Security Council Resolution 883. It demanded the freezing of the regime’s foreign financial assets, and restricted Libyan operations within the hydrocarbon sector.208

In the years following the installment of the US-spearheaded UN sanctions regime, Libya sought to find a mechanism through which judicial proceedings could be undertaken that conformed to Libyan and international law. Therefore, the Jamahiriya suggested the case be tried at the International Court of Justice (ICJ) in The Hague under the supervision of Scottish judges applying Scottish law. Qaddafi attempted to polish his reputation by requesting Western powers to alter their conditions; by referring to and invoking provisions of international law; and by seeking Arab and African support for his position.209

In 1996, the US Congress adopted the Iran – Libya Sanctions Act (also referred to as the D’Amato Act, after the senator who coordinated the legislative process).210 It increased unilateral US sanctions against Tripoli and penalized foreign businesses investing more than forty million dollars in Libya’s oil industry, thereby provoking a conflict with European states over the extraterritorial character of the Iran – Libya Sanctions Act’s (ILSA) provisions.211 Eventually, in August 1998, Washington and London presented their counterproposal to Libya.212 The alleged offenders of the Lockerbie incident were to be extradited to a special court in the Netherlands where three Scottish judges, operating under Scottish law, would decide whether the suspects were proven guilty. Moreover, if al-Megrahi and Fahima were found liable, they would need to face imprisonment in Scotland. After various British assurances toward the Qaddafi leadership during covert diplomatic negotiations, the accused were handed over to the Netherlands on a UN

211 Vandewalle, A History of Modern Libya, 170-172.
aircraft on 5 April 1999. Of pivotal importance were US and UK assurances that Qaddafi would not be held personally accountable and that the trial would not unfold into a political trick, thus ensuring a face-saving solution. After Tripoli had extradited the Lockerbie suspects, the UN suspended its sanctions regime. The US sanctions, however, remained effective because of additional concerns such as monetary compensation for the Lockerbie relatives, Qaddafi’s pursuit of WMD, and the human rights atrocities taking place on Libyan soil.

During the 1990s, the UN and US sanctions regime contributed to some critical strategic reforms in the country. Qaddafi’s position of isolation and the universal attention for human rights, globalization, democratization and economic liberalization during the post-Cold War era incited the Colonel to instrumentally apply human rights rhetoric and employ international law to delegitimize the sanctions. Importantly, Qaddafi sought to curb the power of the Revolutionary Committee Movement through various restrictive measures. In practice, these measures compromised the movement’s latitude to conduct an independent role in international affairs.

Crucially, the Qaddafi leadership faced mounting Islamist opposition at home. In 1998, the Colonel nearly managed to survive an assassination attempt when his convoy was ambushed by Islamic guerillas. Niblock asserts that Islamist resistance to the regime manifested itself at two levels. At one level, there were incidental military upheavals between regime forces and Islamic insurgents. At the second level, there was the deepening of Islamic sentiment. A study in 1996 among Libyan students concluded that they defined their identity in strong Arab-Islamic terms as opposed to merely Arab or Libyan.

Already by 1997, the UN sanctions regime was subject to infringement by African nations. They called for a lifting of the UN embargo based upon Libya’s cooperative conduct in the Lockerbie affair. In particular, Nelson Mandela, who visited Qaddafi in 1997 and who conveyed his gracefulness for Qaddafi’s support during the apartheid rule in South Africa,

---

217 Martinez, The Libyan Paradox, 57.
actively explored avenues for the sanctions package to be permanently lifted.\textsuperscript{219} Qaddafi subsequently re-focused his regional policies toward Africa after the suspension of the UN embargo. Israel and the issue of Arab unification lost their importance to the regime after its position of relative isolation during the Lockerbie crisis. Also, the anachronistic ideological notions of neocolonialism and imperialism featured less prominently on the Libyan international agenda, and were merely utilized for populist rhetoric purposes. In his search for other pastures, the Guide performed the role of mediator in quarrels between Congo and Uganda and between Ethiopia and Eritrea. Also, he initiated peace proposals in Sierra Leone, Sudan and Chad. Crucially, Qaddafi became actively involved as third-party mediator in the Darfur conflict. In addition, humanitarian and financial aid was provided to countries like Ivory Coast, Mali, Tanzania, Uganda, and Zimbabwe. Qaddafi even made calls for a United States of Africa and increasingly pursued African integration. Eventually, in 2009, Qaddafi was elected chairman of the African Union for a one-year term.\textsuperscript{220}

By the turn of the century, three issues remained of concern to US policymakers: Libyan support for terrorist movements; its quest for WMD; and its regional aspirations. During the Clinton administration, secret diplomatic meetings were organized between US and Libyan officials. Through these negotiations, US policymakers aimed to bring about Libyan compliance with the UN Resolutions. Although these were suspended by 1999, a complete lifting entailed additional measures. Besides handing over the Lockerbie suspects, Libya was required to eschew support for terrorism; accept responsibility for the acts of Libyan officials; and provide satisfactory compensation for the families of the Lockerbie victims. After multiple rounds of secret negotiations, the Libyan state, in 2003, accepted responsibility for the downing of Pan Am 103 and agreed to pay 2.7 billion dollars in compensation (which amounted to 10 million dollars per family). On 1 September 2003, the UN sanctions package was permanently lifted.\textsuperscript{221}

After the 9/11 terrorist attacks, Qaddafi quickly expressed support and sympathy for the victim’s families, and fiercely condemned the attacks. He embraced Washington’s \textit{Global War on Terror} and engaged in information-sharing meetings with US officials.\textsuperscript{222} Due to the country’s expertise in Islamist networks and its geographic location, cooperation was appealing

\textsuperscript{219} St. John, \textit{Libya: Continuity and Change}, 130.
\textsuperscript{220} St. John, \textit{Libya: Continuity and Change}, 130-133.
to the White House.\footnote{Martinez, The Libyan Paradox, 56.} Furthermore, former UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan declared that Libya “definitely renounces all forms of international terrorism of whatever origin.”\footnote{As cited in Zoubir, “The United States and Libya: From Confrontation to Normalization,” 51.} Indeed, US policymakers and their Israeli counterparts acknowledged that Qaddafi had expelled the infamous Abu Nidal organization and that it severed its ties with hostile Palestinian movements that thwarted the Middle East peace process.\footnote{Zoubir, “The United States and Libya: From Confrontation to Normalization,” 51.} Nevertheless, US President George W. Bush refused to lift the unilateral US sanctions regime. Bush and his Secretary of State Colin Powell identified Libya’s deplorable human rights record, its violent role in regional disputes, and its pursuit for nonconventional weaponry and accompanied delivery systems as critical US concerns. Again, secret diplomatic talks were conducted after which Libya gradually began to verifiably dismantle its nuclear program.\footnote{St. John, “Libya and the United States: A Faustian Pact?” 136-140.} Eventually, in December 2003, Qaddafi officially renounced the regime’s nuclear aspirations.\footnote{Bowen, Libya and Nuclear: Stepping Back From the Brink, 48-49.} Several weeks later, Libya commenced its compliance with the Chemical Weapons Convention and the Non-Proliferation Treaty’s Additional Protocol which allowed for inspections to be conducted.\footnote{Nincic, “Getting What You Want: Positive Inducements in International Relations,” 174.} Moreover, Saif al-Islam stated that the country desired to rejoin the international community and the Colonel himself called on all nations to forego WMD. In 2004, pending Qaddafi’s abandonment of his nuclear program, Bush slowly began lifting the punitive US sanctions. Moreover, Washington removed Libya from its list of terrorist sponsors in 2006. By 2007, Bush appointed Gene Cretz to become the new US ambassador to Libya; a position which had been non-existent since 1972.\footnote{St. John, “Libya and the United States: A Faustian Pact?” 136-140.} Also, former Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice met with Qaddafi during an official state visit to Tripoli to explore counterterrorist and business cooperation.\footnote{Huffington Post, http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2011/10/26/condoleezza-rice-muammar-gaddafi_n_1032468.html (accessed May 6, 2012).} Still, various differences between Tripoli and Washington remained, but full resurgence of diplomatic interaction with the US materialized and Libya’s reintegration into the international community was a fact.
3.2 Intentional dimension

