



AMERICAN UNIVERSITY OF BEIRUT

NEOREALISM IN THE LIBYAN CASE: MARY-JANE  
DEEB'S PYRAMID AND GOING BEYOND WALTZ

by  
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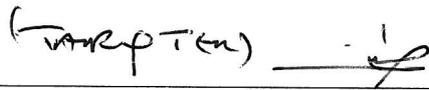
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## AN ABSTRACT OF THE PROJECT OF

Matthew Pokorny for Master of Arts  
Major: Middle Eastern Studies

Title: Neorealism in the Libyan Case: Mary-Jane Deeb's Pyramid and Going Beyond Waltz

This project is concerned with approaches to Libyan foreign policy under Muammar Qaddafi. It first examines Mary-Jane Deeb's pyramidal model of analysis of Libyan policy during the 1970s and 1980s. It argues that her model, based on Waltzian neorealist principles, explains Qaddafi's motivations and actions far better than previous attempts to do so. However, her model fails to explain Qaddafi's policy choices in the decades following the publishing of her book, the 1990s and 2000s. This project argues that her model cannot account for the shift in threats facing the Qaddafi regime due to theoretical limitations. These limitations are based in Kenneth Waltz's neorealism that largely ignores the internal nature of a state. To attempt to find a better means of analyzing Libyan policy this project entails a presentation of several attempts to modify neorealism to better fit a Third World context.

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# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

The first section of this paper will be a presentation of Deeb's framework where I will demonstrate how her model successfully explains Libyan foreign policy during her period of analysis, the 1970s and 1980s. The second section will entail an application of her model to the Libyan policies of the 1990s and 2000s prior to Qaddafi's ouster. I will show how it falters in light of Qaddafi's policies during this period. In my final section, I will incorporate other theories of neorealism beyond that of Waltz. I will do so in order to explore what renders her model unable to explain Libyan policy in the latter decades of Qaddafi's rule and how these other theories may provide a better explanation.

Before delving into the merits of Deeb's model, I will first present several other analyses of Libyan foreign policy under Qaddafi to illustrate how Deeb's work constituted a new approach. Traditionally, there have been two prevalent types of analyses regarding Qaddafi's foreign policy.<sup>1</sup> The first type uses Qaddafi's psychology as the determinant for Libyan policy, and the second believes that Qaddafi's ideological pursuits such as pan-Arabism, pan-Islamism, and 'revolutionary socialism' guide policy.<sup>2</sup> This theme has largely persisted, but there are several recent studies that do treat Qaddafi as a rational actor.

The psychoanalytic approach takes as its foundation Qaddafi's irrational thinking and behavior in order to explain Libyan policies. Haley as well as Owen and Gurewich

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<sup>1</sup> Mary-Jane Deeb, *Libya's Foreign Policy in North Africa* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1991), 6.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 6-7.

use such an approach. Haley, stating that Qaddafi has no moral limits, describes him as “uniquely incomprehensible” and “exceptionally menacing.”<sup>3</sup>

Owen and Gurewich also attempt to analyze Qaddafi’s “madness.”<sup>4</sup> The authors describe the Libyan political system as one where those surrounding Qaddafi have constructed an echo chamber that provides for him an avenue to vent his lunacy, while these close associates actually manage the affairs of the country.<sup>5</sup> Despite this approach coming to prominence in mainstream American political discourse from the Reagan era, I assert that there is little value to be gained in attempting to find explanations for irrational policy from an irrational actor.

More common than the psychological approach is the analysis that assumes the leader and his policies are motivated by a commitment to one or a number of ideologies. Within this group, there are several different ways in which authors treat ideology in relation to Qaddafi.

The most traditional path for ideological analyses is the one taken by Niblock. In his overview on Libyan policy, he states that Qaddafi’s pursuit of Arabism is not merely a feature of his foreign policy, but it is a pillar of it.<sup>6</sup>

More nuanced than Niblock are Zartman and Kluge; they go as far as to assert that Libyan foreign policy is rational. However, they later belie this by stating that the

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<sup>3</sup> P. Edward Haley, *Qaddafi and the United States since 1969* (New York, New York: Praeger Publishers, 1984), 12.

<sup>4</sup> Judith Gurewich and Roger Owen, *Libya's Eccentric Leader: Dangerously Crazy, Pathologically Delusional - or What?*, April 12, 2011, <http://cmes.hmdc.harvard.edu/node/2494> (accessed October 5, 2014).

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Tim Niblock, "The Foreign Policy of Libya," in *The Foreign Policies of Middle East States*, 213-233 (Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2002), 213, 216.

motivation behind the policy is the ideological pursuit of “freedom, socialism, and unity.”<sup>7</sup>

Stottlemyre’s analysis differs slightly in that he combines this “ideological path” with Qaddafi’s personal charisma.<sup>8</sup> For Stottlemyre, the ideologies of unity and anti-imperialism have primacy rather than Islam or pan-Arabism.<sup>9</sup>

In the 1990s and 2000s, there were an increasing amount of examinations regarding Qaddafi’s unexpected willingness to cooperate with the West. Takeyh, Hochman, and Martinez have all used this theme of a “reformed” Qaddafi. These studies address Libyan foreign policy as if Qaddafi had a realization that led him to radically change his policymaking in the 1990s and 2000s.

Takeyh and Martinez both start from the assumption that Qaddafi acts out of ideological motivations. Addressing the circumstances regarding the release of the two Libyan Lockerbie suspects, Takeyh states that “radical ideology” is Qaddafi’s guide.<sup>10</sup> However, the sanctions and isolation have compelled Qaddafi to forego his ideology and reform his policies in a more pragmatic manner.<sup>11</sup>

Rather than Islamic or Arab ideologies, Martinez believes Qaddafi to be motivated by his desire to spread the *jamahiriyya*, the leader’s concept of the ‘state of the masses.’<sup>12</sup> Qaddafi publicly recognized its failure in 2000, and this coincided with a

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<sup>7</sup> I. William Zartman and A.G. Kluge, "Heroic Politics: The Foreign Policy of Libya," in *The Foreign Policies of Arab States: The Challenge of Change*, 236-259 (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1991), 236.

<sup>8</sup> Steve Stottlemyre, “Tactical Flexibility: Libyan Foreign Policy under Qadhafi, 1969-2004,” *Digest of Middle East Studies* 21, no. 1 (2012): 178.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> Ray Takeyh, “The Rogue Who Came in from the Cold,” *Foreign Affairs*, 2001: 63.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> Alia Brahimi, “Libya's Revolution,” *The Journal of North African Studies*, Dec 2011: 605.

rational assessment of the dire economic situation in Libya resulting from mismanagement, sanctions, and reduced oil revenues.<sup>13</sup>

Hochman similarly adopts this concept of Qaddafi “coming in from the cold,” but does so with a focus on the means by which Qaddafi accomplished this. Specifically, Hochman analyzes Qaddafi’s embrace of international institutions, and how Qaddafi uses these to end his isolation and project power.<sup>14</sup>

The ideological approach is accurate as a means of analysis to some extent, but I will demonstrate that there are numerous cases where it cannot account for Qaddafi’s actions.<sup>15</sup>

Finally, there are several studies that do treat Qaddafi as a rational actor. Using the example of the Ujda Agreement, Ronen states that pragmatism mostly overcomes ideology in Qaddafi’s policymaking.<sup>16</sup> Also in line with Deeb’s analysis, Otman and Karlberg present Qaddafi as a pragmatist aimed at ensuring Libya’s political and economic security through rational actions.<sup>17</sup>

As illustrated, the studies of Libyan foreign policy drivers have progressed to a degree beyond psychoanalyses and studies of ideology that Deeb describes in 1991. Still, there are few works that analyze Qaddafi as a realist on a theoretical level.

In the second part of this paper, I will outline several alternatives to Deeb’s neorealism in order to provide a basis for my critique of her model. Deeb utilizes Waltzian neorealism to construct her model, and I believe this to be the reason for its

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<sup>13</sup> Luis Martinez, “Libya: The Conversion of a ‘Terrorist State’,” *Mediterranean Politics* 11, no. 2 (2006): 154, 156.

<sup>14</sup> Dafna Hochman, “Going Legit: Qaddafi’s Neo-Institutionalism,” *Yale J. Int’l Aff* 4, no. 2 (2009): 27.

<sup>15</sup> Mary-Jane Deeb, “Qaddafi’s Calculated Risks,” (SAIS Review) 6 (1986): 151-162: 152.

<sup>16</sup> Yehudit Ronen, *Qaddafi’s Libya in World Politics* (Boulder, Colorado: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2008), 114.

<sup>17</sup> Waniss A. Otman and Erling Karlberg, *The Libyan Economy: Economic Diversification and International Repositioning* (Heidelberg: Springer, 2007), 29, 61.

inadequacies. In Waltz's neorealism, the state is the unit of analysis, and the focus is on the external while the internal is largely assumed to be static. Deeb therefore discounts the importance of internal factors, claiming that the repressive nature of Qaddafi's rule makes any domestic instability irrelevant.<sup>18</sup>

Having shown how Deeb's model is inadequate, I will introduce several other authors that will provide a better portrayal of the realities of Libyan foreign policy. Ayoub, David, and Mufti are all part of an endeavor to modify neorealism and make it better suited for the Third World. Thus, they will provide me with the tools to identify how Deeb falters, and, consequently, highlight the limits of Waltzian neorealism.

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<sup>18</sup> Deeb, *Libya's Foreign Policy in North Africa*, 5.

## CHAPTER II

### DEEB'S THEORY BEHIND THE MODEL

In her book, *Libya's Foreign Policy in North Africa*, Mary-Jane Deeb endeavors to answer two main questions: “What have been Libya’s foreign policy objectives in Africa since 1969? And what means have been used to achieve those objectives?”<sup>19</sup> The author believes there to be a dearth of analyses that take a logical approach to Libyan policy under Muammar Qaddafi.

The first is the psychoanalysis of Qaddafi himself. This route “sees him as an irrational, bloodthirsty megalomaniac whose hegemonic ambitions are limitless and who lacks all sense of perspective and reality.”<sup>20</sup> Fostering the acceptability of such an approach is the nickname given to Qaddafi by Ronald Reagan. Mere days after the April 1986 bombing at a Berlin discothèque by Libyan agents, President Reagan labeled Libya’s leader the “mad dog of the Middle East.”<sup>21</sup> As a result, it became politically profitable to adopt this assessment of Qaddafi as an irrational actor. Deeb discredits the utility of this approach: “If Qadhafi were so out of touch with reality, and if his perceptions and expectations were so irrational and distorted, it is very unlikely that he would have remained in power for so long.”<sup>22</sup>

The second of the two main approaches to Libyan foreign policy at the time of Deeb’s work is the ideological one. Many analyses of Qaddafi adopt the basic assumption that the Libyan leader is motivated by his pursuit to various ideological

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<sup>19</sup> Ibid., 1.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., 7.

<sup>21</sup> Ronald Reagan, *The President's News Conference*, (April 9, 1986).

<sup>22</sup> Deeb, *Libya's Foreign Policy in North Africa*, 7.

principles. Whether as the heir to Nasser, an Islamic reformer, or a Third World revolutionary, this school of thought holds that Qaddafi designs his policy towards the achievement of one of them.<sup>23</sup>

To rather easily deconstruct this line of thinking Deeb provides the example of Libya's post-1978 support of non-Muslim Ethiopia against Muslim Sudan.<sup>24</sup> She also uses the example of the Iran-Iraq War, questioning how Qaddafi, as a committed pan-Arabist, supported Iran in its war against Iraq.<sup>25</sup> Upon further scrutiny of the ideological approach, numerous exceptions appear and the concept's utility fades quickly.

Thus, it is clear that the author feels there is a need for another type of analysis of Libyan policy. Deeb contends that Libya is not only a very weak state in terms of manpower (the population is less than four million in 1989), but there is a high degree of perceived threat.<sup>26</sup> Otman and Karlberg state, "In the Libyan case, its relatively small population, huge geographical area and desirable hydrocarbon assets made it, in security terms, particularly vulnerable."<sup>27</sup> Thus, Deeb intends to examine Libya and Qaddafi not as many others have done, but as a small, weak state dealing with problems very similar to, if not worse than, those facing other small, weak states.<sup>28</sup> She asserts that Libya's core interests are twofold: the preservation of its territorial integrity from encroachment by its neighbors and the survival of the Qaddafi regime.<sup>29</sup> In order to answer her original question about Libya's main policy objectives since Qaddafi's ascension to power, the author then presents a Libyan-specific model.