The analysis of the transformation and normalization of Libyan foreign policy toward the US will begin with a discussion on the leadership’s foreign policy goals and intentions. Which intentions have shaped Tripoli’s behavior toward the US during the 1990s and 2000s, and thereby informed a change in its foreign policy agenda? When analyzing academic insights on Qaddafi’s overture, four main policy goals come to the fore: first, addressing the country’s economic downturn and subsequently fostering socio-economic prosperity; second, forestalling military intervention; third, countering the Islamist threat to the regime; fourth, ameliorating Libya’s international reputation and subsequently reinvigorate its regional leadership. In sum, these policy goals, particularly the first three, served the ultimate aim of retaining and consolidating domestic power.

Vandewalle argues that Libya’s deplorable socio-economic condition jeopardized domestic stability and thereby regime survival. Through seeking benign relations with the West in general and the US in particular, Qaddafi hoped to rejoin the international community, lift his country out of its acute economic misery, and thereby mitigate threats to his leadership. Thus, a tangible thaw in its relations with the US, meaning a permanent lifting of the sanctions regime and a removal of the country’s listing on the State Department’s terrorist blacklist, was deemed obligatory. Also, the Jamahiriya was in need of capital investment and expertise to address the obsolete infrastructure of its oil industry and realize its vast potential (ten to thirty billion dollars was estimated to be required to produce three million barrels of oil per day).²³¹ Zoubir adds that the regime foresaw greater security benefits to be gained through rapprochement with the US, thereby underlining the success of US coercive diplomacy in inciting policy change.²³² Indeed, former Foreign Minister of Libya, Mohammed Rahman Shalgham, when commenting on the monetary settlement of the Lockerbie affair, pointed out that “(…) the issue was not compensation, but the purchase of the annulment of the sanctions.”²³³ Yet, Vandewalle emphasizes that no intention existed to radically alter the state’s political structures. Although the arbitrariness of its political rule was slightly curtailed, moves toward political transparency,

accountability and rule of law remained absent.\textsuperscript{234} Unlike Zoubir, who heavily doubts whether Bush’s proactive counter-proliferation policy and the subsequent US invasion of Iraq in 2003 substantially contributed to Qaddafí’s volte-face politics, Luis Martinez, scholar of international affairs and Libya expert, claims it to have played a pivotal role. According to Martinez, Qaddafí sought to evade military intervention in his heterogeneous and feeble country.\textsuperscript{235} He claims the Second Gulf War to have acted as a catalyst for Libyan change.\textsuperscript{236} “The war in Iraq shattered Libya’s assumptions regarding international relations. To the Libyans, it seemed a demonstration of American invincibility,” thus Martinez asserts.\textsuperscript{237}

In addition, professor of political science Miroslav Nincic claims that, through reconciliation with the US, Qaddafí sought to counter domestic Islamist opposition.\textsuperscript{238} Indeed, numerous Islamic terrorist groups that endangered the US also threatened the survival of the Qaddafí leadership. The common cause in Libyan – US post 9/11 counterterrorist cooperation eventually culminated into the designation of the Libyan Islamic Fighting Group (LIFG) as a terrorist entity by US policymakers; a militant organization that imperiled the stability of the Qaddafí regime likewise.\textsuperscript{239} Randall Newnham, associate professor of political science, allies with Nincic when claiming that the shared enemy, namely al-Qaida and its affiliated terrorist cells, drove the US and Libya closer to each other.\textsuperscript{240} Scholar of political science, Dafna Hochman, adds another goal behind Qaddafí’s search for rehabilitation. “He [Qaddafí] has long considered himself to be a charismatic leader of the developing world. By the late 1990s, however, Libya’s deep international isolation had undercut Qadhafí’s attempts to exert influence on both African politics and intra-Arab affairs,” thus Hochman notes.\textsuperscript{241} Indeed, Qaddafí did not attempt to obscure his ambitions when commenting on his decision to dispose his country of nonconventional weaponry: “Libya, which was in the lead and led the liberation movement in the Third World and Africa, now has decided to lead the

\textsuperscript{234} Vandewalle, \textit{A History of Modern Libya}, 172-174.  
\textsuperscript{235} Martinez, “Libya: The Conversion of a ‘Terrorist State’,” 159-161.  
\textsuperscript{236} Martinez, \textit{The Libyan Paradox}, 45-48.  
\textsuperscript{237} As cited by Martinez, \textit{The Libyan Paradox}, 45.  
\textsuperscript{238} Nincic, “Getting What You Want: Positive Inducements in International Relations,” 176-180.  
\textsuperscript{240} Newnham, “Carrots, Sticks, and Bombs: The End of Libya’s WMD Program,” 90.  
peace movement all over the world." Moreover, Hochman states that the ‘Brother Leader’ has since then been a strong protagonist of global counterterrorist operations and international arms control regimes. Ironically, she concludes that “(...) a public leader successfully isolated by international institutions and regimes is now championing these very mechanisms en route to a restored public image. He has become a spokesperson for the very norms and proliferation agreements that he audaciously violated for more than two decades.”

Thus, Qaddafi sought to preempt subnational and international threats to his leadership through pursuing economic accommodation toward his citizenry and seeking constructive relations with the US and other Western countries. The prospective lifting of the sanctions package was perceived to be mandatory to create the political and economic space required for this strategy. In addition, normalization of his external outlook was needed to alter his position of relative isolation and reassume his role as charismatic Third World leader.

### 3.3 Dispositional dimension

To explain how the abovementioned intentions and preferences have taken shape, certain key questions need to be addressed. Which factors prompted the Libyan leadership to forego its revolutionary ideals of Nasserist Arab nationalism and seek reconciliation with the US instead? To what extent has a potential modification of state preferences or a hypothetical shift within Qaddafi’s cognitive belief system provoked a change in Tripoli’s external behavior? As mentioned before, the liberal approach as propounded by Moravcsik added by the cognitive-psychological insights of O’Reilly will again be utilized to determine the dispositional factors that impacted upon Libyan policy change during the post-Cold War era.

---

3.3.1 Liberal analysis of Qaddafi’s foreign policy transformation

The application of Moravcsik’s ‘primacy of societal actors’ presupposition, provides an instructive analysis. How have issues of scarcity and differentiation impacted upon the legitimacy of Qaddafi’s leadership? More specifically, to what extent have the three potential sources of internal conflict – scarcity of material resources; inequalities in political power; and divergent fundamental beliefs – constrained the Jamahiriya’s state preferences?

Vandewalle contends that the regime primarily derived its legitimacy from its ability, as a rentier state, to provide its populace with a basic standard of socio-economic well-being. Poor fiscal policies and the UN – and to a lesser degree the US – sanctions regime, however, constrained the country’s economic development. Vandewalle states that, by the end of the 1990s, Libyan wages had been frozen at a rate of 250-300 dinars per month for almost two decades.244 “As the sanctions took hold, inflation soared, and the delivery of goods often became erratic and unpredictable. The everyday lives of Libyans had become measurably more difficult,” thus Vandewalle notes.245

Zoubir argues that the debilitating sanctions package, consolidating Libya’s pariah status, had cost the Jamahiriya more than thirty billion dollars.246 Together with the declining oil prices, the embargo had led to a reduction of oil revenues from twenty-two billion dollars in 1986 to eight billion dollars in 1996.247 Moreover, the Libyan dinar sharply declined in value on the black market during 1993-1995, falling from 1.8 to the dollar to 4.0. Consequently, the government was compelled to devalue its currency twice during the 1990s.248 Ronen adds that, after the plummeting of oil prices on the world market in 1998, unemployment rose to 27 percent, while rates among younger adults were even higher.249 Moreover, its oil resources were steadily depleting, with reserves declining at a rate of eight percent a year. Also its gas fields were increasingly exhausted, rendering US investments and technology all the more appealing.250

---

248 Newnham, “Carrots, Sticks, and Bombs: The End of Libya’s WMD Program,” 85.
249 Ronen, *Qaddafi’s Libya in World Politics*, 53.
250 Ronen, *Qaddafi’s Libya in World Politics*, 63.
Thus, in Moravcsik’s terms, Qaddafi’s ideological interests and grand strategy were increasingly constrained by the material scarcity his fraught socio-economic policies and the international embargo had created. Also, opposition against his autocratic leadership and revolutionary zeal heightened, fostering domestic instability. Niblock states that three tribal entities had, up until the mid-1990s, been incorporated into the state apparatus: the Maqraha, the Warfalla and the Qadadfa (Qaddafi’s tribe). The alliance was of pivotal importance to maintain unity within Libya’s security services. Qaddafi’s arbitrary leadership, however, had led to disaffection among both the Maqraha and Warfalla tribe, thereby raising tribal contempt and resistance. In addition, Martinez argues that: “(...) tribal concentration of power generated the resentment of a population, particularly infuriated by the economic mismanagement of the regime and by the waste of national resources for the benefit of a privileged minority. The Libyan population (...) did not identify itself with the revolutionary Libya of the Guide.”

Thus, a clear similarity can be drawn with Moravcsik’s assumption that “(...) where power asymmetries permit groups to evade the costs of redistributing goods, incentives arise for exploitative, rent-seeking behavior, even if the result is inefficient for society as a whole.”

In addition to the material scarcity and political inequality, Niblock contends that the failure of Qaddafi’s economic and political egalitarian ideology, around which he had framed the leadership’s moral purpose, forged a lacuna from where alternative ideological concepts, and thus subnational resistance, could develop. Here, we arrive at the analysis made earlier by Nincic that Islamist opposition gained substantial ground within Libyan society. Especially during 1995-1998, the regime experienced violent Islamic discontent. Vandewalle agrees when claiming that the Colonel faced insurmountable difficulties in rallying the masses behind his leadership; support for his revolutionary fervor seemed to have dissipated throughout the 1990s. Thus, all three sources of internal conflict as discussed by Moravcsik – divergent fundamental beliefs; conflict over scarce material goods; and inequalities in political power – were, to a varying degree, active. The most acute conflict, however, revolved around the lack of

---

251 In 1993, Qaddafi’s regime arrested Warfalli officers suspected of subversive activities against the Colonel’s leadership. Moreover, the regime placed Abdessalem Jalloud, a leading Maqraha figure, under house arrest after having criticized Qaddafi’s policies.
254 Niblock, “Pariah States” and Sanctions in the Middle East: Iraq, Libya, Sudan, 87-90.
256 Vandewalle, A History of Modern Libya, 173.
material resources, and thereby acted as a critical constraint on the country’s foreign policy. In order to address this issue, the Libyan leader applied policies of appeasement toward both his people and the US.\textsuperscript{257} However, the regime did not effectively address the conflict over diverging fundamental beliefs and inequalities in political power. When analyzing the regime’s diplomatic conversion, St. John asserts that it constituted an “attempt to promote economic solutions to what were actually political grievances as opposed to a concerted effort to address the underlying ideological issues at the root of political discontent.”\textsuperscript{258} Crucially, these unresolved issues critically informed the toppling of the Qaddafi regime during the Arab uprisings in 2011.

Moravcsik’s second assumption, concerning representation and state preferences, allows for some interesting insights. To what extent did the conflictual societal demands modify Libyan state preferences? How did the regime’s political structures and altered state preferences affect its foreign policy agenda? First, when analyzing the literature on Libya’s reintegration into the international community, one core preference seems to have driven Tripoli’s reconciliation with the US: regime survival. To succeed, it solely sought to address the issue of material scarcity.\textsuperscript{259} Thus, as regards state representation, no genuine reforms were executed. Consequently, the basic political structures as outlined in the preceding chapter remained unaffected. Second, Qaddafi’s refusal to cease his quest for a larger political stage to satisfy his messianic nature constituted an additional preference that acted as a catalyst toward reforming his foreign policy.\textsuperscript{260}

With respect to representation, Qaddafi increased his grip on power by diminishing the influence of the Revolutionary Committee Movement.\textsuperscript{261} Pargeter contends that: “The reformists within the Libyan regime have tried to give the impression that whilst the revolutionary committees were a necessary tool during the early years of the revolution, they developed into a monster that Qadhafi could no longer control.”\textsuperscript{262} Hardliners within the movement seemed to defy any compromise with the West and continued to plead for noncompliant militancy. By sidelining the movement, Qaddafi sought to create the political space enabling him to refashion his relations with Washington.\textsuperscript{263}

On a general level, however, no substantive changes were made by the Libyan leadership

\begin{footnotes}
\item[257] Vandewalle, \textit{A History of Modern Libya}, 172-179.
\item[261] Niblock, “\textit{Pariah States” and Sanctions in the Middle East: Iraq, Libya, Sudan}, 87-90.
\item[262] As cited in Pargeter, “Libya: Reforming the Impossible?” 228.
\item[263] Ronen, \textit{Qaddafi’s Libya in World Politics}, 38-50.
\end{footnotes}
to alter its political system. In 2007, Qaddafi commented on Western calls for democratic reforms: “Why impose its system [on us]? I don’t think it suits us. Diversity is the foundation of life, and countries should find a system that suits them.”^264 St. John claims that Qaddafi was unable or unwilling to address the deficiencies within Libya’s policymaking structures. No elements of modern representative democracies – such as rule of law, electoral processes, legitimate political institutions, and respect for human rights – were incorporated.\(^{265}\)

“Lamentable in its own right, the refusal to implement meaningful political reform imposes real limits to the current development model and also compromises domestic and foreign policies in other areas,” thus St. John argued in 2008.\(^{266}\) To conclude, in Moravcsik’s terms, the Qaddafi leadership remained a clientalistic authoritarian regime conducting a fairly unitary foreign policy.