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<sup>23</sup> Ibid., 8.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid., 15.

<sup>27</sup> Otman and Karlberg, *The Libyan Economy*, 29.

<sup>28</sup> Deeb, *Libya's Foreign Policy in North Africa*, 4.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid., 12.

As a theoretical basis for this model, Deeb chooses a neorealist approach, specifically that of Waltz.<sup>30</sup> The author states that she, like Waltz, accepts the state as the unit of analysis.<sup>31</sup> The author also argues that there exist dual balance of power systems, a global one and a regional one.<sup>32</sup> Indeed, Libya's interactions with its North African neighbors in a regional balance of power contest are the focus of her book.

Further on in her introduction, the author defends her choice of neorealism as her theoretical basis for the book by addressing some of the critiques of neorealism. In response to the claim that ideology is unaccounted for in neorealism, Deeb affords a place for it. For her, ideology serves as a tool useful to Qaddafi "to explain events and policies, outline the final objective of those policies, justify the choice of friend and foe, and legitimize Qadhdhafi's domestic and regional authority."<sup>33</sup>

She next addresses the role of domestic factors in Libyan policymaking as well as in her model. While acknowledging the existence of a myriad of domestic institutions under Qaddafi, she wholly discounts their importance:

Under Qadhdhafi, social and political groups and organizations have not been permitted to hold or express views different from those of the Libyan leadership...It would be fruitless therefore to try to incorporate them in the framework of this book.<sup>34</sup>

Therefore it is the highly repressive nature of the regime that allows Qaddafi freedom to act externally without consideration for domestic events and effects from his policy. An

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<sup>30</sup> Ibid., 1.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid., 2.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid., 5.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

addendum to this is Deeb here equates and makes interchangeable Qaddafi and Libya as one, unitary actor.

It is significant to note here that Waltz himself claims that neorealism is not a theory of foreign policy for individual states.<sup>35</sup> However, there are those that believe that neorealism can account for some of a state's motives and pursuit of security.<sup>36</sup> Deeb, in utilizing neorealism to find these motives for Qaddafi's Libya, falls into this latter category.

With this theoretical underpinning, Deeb constructs her model for Qaddafi's policies. The model is a five-level pyramid where every level has a group of countries paired with specific policies.<sup>37</sup> The top level of the pyramid is North Africa, where policy is primarily determined by national interest. The second level is the Arab world, where policy is determined by Arab nationalist ideology. The third level is the Islamic world, where Islamic ideology is the major policy determinant. The fourth level is the Third World, where policy is largely formulated according to Qaddafi's "revolutionary socialism." The fifth level consists of the industrialized countries (i.e. Europe, the United States, the Soviet Union), where policy is a combination of pragmatism and ideological fervor.<sup>38</sup> Thus, as one progresses down the pyramid, "the content of Qadhafi's policy appears more diffuse and more ideological."<sup>39</sup> Accordingly, the higher up the pyramid, the closer the issue is to Libyan core interests, and the more rational and pragmatic Qaddafi becomes in his response.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> Shibley Telhami, "Kenneth Waltz, Neorealism, and Foreign Policy," *Security Studies*, Sep 2010: 158.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, 163.

<sup>37</sup> Deeb, *Libya's Foreign Policy in North Africa*, 8.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, 8-9.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, 8.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, 9.

In this first chapter, Deeb presents her pyramidal model based on Waltz's principles as a means of taking a rational approach to analyzing Libyan foreign policy.

## CHAPTER III

### DEEB'S MODEL IN THE 1970s AND 1980s

In this next section, I will provide several examples to demonstrate how Deeb's model was more successful as a means of analysis than others in the 1970s and 1980s.

The first period Deeb addresses is that immediately following the Revolutionary Command Council coup in September of 1969. After an initial 15-day news blackout, the newly self-promoted Colonel Muammar Qaddafi emerged as the leader of the group of young officers. Labeling the overthrow not a coup, but a revolution, he called for radical change;<sup>41</sup> one of his first orders was to make all road signs to Arabic-only.<sup>42</sup> The RCC also issued a decree requiring all foreign banks to have 51% of their shares owned by the Libyan government.<sup>43</sup>

These strong nationalistic maneuvers were attempts by the new leaders to legitimize the regime and secure it from possible countercoups. This was similarly reflected in Libya's foreign policy:

To guard against countercoups, the regime must establish legitimacy and credibility on a basis other than the mere monopoly of force; and to deter external intervention, the regime must gain swift recognition by the regional system of states to which it belongs.<sup>44</sup>

It was during this period that Libya took part in a number of unsuccessful unification and merger attempts as a means of consolidating its security.

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<sup>41</sup> Dirk Vandewalle, *A History of Modern Libya*, Second Edition (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 85.

<sup>42</sup> Ronald Bruce St. John, "The Ideology of Mu'ammār al-Qadhafi: Theory and Practice," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 15, no. 4 (1983): 474.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, 474-475.

<sup>44</sup> Deeb, *Libya's Foreign Policy in North Africa*, 71.

One of the more notable early policy actions taken by Qaddafi was his expulsion of American and British forces from Wheelus and Al-Adem airbases. Their presence had become wildly unpopular in Libya, and this was an easy way for the new regime to earn legitimacy.<sup>45</sup> However, this also meant sacrificing Libya's traditional international protectors. To make up for this loss, Qaddafi turned to the regional power, Egypt, to make up for what he lost in terms of external security.<sup>46</sup>

In this context, it is surprising then that Qaddafi was not the most fervent supporter of the creation of the Federation of Arab Republics between Egypt, Sudan, Syria, and Libya between 1969 and 1972. It is in this first instance of unity for the new Libyan regime that Deeb's model proves more valuable than those based on ideological grounds. Despite having one of the most notable works on the early period of Qaddafi's rule, First misqualifies this unity project. She asserts that the reasoning behind Qaddafi's involvement in this first union attempt is not a search for a regional ally, but, rather, is his quest for pan-Arab unity. She states,

To Arab nationalists of Qaddafi's cast of thinking, the Arab world...is a single homogenous whole...Since every setback to the Arab cause arose from Arab disunity, the Arab world had to be united; from the kernel of an enduring Arab union among like regimes.<sup>47</sup>

First further emphasizes how Libya was the driving force behind the unification project.<sup>48</sup>

In reality, it was Sadat who was most interested in the FAR, not Qaddafi.<sup>49</sup>

Qaddafi actually held reservations about joining the FAR, a fact that does not conform to

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<sup>45</sup> Charles O. Cecil, "The Determinants of Libyan Foreign Policy," *Middle East Journal* 19, no. 1 (Winter 1965): 26.