As regards state preferences, Joffé and Paoletti argue that an inversion of Deeb’s pyramid model materialized in Libyan foreign policymaking. The US thus transformed into a top Libyan priority which meant that it was approached in an increasingly pragmatic and opportunistic fashion.\(^{267}\) Vandewalle argues that cooperation with the Lockerbie trial; modification of its foreign policy doctrine; negotiations with the US over concerns such as terrorism and WMD; and curbing the power of the Revolutionary Committee Movement, all stemmed from the Colonel’s desire to apply a more pragmatic policy line that would safeguard regime stability, contribute to its self-perpetuation, and capitalize on economic improvement.\(^{268}\) Zoubir agrees with Vandewalle when stating that “(…) when survival of the regime was at stake, Qadhafi knew how to adapt to international realities and espouse pragmatism.”\(^{269}\) Braut-Hegghammer adds that Qaddafi’s “(…) security priorities were less shaped by ideological dogmatism. The Libyan regime was entering what can be described as a ‘post-revolutionary’ phase, where pragmatism was becoming a stronger influence on policy-making than the revolutionary fervor characterizing Libyan grand strategy during the two previous decades.”\(^{270}\) According to Zoubir, this fundamental shift in state preferences toward regime survival also had ramifications for Tripoli’s WMD program. The regime “(...) turned its discourse on security on its head. In 2004, Qadhafi

\(^{264}\) As cited in Zoubir, “The United States and Libya: The Limits of Coercive Diplomacy,” 289.
\(^{266}\) As cited by St. John “Redefining the Libyan Revolution: the Changing Ideology of Muammar al-Qaddafi,” 104.
\(^{269}\) As cited by Zoubir, “The United States and Libya: The Limits of Coercive Diplomacy,” 276.
\(^{270}\) As cited by Braut-Hegghammer, “Libya’s Nuclear Turnaround: Perspectives from Tripoli,” 66.
declared that any nation-state seeking nuclear arms would not be protecting itself. On the contrary, ‘it would expose itself to danger. A nuclear arms race is a crazy and destructive policy.’ He concluded that it was more profitable to invest in the economy and the welfare of one’s citizens,” thus Zoubir notes.271 The strong ideological preferences of the 1970s and 1980s were thus perceived to be undermining the Guide’s leadership and were therefore discarded in favor of the core preference of regime survival.

An additional preference of Qaddafi was his eager to display his global statesmanship. St. John asserts that, due to a lack of support from Arab leaders during the Lockerbie crisis coupled with their resentment toward Tripoli’s continued proposals for Arab unification, the Colonel withdrew his attention away from the Arab world. Partly instigated by the support he received from African nations during the international sanctions, he instead shifted the focus of his regional policies toward the African continent. Likewise, Israel did no longer constitute a main concern for the Libyan regime, thus St. John argues. Qaddafi tempered his obsession with imperialism and neocolonialism, and proclaimed the future of the ‘big spaces’ of continental Africa.272 Qaddafi, weary from his global reputation and well aware of the need to modify his diplomatic outlook, hoped that his prospective revival would increasingly enable him to appropriate regional African leadership.273 Indeed, Qaddafi continued his quest for a wider stage in order to satisfy his messianic nature.

In sum, with respect to Moravcsik, a fundamental shift within Libya’s state preferences toward regime survival resulted in a radical transformation of its foreign policy. Qaddafi perceived the sanctions regime to be forestalling socio-economic development and thereby threatening regime stability. The Colonel’s desire to consolidate his position of power led him to forego his ideological interests of Nasserist Arab nationalism and espouse opportunist pragmatism instead. As such, rather than being incited by a fundamental change of heart, Qaddafi’s diplomatic conversion seems to have been primarily driven by a pragmatic desire to retain power. With regard to state representation, Joffé and Paoletti claim that the transformation and the successful international charm offensive “(...) could really only occur with such alacrity because of the intense personalization of the policy process.”274 In addition, Qaddafi’s love for

274 As cited in Joffé and Paoletti, Libya’s Foreign Policy: Drivers and Objectives, 22.
the international limelight acted as a catalyst toward foreign policy change. The ‘Brother Leader’ realized that his isolated position severely compromised his ability to be regarded a notable international statesman.

As regards Moravcsik’s last assumption concerning ‘the configuration of interdependent state interests’, the shift within the Jamahiriya’s preferences had critical implications for the issue of policy interdependence. How have US state preferences and subsequent policies constrained Libya’s fundamental ideals? In what way did they impact upon Qaddafi’s set of revolutionary preferences? To what extent did Tripoli’s altered policy interests eventually enable cooperation with the White House?

As mentioned in Chapter II, Libya’s prior ideological preferences could be characterized as zero-sum with respect those of Washington. During the 1990s, US preferences toward retaining its geopolitical influence within the Arab region coupled with its security interests, increasingly constrained Libya’s external behavior. Joffé and Paoletti argue that, among others, Libya’s overture toward pragmatic opportunism was informed by its wish to deflect potential US military intervention. According to Joffé and Paoletti, the 1986 US bombardments of Tripoli and Benghazi had decisively impacted upon the Jamahiriya’s decision-making toward Washington, and thereby affirmed the potential efficacy of military force. They point to a dialectic between ideology and pragmatism that invoked critical foreign policy failures during the first two decades of Qaddafi’s leadership: “(…) the outcome of this dialectic seems to be that policy is iteratively influenced by experience; Libya has learned to appreciate the danger of concerted American hostility (…)”.275

Yet, the Pan Am and UTA incidents of 1988 and 1989 followed after the Operation El Dorado Canyon. Joffé and Paoletti, however, claim that Libya’s transformation, particularly during the 1990s, has been a contradictory process with anti-Western radicalism and policies aimed at reintegration existing alongside each other: “(…) Libya would seek vengeance for Western rejection if it believed its involvement could be concealed alongside public statements seeking a diametrically opposed rapprochement.”277 They also point to the structure of Libya’s political system to clarify this foreign policy ambiguity: “(…) [T]he lack of coherence inherent in personalized, charismatic political systems of the kind typified by Libya can easily result in the

276 As cited by Joffé and Paoletti, *Libya’s Foreign Policy: Drivers and Objectives*, 11.
bureaucracy misinterpreting leadership objectives, especially if there had been recent radical reorientations of policy.”

Martinez coalesces with Joffé and Paoletti’s military argument in that, after the US-led Iraq invasion and the subsequent toppling of the Saddam leadership, Qaddafi feared his country would be next. Indeed, Libya had been successfully isolated for the very same reasons Washington had invaded Iraq, and the Libyan leader had been designated as an enemy long before Saddam. Qaddafi openly questioned whether countries like Libya and Iran would follow suit. Thus, the Colonel increasingly seemed to acknowledge the negative consequences his ideologically induced policy actions had for regime stability. US preferences fundamentally collided with those of the Jamahiriya; their military response to conflicting interests – including those with Iraq – could well have restrained Libyan behavior.

In contrast, Nincic deems the Iraq argument to be non-persuasive: “(…) the origins of Qaddafi’s metamorphosis preceded the US invasion by several years, whereas the December 2003 announcement culminated a long diplomatic process with substantial positive inducements.” Indeed, Qaddafi explicitly denied that the forceful eradication of Saddam had affected his decision to dismantle his WMD program. Yet, it could very well be that the Libyan leader refused to give the impression that he was acceding to violent US coercion. Nevertheless, Nincic, as well as Vandewalle and Zoubir, contends that Qaddafi’s gradual relinquishment from his legitimizing narrative – Arab nationalism and the Third Universal Theory – was predominantly induced by a stagnating growth in Gross National Product (GNP) and a rapidly growing population, which subsequently compromised regime legitimacy. With regard to Libya’s decision in 2003 to forego WMD, Bowen argues that it ultimately rested within the Colonel’s desire to nullify the international embargo. “Sanctions worked in the Libyan context because they targeted the regime’s dependency on oil to finance the country’s over-sized public sector (…). The outcome was a significant reduction in state revenues, a parallel decline in state expenditure and a rapidly deteriorating economy, which in turn generated political challenges for the regime that threatened to undermine its security,” thus Bowen notes. The

---

282 As cited by Bowen, *Libya and Nuclear Proliferation: Stepping Back from the Brink*, 68.
costs of Tripoli’s frequently resuscitated nuclear program – domestic discontent due to forfeited socio-economic gains – were deemed counterproductive. When linking this perspective to Moravcsik, instead of potential military aggression, Qaddafi perceived the international constraint of US preferences mainly in economic terms. The US-spearheaded sanctions regime and the subsequent international isolation directly fueled civil unrest due to the economic hardship it sustained. Thus, annulment of the sanctions was deemed obligatory to be able to appease his impoverished population and invest in socio-economic development.

Either way, scholars tend to agree on the determinative constraint US fundamental interests had on Libyan ideological preferences.

After Tripoli’s gradual reversal of its Nasserist ideals, the regime explored ways to accommodate the US that would not undercut its continuity. Crucially, the existence of mixed preferences, as outlined by Moravcsik in Chapter II, enabled both parties to cooperate after mutual policy concessions. US commercial interests, coupled with its proactive counterterrorist doctrine – particularly during the post-9/11 era – provided the Jamahiriya with the opportunity to cease its isolation.

A crucial compatible interest between Libya and the US, and thereby a precipitant to mutual diplomatic engagement, constituted the potential threat of violent Islamist movements. Martinez argues that, due to its geographic location and expertise in Islamist networks, Libya constituted a useful source of intelligence for US security services. On the other hand, Tripoli could more easily counter Islamist threats to its leadership when joining the *Global War on Terror*. Martinez notes that anticipated US support could subsequently augment its ‘counterterrorist’ activities at home. Of course, the increased securitization of non-state terrorism also provided the Libyan regime with a ‘moral justification’ to arbitrarily subvert domestic opposition. Consequently, it came as no surprise that Libya, just like Sudan, Syria and Algeria, positioned itself within the discourse of the US-initiated fight against terrorism. This common cause, coupled with Libya’s concessions toward settling the Lockerbie issue;

---

286 Newnham, “Carrots, Sticks, and Bombs: The End of Libya’s WMD Program,” 90.
terminating its support for violent extremist groups; and dismantling its WMD program, made the Bush administration temper its calls for democracy and human rights in Libya. While these issues seemed so intricately linked to Bush’s idealistic and proactive foreign policy, they lost their significance for the US when they eventually resumed normalized relations with Tripoli.

Zoubir agrees by stating that: “This confirms a long-standing disconnection in US foreign policy between the discursive preeminence accorded to democracy and human rights on the one hand, and a ‘Realpolitik’ agenda driven by the security implications of policies implemented on the other.” Thus, speaking in Moravcsik’s terms, these issues no longer constituted an international constraint on the regime’s preference toward retaining power. On the other hand, compatible security interests, coupled with lucrative business opportunities, critically informed US – Libyan reconciliation.

In sum, with respect to policy interdependence, Tripoli made some critical adjustments. The Qaddafi regime seemed to acknowledge the transnational costs its ideologically configured preferences had created. Libyan interests directly conflicted with American preferences – security issues such as WMD and terrorism; geopolitical interests within the Arab world; and steady supply of energy resources. Subsequent US policy actions increasingly constrained Libya’s conduct. Whether Qaddafi perceived these costs in mere military terms – threat of intervention – or solely in indirect economic terms – international isolation undermining internal legitimacy – remains disputable. Nevertheless, most scholars tend to agree that the configuration of US fundamental interests altered Libyan priorities. The subsequent mixed pattern of interdependent state preferences – compatible counterterrorist and commercial interests – critically incited cooperation. Crucially, it enabled a resumption of normalized relations and thereby safeguarded regime survival.

---

292 US business groups and anti-sanctions trade associations put heavy pressure on US Congress to revise the unilateral sanctions regime. They claimed that it unnecessarily jeopardized America’s commercial opportunities within the Libyan oil and gas sector. For more, read: Zoubir, “The United States and Libya: From Confrontation to Normalization,” 50-54.
3.3.2 Cognitive-psychological approach of Qaddafi’s diplomatic transformation

When analyzing Qaddafi’s transformation on a cognitive-psychological level, O’Reilly asserts that, starting at the end of the 1990s, Qaddafi’s world view seems to take a more cooperative shift. During his first two decades in power, pessimism, a lack of control over events, and hostility toward the international environment continued to entertain his belief system. However, after the Lockerbie bombing and the installment of the sanctions package, this did not lead to any major violent escalations but was merely expressed through increasingly threatening rhetoric.\footnote{293} Even though the Colonel continued to adhere to a dissimilar view about the nature of the political system toward the turn of the century, his tendency toward malignant tactics slightly decreased. Later, during 2003-2005, O’Reilly finds no critical statistical difference between Qaddafi’s world view and that of the average world leader.\footnote{294}