<sup>46</sup> Deeb, *Libya's Foreign Policy in North Africa*, 71.

<sup>47</sup> Ruth First, *Libya: The Elusive Revolution* (Baltimore, MD: Penguin Books, 1974), 214.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, 214.

First's idea of the leader as striving for pan-Arab unity at all costs. The reason behind Qaddafi's hesitancy further belies First's characterization: "What was important to Qadhafi was a close alliance to Egypt, not a larger union of Arab states in which Libya would play an insignificant role."<sup>50</sup>

This early unification attempt is an excellent case where Deeb's model provides a more accurate depiction of Libyan policy than similar efforts based on assumptions that Qaddafi is acting on ideology, not rationality.

From 1977 to 1981 Qaddafi made five different attempts at alliances, mergers, and unifications. These cases offer more instances where Deeb's analysis is more useful than those of the ideological school of thought.

Burgat is an adherent to this school of thought on Qaddafi. Writing on these unity projects, he states, "Belonging to the Arab nation implies the obligation to bring about its reunification by every possible means. Qadhafi's political practice – domestically and internationally – is profoundly influenced by this imperative."<sup>51</sup> He continues on to expound on Qaddafi's motivations: "Here indeed is the heart of the Qadhafian doctrine: Maghrebine unity is only a transitional phase in an ongoing process of regional unification."<sup>52</sup> Deeb proceeds to show that this "doctrine" in fact plays no role in prompting Qaddafi to pursue these mergers. Rather, Deeb gives an accurate portrayal of the reasons behind these schemes using a balance of power argument.

The first of these was an alliance in December 1977 between Libya, the PLO, Algeria, the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen, and Syria named the Steadfastness

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<sup>49</sup> Deeb, *Libya's Foreign Policy in North Africa*, 74.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, 75.

<sup>51</sup> François Burgat, "Qadhafi's 'Unitary' Doctrine. Theory and Practice," in *The Green and the Black: Qadhafi's Policies in Africa* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1988), 21.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, 20-21.

and Confrontation Front. The foremost goal of this alliance was to alienate Egypt.<sup>53</sup>

That summer, Egypt had launched a cross-border attack on Libya in order to destroy threatening Soviet radar installations.<sup>54</sup> The conflict may have continued if Algerian President Houari Boumedienne had not flown to Cairo to threaten Sadat with the implementation of the Libya-Algerian Hassi Mess'oud defense pact from 1975.<sup>55</sup>

More importantly, Sadat had made his historic visit to Jerusalem in November of that year, and this alliance was Qaddafi's vehicle to capitalize on it. Deeb states:

Libya's rationale was that a politically undermined Egypt would be too weak regionally to undertake any more attacks against Libya's borders. An Arab consensus would prevail to prevent an outcast Egypt from attacking one of its own members.<sup>56</sup>

It is clear in this instance that the motivation behind the Steadfastness and Confrontation Front was not Qaddafi's commitment to pan-Arab unification, but instead a balance of power calculation to diminish Egypt's regional hegemony.

Another example that greatly discredits the ideological school of thought is Qaddafi's policy towards the various factions in Chad during this period. There are a multitude of ideological explanations for Qaddafi's seemingly constant involvement in his southern neighbor. Some argue that Qaddafi coveted Chad as the cornerstone for a greater Islamic State across the Sahel.<sup>57</sup> Zartman considers Libyan interest in Chad to be ideological as well, but on revolutionary, not Islamic grounds:

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<sup>53</sup> Deeb, *Libya's Foreign Policy in North Africa*, 122.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid.

<sup>55</sup> John Cooley, *Libyan Sandstorm* (New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1982), 122.

<sup>56</sup> Deeb, *Libya's Foreign Policy in North Africa*, 122.

<sup>57</sup> Oye Ogunbadejo, "Qaddafi's North African Design," *International Security* 8, no. 1 (Summer 1983): 161.

Qaddafi's Libya sees itself as a revolutionary movement rather than simply a territorial state. It has therefore sought to fill any neighboring vacuum that it could find...Libya has claimed and occupied the Aouzou strip of northern Chad since 1973, and it extended its protection over most of the rest of the country in 1980 and 1981, when it signed a unification agreement with the Chad it occupied.<sup>58</sup>

Deeb contends that neither of these analyses is correct, arguing that again it was rational calculations behind Qaddafi's involvement in Chad.

The border between Chad and Libya is vast and nearly ungovernable. Furthermore, due to overlapping treaties by the colonial powers in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, the dispute over the Aouzou Strip, claimed by both Libya and Chad, was only settled by the International Court of Justice in 1994.<sup>59</sup> Qaddafi regarded this border of immense strategic importance: "Libya argued that 'Chad's security is linked to Libyan security'. Qadhdhafi's spokesmen stressed that 'events in Chad have direct bearing on us because of our undeniable closeness to the country'."<sup>60</sup> The considerations for Qaddafi in Chad were not Arab, Islamic, or anti-colonial, but strategic:

Chad is the soft underbelly of Egypt. The Libyan presence in Chad had thus a double function – one offensive and one defense. Chad is an ideal stepping stone for infiltrating and destabilizing Sudan and Egypt, and at the same time a Libyan presence in Chad prevents it from becoming a base of operations for the enemies of Qadhdhafi's régime.<sup>61</sup>

Thus, the true motivations behind Qaddafi's support for the southern Christian insurgents against the Arab Muslim northerners in Chad become clearer. Qaddafi believed he could

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<sup>58</sup> I. William Zartman, "Foreign Relations of North Africa," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 489 (January 1987): 20.

<sup>59</sup> Ronen, *Qaddafi's Libya in World Politics*, 173.

<sup>60</sup> Benyamin Neuberger, *Involvement, Invasion, and Withdrawal: Qadhdhafi's Libya and Chad, 1969-1981* (Tel Aviv: Shiloah Center for Middle Eastern and African Studies, Tel-Aviv University, 1982), 52.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, 60.

not afford not to topple the recalcitrant government of Goukouni Ouedeye and Hissene Habre. Again, Deeb's model is able to account for Libyan policies in a case where ideological approaches flounder.

A final notable example that highlights the deficiencies of the ideological approach is the Libyan-Moroccan agreement of 1984. The announced merger from the Oujda Treaty seems ostensibly puzzling. Indeed, the fact that ideological opposites such as King Hassan II of Morocco and Qaddafi could agree to unify their two countries is even described by some as "bizarre."<sup>62</sup> However, looking beyond mere ideology, one is able to discern the clear geopolitical considerations that drove this agreement.

Libya had become more isolated regionally and globally in the early 1980s. Qaddafi had been denied to be the chair of the Organization of African Unity meeting in June 1983.<sup>63</sup> Later in 1983, Libya was refused participation in Algeria's Treaty of Concord and Friendship with Mauritania and Tunisia due to border disputes and Algeria's disapproval of Libyan involvement in Chad.<sup>64</sup> Qaddafi as well as King Hassan of Morocco immediately regarded this treaty as an Algerian attempt to isolate them regionally.<sup>66</sup>

The two leaders reacted with a warming in bilateral relations. Qaddafi promised to withdraw his support for the POLISARIO<sup>67</sup> and Morocco provided verbal cover for

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<sup>62</sup> Elvira Sanchez Mateos, "Libya's Return to the International Scene," *Mediterranean Politics* 10, no. 3 (November 2005): 440.

<sup>63</sup> Ronald Bruce St. John, *Libya: Continuity and Change* (Routledge, 2013), 123.

<sup>64</sup> Mary-Jane Deeb, "Inter-Maghribi Relations Since 1969: A Study of the Modalities of Unions and Mergers," *The Middle East Journal* 43, no. 1 (Winter 1989): 29.

<sup>65</sup> Richard B Parker, "Appointment in Oujda," *Foreign Affairs* 63, no. 005 (1985): 1105.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*, 1107.

<sup>67</sup> Deeb, *Libya's Foreign Policy in North Africa*, 150.

Libya's actions in Chad.<sup>68</sup> The rapprochement between the two culminated in the August 1984 announcement of plans to unify the two countries in what was to be called the Arab-African Union or the Oujda Treaty.<sup>69</sup> The plan was to be quite mutually beneficial:

At a stroke, Qaddafi's isolation ended; he had acquired an impressive ally and, if the remarks of various Moroccan officials are to be taken seriously, the paper alliance is turning toward a union of some substance.<sup>70</sup>

Qaddafi and Hassan hoped this "counteralliance"<sup>71</sup> would "outflank" Algeria's Treaty of Concord and Friendship.<sup>72</sup> In addition to aiding Morocco's stagnant economy,<sup>73</sup> the agreement "had detached Libya from the Algerian embrace and reduced the threat from the continuing war in the Western Sahara."<sup>74</sup> Therefore, it is readily apparent that this merger was mutually beneficial to Qaddafi and King Hassan at this specific point in the North African context.

It also is no surprise that once circumstances changed for one or both of the parties, the agreement would be nullified. This is precisely what happened in August 1986 when Morocco announced its cancellation of the treaty. Morocco's position in the Western Sahara had dramatically improved in the past year, and Libya's involvement in terrorism was drawing unwanted American pressure on Morocco to abrogate the federation. With the costs now outweighing the benefits, King Hassan II did exactly

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<sup>68</sup> Mark Tessler, "Libya in the Maghreb: The Union with Morocco and Related Developments," in *The Green and the Black: Qadhafi's Policies in Africa*, 73-105 (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1988), 88.

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*, 74.

<sup>70</sup> Parker, "Appointment in Oujda," 1095.

<sup>71</sup> Zartman, "Foreign Relations of North Africa," 18.

<sup>72</sup> Tessler, "Libya in the Maghreb," 88.

<sup>73</sup> Deeb, *Libya's Foreign Policy in North Africa*, 152.

<sup>74</sup> George Joffé, "Libya's Saharan Destiny," *The Journal of North African Studies*, January 2007, 610.

that.<sup>75</sup> On the other hand, Libya still very much needed the treaty to prevent its near-total international isolation, especially so following the American bombing raids on Tripoli and Benghazi in April 1986.<sup>76</sup>

The Oujda Treaty is another case where ideological determinations fail to explain Libyan policy. Qaddafi and King Hassan were ideological opposites. Yet the treaty between the two lasted for two years, and, in the context of North Africa in 1984, it benefited both partners. As has been illustrated, Deeb's approach and model produce a greater understanding of Libyan policy.

In her book, Deeb adopts a neorealist approach to Libya's Qaddafi and constructs a pyramidal model of analysis for his policies. I have shown in this section that her model is far more adept at ascertaining the real motivations behind Libyan policy in North Africa than other approaches that assume Qaddafi is merely motivated by his ideologies.

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<sup>75</sup> Deeb, "Inter-Maghribi Relations Since 1969," 31.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE MODEL LOSES EFFICACY

In this next section, I will highlight how Deeb's model fails to explain Libyan policy when applied to the decades after the publishing of her book, the 1990s and 2000s. I will do so by discussing how Qaddafi's policies no longer fit her pyramid as a result of a shift in the threats to Libya and Qaddafi's regime in these decades.

The first of the two major threats was that of militant Islamist movements across North Africa beginning in the late 1980s. This first wave of militant Islamism had thrown both Algeria and Egypt into chaos and had begun to spill over into Libya. Fueling this was a sharp decline in oil revenues in the mid-1980s that resulted in a deterioration of the regime's distribution network as well as a slide in the standard of living.<sup>77</sup> There were several disturbances in January 1989 at Tripoli University in addition to clashes between worshippers and members of the Revolutionary Committees at several mosques across the city.<sup>78</sup>

Qaddafi responded with harsh crackdowns involving widespread arrests and secret executions.<sup>79</sup> In the fall of 1989, Qaddafi, in his hyperbolic manner, claimed the militant Islamists to be "more dangerous than cancer and AIDS, even more than war with the Israelis or the Americans."<sup>80</sup>

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<sup>77</sup> Yehudit Ronen, "Qadhafi and Militant Islamism: Unprecedented Conflict," *Middle Eastern Studies*, Sep 2010: 2.

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*, 3.