Interestingly, while Tripoli stepped up its nuclear program during 1999-2003, O’Reilly allies with Braut-Hegghammer when stating that this merely constituted a bargaining chip to maximize potential benefits during prospective negotiations. O’Reilly claims that, when comparing the period of 1999-2003 (before the Iraq intervention and Libya’s abandonment of WMD) with 2003-2005, Qaddafi clearly underwent a change in his underlying philosophical belief system. He perceived the nature of the international political system in less conflictual terms, implying a more cooperative view of the world. Also, the Guide displayed more optimism about achieving his political goals within the international environment. Thus, O’Reilly disregards the ‘threat of military intervention’ argument since this would imply a negative perception of the political universe. He instead points to the tangible benefits (lifting of sanctions and reestablishment of diplomatic relations) Tripoli received from reciprocal interaction during the Lockerbie settlement and the continued diplomatic engagement that followed this resolution. Crucially, O’Reilly contends that the change within the Guide’s philosophical belief system stemmed from altered perceptions about others permitting a successful outcome as opposed to an increased sense of control over events.\footnote{295}

To conclude, O’Reilly states that, short of a complex learning process, Qaddafi

\footnote{293 O’Reilly, “Turning Over a New Leaf in Tripoli? Lessons from Libya’s Transformation,” 285.}
\footnote{294 O’Reilly, “Turning Over a New Leaf in Tripoli? Lessons from Libya’s Transformation,” 282-285.}
experienced a degree of diagnostic learning. 296 “All told, the changes to Qaddafi’s world view point to social learning, with behavior altered in response to external stimulus, rather than an instance of experiential learning. Changes at the international level, instead of fundamental changes to Qaddafi’s world view, appear more instructive about the reasons for the Libyan transformation,” thus O’Reilly asserts. 297 When explaining Qaddafi’s overture, O’Reilly thus points to the incentives offered to Libya by the US, rendering Libyan cooperation more effective in satisfying its political aims.

3.4 Structural dimension

With respect to Mearsheimer’s structuralist approach, it would be instructive to analyze to what extent the termination of the bipolar distribution of power affected Libyan dispositions toward Washington. How has the US hegemony and its subsequent unilateralism modified Libya’s international agenda and its subsequent behavior?

As mentioned before, throughout the 1970s and 1980s, Tripoli sought to pragmatically ally with the Soviet Union in order to buttress its coercive capabilities and balance against the US political and military buildup within the Arab region. Joffé and Paoletti assert that, after the Soviet withdrawal from the Arab region and its eventual collapse, Tripoli increasingly recognized the need to adapt to the new international realities and accept US unipolarity. 298 St. John argues that in addition to the cessation of Soviet support, Libya increasingly faced regional isolation. He asserts that, next to the fierce Arab disgruntlement Libya experienced against its attempts toward unification, the half-hearted support it received from Arab nations during its confrontation with the US and the following sanctions period made it recognize its position of regional isolation and its subsequent strategic vulnerability. 299 Consequently, St. John asserts that Libya’s acts toward conversion, in particular its cooperation with the Lockerbie trial, was partly motivated by a wish to construct new alliances with African nations in order to prevent potential

298 Joffé and Paoletti, *Libya’s Foreign Policy: Drivers and Objectives*, 20-27 and 41-42.
isolation in the future.\textsuperscript{300}

Particularly after the 1986 US air bombardments, and the exhibition of American military supremacy, the Qaddafi regime seemed to acknowledge its vulnerable position, thus Joffé and Paoletti claim.\textsuperscript{301} “There is little doubt that since Libya realized that it had to accept the reality of hegemonic stability under the world’s single hyper-power in the 1990s, it had made great strides in readjusting to a world very different from that which greeted the Great September Revolution in September 1969. The basis of Libya’s foreign policy has swung full circle, from being dominated by ideology to a preoccupation with opportunistic pragmatism,” thus Joffé and Paoletti note.\textsuperscript{302}

In addition, Martinez emphasizes the seminal importance of the Second Gulf War by stipulating that “For the regime, it then became clear that if Germany, Russia and France could not ‘stop’ the war in Iraq, it would mean that American unilateralism could not be checked.”\textsuperscript{303} Thus, in Mearsheimer’s terms, Tripoli faced the world’s single superpower while at the same time losing its Soviet and Arab allies. Consequently, Libya felt increasingly isolated and constrained by the US hegemony while at the same time being unable to offset this power asymmetry through external balancing.

Interestingly, Braut-Hegghammer contends that the main leitmotiv for the Libyan regime to sustain its WMD project throughout the 1990s was to compensate for its increasing strategic vulnerability and thereby to deter prospective US aggression.\textsuperscript{304} Following the 1986 US air strikes, Qaddafi underlined the security imperative of the program when stating that “[i]f we had possessed a deterrent – missiles that could reach New York – we would have hit it at the same moment. Consequently, we should build this force so that they and others will no longer think about an attack.”\textsuperscript{305} During the 1990s, the Jamahiriya pursued a two-track policy through which it sought rapprochement with the US while simultaneously maintaining its nonconventional weapons program as an ‘insurance policy’, thereby ensuring a credible deterrent against potential US aggression in case of failure to reconcile.\textsuperscript{306}

To conclude, US unilateralism had effectively curtailed the Jamahiriya’s ability to sustain

\textsuperscript{300} St. John, \textit{Libya and the United States: Two Centuries of Strife}, 176-177.
\textsuperscript{301} Joffé and Paoletti, \textit{Libya’s Foreign Policy: Drivers and Objectives}, 20-27 and 41-42.
\textsuperscript{302} As cited by Joffé and Paoletti, \textit{Libya’s Foreign Policy: Drivers and Objectives}, 41.
\textsuperscript{303} As cited by Martinez, “Libya: the Conversion of a ‘Terrorist State’,” 160.
\textsuperscript{304} Braut-Hegghammer, “Libya’s Nuclear Turnaround: Perspectives from Tripoli,” 64.
\textsuperscript{305} As cited in Braut-Hegghammer, “Libya’s Nuclear Turnaround: Perspectives from Tripoli,” 64.
its ideologically induced foreign policy. With respect to Mearsheimer, it could be argued that Libya’s isolated place within the international system and its increasing inability to oppose US hegemonic coercion and to counterbalance its military superiority made it a sensible enterprise to bandwagon with the adversary instead in order to secure regime survival. Nevertheless, dispositional factors – altered state preferences caused by internal threats to Qaddafi’s leadership due to socio-economic deprivation – seem to have primarily driven the regime’s external metamorphosis.

3.5 Conclusion

When returning to the question of why Libyan foreign policy change materialized throughout the 1990s and 2000s, dispositional factors again prove to be decisive. Moravcsik’s theory shows that both societal as well as international constraints eventually modified Libya’s ideological preferences and grand strategy. The consulted sources claim that Qaddafi’s realization of his ideological policy failures critically informed his diplomatic overture. Through pursuing reconciliation with the US, the Libyan regime pragmatically sought to repel international and subnational threats to its leadership and subsequently ensure its core preference of regime survival.

All three sources of internal conflict as discussed by Moravcsik were, to varying degree, active. The Libyan population increasingly repugned Qaddafi’s revolutionary ideals and his authoritarian clientalistic leadership. More acute, however, was the conflict over scarce material goods. The sources consulted point to Libya’s deplorable economic condition – caused and sustained by the regime’s economic mismanagement and by the constraining international sanctions regime – coupled with its rapidly growing population, when explaining the mounting domestic contempt. As a consequence, the leadership’s core preference of regime survival was at stake. In order to retain his position of power and consolidate the regime’s fundamental political structures, Qaddafi discarded his ideological radicalism and espoused opportunist pragmatism instead. Through this strategic adjustment, the Libyan leader attempted to address the country’s socio-economic problems and subsequently appease subnational opposition.
As regards policy interdependence, US preferences within the Arab region critically informed Libyan policy change. The international embargo which followed the conflictual configuration of state preferences severely constrained the Jamahiriya’s economic development. Hence, annulment of the sanctions constituted a primary aim of its leadership. From this perspective, the international constraint on Libyan foreign policy mainly manifested itself indirectly by fostering societal unrest and compromising the regime’s internal legitimacy. Yet, other sources point to a direct international constraint. While the former perspective emphasizes the punitive sanctions regime and the post-Lockerbie diplomatic engagement involving positive inducements; others sources provide more weight to the coercive threat of potential US military force. Nonetheless, most scholars agree that domestic economic hardship critically imperiled regime survival.

In Moravcsik’s terms, the transformation from zero-sum to mixed state preferences altered US – Libyan relations. Next to the shared commercial preferences, the ostensible Islamist threat to their security constituted a compatible interest between Tripoli and Washington and subsequently induced both parties to cooperate. Crucially, Qaddafi’s policy concessions toward settling the Lockerbie affair, denouncing terrorism and abandoning WMD, led Washington to resume diplomatic and commercial interactions, despite the human rights atrocities taking place on Libyan soil and Qaddafi’s non-democratic governance.

On a structural level, Mearsheimer’s approach to international relations provides a useful, though less nuanced, insight into the matter. The regime’s continued isolation and increasing difficulties in counterbalancing US unilateralism through arms procurements – most notably its pursuance of WMD – or alliance formation, seems to have prompted it to bandwagon with the adversary instead.

In sum, when analyzing the chosen literature and applying Carlsnaes’ model, the root causes for Libya’s transformation seem to primarily lie within the dispositional dimension. Societal threats to Qaddafi’s leadership critically undermined his internal legitimacy and subsequently altered his adherence to ideological militancy. Diverging fundamental believes, political exclusion, and particularly material scarcity fueled societal dissatisfaction. Consequently, the Libyan leader forfeited ideological coherence in favor of opportunistic pragmatism. Nullification of the international embargo and diplomatic engagement were perceived to be required to eliminate the subnational and international constraints on his
preference to retain power. Thus, instead of a fundamental change of heart or experiential learning, the consulted sources claim that Qaddafi’s transformation was solely informed by pragmatic considerations of securing regime survival.

Conclusion

When addressing to the core question of how Libyan oscillating foreign policy toward the US, and its eventual conversion to moderation, can be explained through analyzing agential, societal, international, and systemic forces affecting its policymaking process, Carlsnaes’ FPA approach, added by Moravcsik’s liberal theory, provides a crucial insight into the matter. The chosen theoretical model clearly unravels the reasons behind Libya’s alternating policy actions throughout Qaddafi’s tenure. Both Libya’s revisionist policies as well as its eventual diplomatic transformation were mainly caused by factors and processes operating at the dispositional level.

Qaddafi’s initial goals to curb US influence within the Arab world, expand his domestic and regional power, and enhance legitimacy for his leadership, increasingly interfered with Washington’s interests in the region; namely, a steady supply of energy resources, security of its Israeli ally, and countering potential communist encroachment. Ideological revisionist notions stemming from Nasserist Arab nationalism – most notably anti-imperialism and pan-Arabism – mainly fueled Libya’s belligerent conduct toward the US. Qaddafi perceived American ‘imperialist’ policies within Libya and other Arab states to be critically compromising national self-determination and true independence for its people. Moreover, Washington’s conduct was perceived to be halting efforts toward a flourishing and powerful Arab nation. Through subverting pro-US regimes in the region, sponsoring violent extremist entities, and seeking Arab unity, the Qaddafi regime sought to countervail US power and subsequently satisfy its idealistic objectives. On a structural level, the bipolar distribution of power enabled Libya to collaborate with the USSR in order to augment its military capabilities and counterbalance US influence in the region. Moreover, the espoused WMD capability, coupled with Soviet alliance formation, was required to deter possible US or Israeli hostility. Thus, while Mearsheimer’s approach satisfactorily explains Tripoli’s collaboration with the Kremlin and its pursuance of WMD,
Moravcsik’s theory – operating within the dispositional dimension of Carlsnaes’ framework – clarifies Qaddafi’s confrontation with the US more comprehensively. Through elaborating upon the fundamental ideological preferences of the Libyan leadership, coupled with its accumulation of domestic power, the basic causal factors and processes – operating at the agential and societal level – behind Libya’s revisionist policy actions are discerned.

Although both regime survival and revisionist idealism informed Qaddafi’s policies during the first two decades of his rule, the former increasingly determined his foreign policy agenda after the end of the Cold War. In Moravcsik’s terms, Libya’s leadership was confronted with three internal threats: diverging fundamental beliefs, disaffection due to political exclusion, and material scarcity. The last factor proved the most acute and subsequently forced Qaddafi to conduct economic accommodation toward his population in order to quell domestic instability. Annulment of the international sanctions package combined with prospective Western investment in Libya’s obsolete but profitable oil industry was deemed obligatory to satisfy this goal. From this perspective, the international constraint on Libyan foreign policy manifested itself indirectly by thwarting economic development and thereby undermining the regime’s internal legitimacy.

As regards the threat of potential US military aggression, views differ as to what extent this factor impacted upon Libya’s overture. Some scholars assert that the 1986 US air bombardment and the coercive regime overthrow in Baghdad in 2003 critically informed Qaddafi’s about-face politics; others conforming to the indirect perspective, however, claim his transformation to have predominantly been incited by the international embargo and the subsequent diplomatic negotiations involving substantial positive inducements (resumption of diplomatic and commercial relations coupled with the abolition of the sanctions regime). Indeed, O’Reilly’s operational code analysis emphasizes the importance of positive external stimuli in explaining Qaddafi’s transformation. Moreover, the Iraq-argument as put forward by Martinez in section 3.3.1 ignores the concept of political and military overstretch. While Martinez argues that US unilateralism and military superiority as demonstrated during the Second Gulf War critically fueled Qaddafi’s political volte-face, one could very well argue that the Iraq invasion in 2003 relieved Qaddafi from the threat of external intervention instead. Conducting a third war within the Islamic world simultaneously would have severely compromised US military capabilities and its international moral credibility.
Crucially, the international preoccupation with global terrorism that followed the 9/11 attacks created an atmosphere conducive for mere counterterrorist cooperation, rendering human rights and democratic governance of secondary importance. In terms of Moravcsik, Libyan zero-sum preferences eventually altered into mixed preferences with respect to those of the White House. Through conducting crucial policy concessions – resolving the Lockerbie crisis; terminating its support for non-state terrorism; and foregoing WMD – the Colonel created the political space for bilateral business and counterterrorist cooperation, thereby relieving himself from the international constraint on his preference to preserve his domestic position of power.