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*, 4.

<sup>80</sup> "Tripoli TV, 7 April, Daily Report," *Middle East and Africa (DR)* (1989), quoted in Yehudit Ronen, "Qadhafi and Militant Islamism: Unprecedented Conflict," *Middle Eastern Studies*, Sep 2010: 4.

More significantly, this regional threat provoked a coordinated, regional response. This response manifested in the form of the Arab Maghreb Union: “Islamic fundamentalism is now perceived as the primary threat to all the regimes in power in the Maghrib, and the leaders have closed ranks to face the mounting confrontation.”<sup>81</sup>

However, the period of relative stability following the formation of the AMU in Libya lasted only for a few years. The emergence of the Libyan Islamic Fighting Group in 1995 signaled a return of Islamist militancy in the country. That summer a number of clashes erupted between Libyan security forces and Islamists in and around Benghazi.<sup>82</sup> In early 1996, the LIFG actually managed to injure Qaddafi in an assassination attempt.<sup>83</sup> There was also a well-executed raid on the state arms factory in Bani Walid.<sup>84</sup> July 1996 saw the heaviest of fighting, culminating in a jailbreak of Islamist prisoners from Abu Salim prison in Tripoli.<sup>85</sup> Furthermore, Musa Kusa, one of Qaddafi’s top intelligence chiefs, narrowly escaped a planned assassination in Benghazi by the Militant Islamic Group.<sup>86</sup> The closest the militants came to assassinating Qaddafi was as the leader was traveling by land to Cairo in May 1998. Near Sidi Khalifa, east of Benghazi, gunmen ambushed Qaddafi’s convoy, killing several of his bodyguards and wounding the leader in the elbow.<sup>87</sup> The regime’s response was a brutal crackdown across Benghazi as well as threats to cut off all utility services to the region.<sup>89</sup>

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<sup>81</sup> Mary-Jane Deeb, “The Arab Maghribi Union and the Prospects for North African Unity,” in *Polity and Society in Contemporary North Africa*, 189-203 (Boulder, CO: Westview, 1993), 203.

<sup>82</sup> Ronen, “Qadhafi and Militant Islamism,” 7.

<sup>83</sup> Lisa Anderson, “Rogue Libya’s Long Road,” *Middle East Report*, no. 241 (Winter 2006): 44.

<sup>84</sup> Ronen, “Qadhafi and Militant Islamism,” 8.

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid.*, 9.

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*, 10.

<sup>87</sup> Martinez, “The Conversion of a ‘Terrorist State’,” 157.

<sup>88</sup> Ronen, “Qadhafi and Militant Islamism,” 10.

<sup>89</sup> *Ibid.*, 11.

This second wave was a greater threat to the Libyan regime than the first. Despite having been spurned by the Arab states in his ongoing battle against the Lockerbie sanctions, the Libyan response was again more regional coordination. Qaddafi aided Egypt against its own Islamist militancy by turning over several Egyptian fighters and allowing Egypt to search all Libyan-registered cars entering Egypt in early 1994.<sup>90</sup> Libya also imprisoned 1,000 Islamists involved in the Algerian Civil War,<sup>91</sup> with relations between the two countries restored in 1995.<sup>92</sup> Qaddafi further extradited 600 Algerian Islamists from Libyan prisons to Algeria for trial.<sup>93</sup>

Thus, one can see here two major contradictions to Deeb's model in the 1990s. The first of these is regarding threats to Libya's core interests of territorial integrity and regime security. Deeb originally placed North African states at the top of her model as they consistently posed the greatest threat to Libya and Qaddafi in the 1970s and 1980s. However, in the 1990s the threat of militant Islam has clearly usurped that of Libya's neighboring states.

Not only were the North African states replaced as the main threat to Libya, but also the threat of militant Islamism actually promoted cooperation between the neighboring regimes contrary to Deeb's model. The Arab Maghreb Union is the premier example, signaling a clear end of the decades-long pattern of bloc formation and balance of power.<sup>94</sup> There were also numerous instances of bilateral cooperation between Libya and its neighbors to combat the Islamist threat. Thus, it is clear that Deeb's model cannot

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<sup>90</sup> Ronen, *Qaddafi's Libya*, 127.

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*, 126.

<sup>92</sup> Anderson, "Rogue Libya's Long Road," 45.

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>94</sup> Melanie Cammett, "Defensive Integration and Late Developers: The Gulf Cooperation Council and the Arab Maghreb Union," *Global Governance* 5, no. 3 (July-September 1999): 392.

account for this new type of threat and, therefore, it cannot account for the regional reaction, the shift from bloc formation to cooperation in the 1990s.

Even more threatening to Libya's core interests than militant Islamists was the sanctions regime imposed on the country as a result of the Lockerbie bombing. The United States had originally designated Libya a state sponsor of terrorism in 1979 and had subsequently introduced several unilateral sanctions against Qaddafi throughout the 1980s.<sup>95</sup> It was in this era that President Ronald Reagan famously anointed Qaddafi the "mad dog."<sup>96</sup>

However, the act that would truly turn the international community against Libya was the Lockerbie bombing. On December 21, 1988, a bomb exploded onboard Pan Am Flight 103 en route to New York killing 270 people, including 11 on the ground in Lockerbie, Scotland. Three years later, the United States and Britain jointly accused Libya of perpetrating the disaster.<sup>97</sup> United Nations sanctions meant to pressure Qaddafi into handing over the two Libyan suspects for trial followed soon after.<sup>98</sup> UN Security Council Resolutions 731 and 748 banned all air travel and arms sales to Libya effective April 15, 1992.<sup>99</sup> Despite renouncing terrorism, Qaddafi refused to surrender the suspects.<sup>100</sup> The Security Council responded to the noncompliance by passing Resolution 883 in December 1993. Though short of a comprehensive ban on oil sales, the resolution froze Libya's overseas assets, posing a massive economic threat to the regime.

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<sup>95</sup> Anderson, "Rogue Libya's Long Road," 43.

<sup>96</sup> Reagan, *The President's News Conference*.

<sup>97</sup> Ronen, *Qaddafi's Libya in World Politics*, 125.

<sup>98</sup> *Ibid.*, 45.

<sup>99</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>100</sup> *Ibid.*, 46.