On a structural level, Mearsheimer’s approach puts emphasis on US global invincibility and Libya’s failure to offset the regional power imbalance through pursuing WMD or seeking alliance formation, prompting it to pragmatically bandwagon with the adversary instead in order to secure regime survival. Thus, the Guide’s ideological preferences increasingly jeopardized regime continuity and its raison d’être; the constellation of power (US hegemony coupled with Tripoli’s isolation) severely constrained his idealistic revisionism, eventually provoking a foreign policy conversion. Nevertheless, Mearsheimer’s theory neglects the detrimental effect international isolation, and the regime’s fraught socio-economic policies, had on domestic stability. Through analyzing the consulted sources by utilizing Moravcsik’s liberal approach, the societal constraint on Libyan foreign policy can be conceived of as decisive in effectuating foreign policy change. Pragmatic opportunism informed by a desire to secure regime survival prompted the Qaddafi leadership to seek reconciliation with the US, reverse its position of international isolation, and subsequently accommodate the economic needs of its people.

This research has also shown that, through applying Carlsnaes’ synthesis to Libyan US-policy during Qaddafi’s leadership, a thorough analysis of the subject is feasible. Some marginal notes, however, should be made in order to put the surplus value of this approach into perspective.

First, to illustrate the complexity of Libya’s diplomatic reversal, Martinez emphasizes the seminal importance of the 9/11 terrorist attacks. This event enabled Libya to reposition itself in such a way as to align with the US and with their anti-terrorist discourse, and in the process of cooperation, to seek normalization of mutual relations.\(^\text{307}\) Whether Qaddafi would have been able to improve his relations with the White House and subsequently rejoin the international

community without the occurrence of this tragic event remains highly disputable. Thus, US – Libyan reconciliation was for a critical part enabled by the 9/11 terrorist attacks; a factor unrelated to the FPDM process – meaning previous policymaking and the subsequent feedback on those policies. Thus, the occurrence of sudden events is not satisfactorily absorbed by Carlsnaes’ model. Therefore, to draw inferences strictly from the factors over which policymakers have control, one excludes the potential crucial ramifications of events unrelated to this enterprise. Carlsnaes himself is aware of this notion when stating that many of the changes within the three dimensions posited in his framework are the result of factors independent of the policymaking process.\footnote{Carlsnaes, “The Agency – Structure Problem in Foreign Policy Analysis,” 265.} On the other hand, discursive approaches could possibly incorporate such events into the model by emphasizing, for example, the securitization process of non-state terrorist phenomena, and by subsequently analyzing its effect on state preferences.

Also, through utilizing the chosen model, in which Carlsnaes’ synthesis is complemented with Moravcsik and Mearsheimer’s theoretical approach, the state is treated as the critical transmission belt through which individual and societal preferences interact with international forces. Thus, the potential institutional effect of multinational corporations (MNCs), Nongovernmental Organizations (NGOs), international practices and transnational discourses on state preferences are left out of the analysis. While Carlsnaes’ framework does allow for such an application, the usage of his synthesis within this analysis, however, excludes such approaches. This research mainly analyzed the interplay between society and state coupled with processes of interstate interaction, and thereby partly obscured the potential influence of other actors and processes operating outside this ‘funnel model’.

Nevertheless, although being rather static, the theoretical model employed unambiguously allows for an insightful explanation of Libya’s oscillating foreign policy toward the US during Qaddafi’s leadership. Carlsnaes’ tripartite synthesis operates at a level of abstraction that enables a comprehensive analysis on Libyan policy actions toward Washington by letting purposive behavior (intentional dimension); cognitive-psychological factors, ideologies, and societal and international patterns of preferences (dispositional dimension); and systemic phenomena like the distribution of power (structural dimension) play a pivotal role in the explanatory process. Carlsnaes’ perspective, particularly in combination with Moravcsik’s liberal theory, provides due attention to the interplay between domestic and international forces,
and its subsequent effect on foreign policymaking. However, it does not provide any understanding in advance as to which factors are determinative within foreign policymaking; indeed, this is inherent to integrative efforts toward theoretical synthesis. This lack of parsimony is for the obvious reason that there are not a lot of things that fall outside the scope of foreign policy analysis. Moreover, these factors are inextricably linked through complex patterns of interaction, rendering parsimony less conceivable if one is to maintain a high explanatory value.

As regards the implications Qaddafi’s expulsion from power has on future Libyan policy toward Washington, many things remain unclear. Indeed, since the revolution was non-ideological in character, much of future foreign policy will depend on the constellation of the prospective Libyan government, its internal legitimacy, and its subsequent ability to enforce its leadership. According to Joffé, the attitudes of the outside world toward the next Libyan government coupled with whether democracy and rule of law will overcome forces eliciting a return to authoritarian governance are of vital importance to its future international conduct. In addition, Joffé urges the international community to accept the outcome of electoral processes in Libya, irrespective of their own preferences.\textsuperscript{309} That said, St. John dilutes the threat of radical Islam gaining ground within Libya. After the regime sanctioned the execution of three Islamist militants in 2000, there has been little evidence of organized Islamist activity, thus St. John notes. Libya constitutes a religious homogeneous country where an overwhelming part of the population is Sunni Muslim. According to St. John, they have never shown an extraordinary interest in Islamic radicalism as advocated by al-Qaida or al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM). Thus, St. John downplays the threat of a prospective Islamic militant administration since the Libyan people have shown little appetite in an extremist Islamist alternative to their revolt.\textsuperscript{310} Nevertheless, already two months before the imminent fall of Qaddafi, St. John warned against a continued armed struggle or external military intervention: “(…) if the rebellion deteriorates into a prolonged civil war or coalition forces intervene with ‘boots on the ground,’ the potential for militant Islamist groups to increase the space in which they operate will grow.”\textsuperscript{311} St. John concludes that the ‘road maps’ introduced by the National Transitional Council (NTC) appear to be based on the acceptance of universal human rights and a conviction

in democratic principles. Yet, he points out that many reforms need to be successfully executed coupled with institution and capacity building from scratch; this discussion, however, exceeds the limits of this research. As regards Libya’s prospective international relations, St. John asserts that the coalition partners, who succeeded in implementing military intervention, need to provide expertise and support to the Libyans. This, however, should only occur at the request of the Libyans themselves, thus St. John notes.\footnote{St. John, \textit{Libyan Myths and Realities}, 9-12.}
Bibliography


Bowen, Wyn Q. *Libya and Nuclear Proliferation: Stepping Back from the Brink* (New York: Routledge, 2006)


Niblock, Tim. “Pariah States” and Sanctions in the Middle East: Iraq, Libya, Sudan (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2001)


Ronen, Yehudit. *Qaddafi’s Libya in World Politics* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2008)


St. John, Ronald Bruce. *Libyan Myths and Realities* (Copenhagen: Royal Danish Defense College, 2011)


United Nations Security Council resolution 748.