Coupling with oil prices as low as \$10 per barrel in 1998, these measures gravely affected Libya's solvency.<sup>101</sup> Libyan revenues fell from \$22bn in 1986 to just \$8bn in 1996.<sup>102</sup> The cost to the country was massive as estimates claim the sanctions deprived the economy of between \$18 billion and \$33 billion.<sup>103</sup>

Beyond the numbers, the effects of the sanctions became quite visible in Libya. Inflation caused a severe drop in the standard of living across the country, and a desperate unemployment crisis developed.<sup>104</sup> Not only did the sanctions and their effects fuel the cause of the militant Islamist opponents of Qaddafi, but threats to the regime began appearing from within his own armed forces as well. A coup attempt in the army camps at Misrata and Bani Walid in October 1993 was ultimately unsuccessful, but shocking nonetheless. Carried out by officers from the Warfalla tribe, one close to Qaddafi's own Qadhadhfa, the uprising evinces just how perilous the sanctions had become.<sup>105</sup>

Thus, Qaddafi's priority became the lifting of the sanctions. Finding his Arab states unwilling to ignore them in this new, post-Cold War international community, Qaddafi made the calculation to turn to Sub-Saharan Africa to break them. Ronen states, "At that juncture, Qaddafi began to view Africa as a lever uniquely designed to pull Libya out of its foreign-policy swamp."<sup>106</sup> Qaddafi recognized that while this new unipolar geopolitical landscape had now focused its attention on him, it also presented him with an opportunity in Africa. African states had become less geopolitically relevant following the end of the Cold War and were no longer able to play out superpower

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<sup>101</sup> Deeb, "Qadhafi's Changed Policy," 146.

<sup>102</sup> Martinez, "The Conversion of a 'Terrorist State'," 154.

<sup>103</sup> Takeyh, "Rogue Who Came in from the Cold," 64.

<sup>104</sup> Martinez, "The Conversion of a 'Terrorist State'," 154.

<sup>105</sup> *Ibid.*, 159.

<sup>106</sup> Ronen, *Qaddafi's Libya in World Politics*, 198.

rivalries; their leaders could no longer expect foreign military interventions to maintain their regimes.<sup>107</sup> The African states were looking for partners and relevancy, and Qaddafi identified and exploited this fact.<sup>108</sup>

The main crux of Qaddafi's pivot to Africa was funding and grants in exchange for, ultimately, an end to Libyan isolation. A grant of \$6 million to Gambia resulted in the re-establishment of relations in 1994.<sup>109</sup> Similar grants of \$2 million and \$200,000 in 1996 to Niger and Mali respectively evince the nature of Qaddafi's policy.<sup>110</sup> In early 1998, Qaddafi furthered these overtures with the formation of the Community of Sahel-Saharan States or CEN-SAD with Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Niger, and Sudan.<sup>111</sup>

These efforts all culminated in success at the June 1998 Organization of African Unity summit in Burkina Faso. It was declared at the summit, which Qaddafi had helped fund to the tune of \$2 million,<sup>112</sup> that "all member states would immediately cease complying with the UN sanctions against Libya, regarding religious, humanitarian, or OAU-related Libyan flights."<sup>113</sup> Qaddafi followed by inviting African heads of state to Libya by air.<sup>114</sup> The presidents of Chad, Niger, Gambia, Eritrea, Mali, Sierra Leone, Zimbabwe, the Central African Republic, and Sudan all accepted and visited in direct

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<sup>107</sup> Asteris Huliaras, "Qadhafi's Comeback: Libya and Sub-Saharan Africa in the 1990s," *African Affairs* 100, no. 398 (January 2001): 14.

<sup>108</sup> Ronen, *Qaddafi's Libya in World Politics*, 183.

<sup>109</sup> Colin Legum, *Africa Contemporary Record: Annual Survey and Documents, 1994-96* (Africana) 25, quoted in Yehudit Ronen, *Qaddafi's Libya in World Politics* (Boulder, Colorado: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2008), 184.

<sup>110</sup> Yehudit Ronen, "Libya's Diplomatic Success in Africa: The Reemergence of Qadhafi on the International Stage," *Diplomacy & Statecraft* 13, no. 4 (2002): 62.

<sup>111</sup> Asteris Huliaras and Konstantinos Magliveras, "The End of an Affair? Libya and Sub-Saharan Africa," *The Journal of North African Studies* 16, no. 2 (2011): 171.

<sup>112</sup> "Africa Research Bulletin," March 1998, quoted in Yehudit Ronen, "Libya's Diplomatic Success in Africa: The Reemergence of Qadhafi on the International Stage," *Diplomacy & Statecraft* 13, no. 4 (2002): 67.

<sup>113</sup> Ronen, "Libya's Diplomatic Success in Africa," 66.

<sup>114</sup> *Ibid.*

contravention of the UN sanctions.<sup>115</sup> Furthermore, in September 1998, the OAU called on its members to disregard all further UN sanctions against Libya.<sup>116</sup>

From these efforts, Qaddafi realized some tangible success in the Lockerbie case in the summer of 1998. With the air travel ban being routinely broken, the U.S. and Britain compromised with Libya and allowed for the suspects to be tried in the Netherlands under Scottish law.<sup>117</sup> This was a major achievement from Qaddafi's efforts to reduce the threat posed by the sanctions.

Again, the most dangerous threat facing Libya and Qaddafi's stability was not the other North African states, but, instead, the international sanctions regime. The economic impact on Libya not only fostered Islamist violence, but also raised the prospects of general unrest and military coups d'état. As such, Deeb's pyramid not only is unable to accommodate this type of threat, but Qaddafi's response falls outside the purview of her model as well. Deeb states Qaddafi relies on his ideas of 'revolutionary socialism' when dealing with the Third World.<sup>118</sup> However, in the case of relations with Africa in the 1990s, one can clearly discern the Libyan leader's rational motives for increased coordination with Sub-Saharan Africa.

The threats of both militant Islamist violence and international sanctions are outside of the scope of Deeb's pyramidal model. In addition to these new threats is the monumental change in the international system following the end of the Cold War. Deeb's framework claims that Libyan policy towards the United States and the Soviet Union is a mixture of pragmatism and ideology. This new international context only

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<sup>115</sup> Ibid., 66-67.

<sup>116</sup> Ibid., 67.

<sup>117</sup> Ibid.

<sup>118</sup> Deeb, *Libya's Foreign Policy in North Africa*, 8-9.

makes her framework less applicable. Not only has the pyramid been inverted with North Africa ranking last among Libyan policy concerns, but it rather fails to fit the post-1991 international system altogether.<sup>119</sup>

Thus, her model largely fails to accurately portray Libyan policies of the 1990s. I will argue in the next section that the flaw lies not so much in the model, but rather is a result of the author's reliance on Waltzian neorealist principles in constructing it, principles which lose efficacy when applied to the Third World.

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<sup>119</sup> John P. Entelis, "Libya and Its North African Policy," in *Libya since 1969: Qadhafi's Revolution Revisited*, ed. Dirk Vandewalle, 173-189 (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 173.

## CHAPTER V

### ALTERNATIVES TO WALTZ IN THE THIRD WORLD

Having proven that Deeb's pyramid model does not accurately portray Libyan policy in the 1990s and 2000s, I will now discuss the reasons behind this failure. I argue that Deeb's adoption of Waltz's principles in constructing the model is the cause. This section will be not so much a further deconstruction of her model as it will be an analysis of the efficacy of Waltz in the Libyan context. To do so, I will present alternatives to Waltz while remaining in the neorealist canon that will allow for a better analysis of Libyan policy.

As illustrated, the two most dangerous threats to Libya in the 1990s and 2000s were militant Islamism and international sanctions. Not only could Deeb's model not account for these threats, but it could not account for how these threats were truly dangerous to the regime. The risk of Libyan sovereignty being violated or Qaddafi being overthrown by an outside invasion was quite low in these decades. Rather, the risk of internal instability was markedly raised by these threats. However, Deeb discounts the importance of internal factors when establishing her theoretical foundation.<sup>120</sup> She does so in accordance with Waltzian neorealism, which, itself, does not account for internal factors. Moreover, she wholly assumes Waltz's concept of the state being the unit of analysis.<sup>121</sup> I will argue that it is these tenets of neorealism that are the true cause of the inadequacies in Deeb's model.

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<sup>120</sup> Deeb, *Libya's Foreign Policy in North Africa*, 5.

<sup>121</sup> *Ibid.*, 3.

Ayoob, in presenting what he names “subaltern realism,” provides a critique of these principles. Ayoob’s description of the domestic stability of modern Third World states is very much applicable to Libya. He writes, “State structures in the Third World in the present form do not enjoy ‘unconditional legitimacy’ and are *weak as states*,” despite being externally strong powers.<sup>122</sup> This is quite apt for Libya; Qaddafi, whilst at one point possessing the highest ratio of weaponry to manpower in the world, had to constantly reaffirm his legitimacy, sometimes through seemingly odd policy choices.<sup>123</sup> Qaddafi’s actions in such cases as the Bulgarian nurse episode in 2004 and his call for jihad against Switzerland in 2010 become much clearer when viewed through the lens of domestic legitimacy.<sup>124</sup>

Asserting that neorealism fails to explain why states behave the way they do,<sup>125</sup> he challenges the traditional notion that security is always external.<sup>126</sup> This notion is only applicable in a Western context.<sup>127</sup> Rather, there is most often in the Third World a combination of external and internal threats facing the ruling regimes, a fact which is critically beyond the scope of neorealism.<sup>128</sup> Furthermore, the case is that most often, on balance, the internal threats to Third World regimes are far more dangerous than the external.<sup>129</sup>

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<sup>122</sup> Mohammed Ayoob, “Security in the Third World: The Worm about to Turn?,” *International Affairs (Royal Institute of International Affairs 1944-)* 60, no. 1 (Winter 1983-1984): 44.

<sup>123</sup> Ronald Bruce St. John, “Redefining the Libyan Revolution: the Changing Ideology of Muammar al-Qaddafi,” *The Journal of North African Studies* 13, no. 1 (Jan 2008): 96.

<sup>124</sup> Alison Pargeter, “The Libyan-Swiss Crisis: A Lesson in Libyan Foreign Policy,” *The International Spectator: Italian Journal of International Affairs*, September 2010: 111.

<sup>125</sup> Ayoob, “Inequality and Theorizing in International Relations,” 33.

<sup>126</sup> *Ibid.*, 46.

<sup>127</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>128</sup> *Ibid.*, 35.

<sup>129</sup> *Ibid.*, 43.

This concept of Third World regimes facing both external and internal threats fits the realities of Libya in the 1990s and 2000s far better than does Waltz. Indeed, the two greatest threats, as demonstrated above, to Qaddafi's survival in these decades were internal.

Ayoob also questions the validity of Waltz's assumption of the state as the unit of analysis: "The security of units below the level of the state has rarely, if ever, been an important point at issue in Western discussions and analyses of the concept of security."<sup>130</sup> Thus, the interests of the ruling regime can diverge from the interests of the state:

However, in the case of most Third World states, the core values of the regime—with self-preservation at the core of the core—are often at extreme variance with the core values cherished by large segments of the population over which they rule.<sup>131</sup>

As I will demonstrate, this concept will become more relevant to the Libyan case under David's theory of omnibalancing.

Omnibalancing, as presented by David, is another departure from Waltzian neorealism. While still accepting the main tenet that threats will be resisted, David finds that the concept of balance of power largely founders in a Third World.<sup>132</sup> His reasons echo those of Ayoob: "Balance of power theory is flawed in its application to the Third World because it ignores internal threats; that is, it overlooks the most likely source of challenge to the leadership of Third World states."<sup>133</sup>

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<sup>130</sup> Ibid., 42.

<sup>131</sup> Ibid., 46.

<sup>132</sup> Steven R. David, "Explaining Third World Alignment," *World Politics* 43, no. 02 (January 1991): 234.

<sup>133</sup> Ibid., 244.

His solution to this is to detach the leadership of the state from the state as the unit of analysis. Third World leaders must account for all threats, external and internal, in their policymaking. He labels this process omnibalancing: “Omnibalancing assumes instead that the decision maker asks, ‘How does this policy affect the probability *of my* remaining in power?’”<sup>134</sup> I have already demonstrated how the internal threats overtook the external in Libya in the 1990s, and there are several instances of Qaddafi acting in the interest of his own survival rather than the interest of the Libyan state.

One of the more prominent instances of this type was the extradition of the Lockerbie suspects for trial in the Netherlands in April 1999. That same year, Qaddafi paid compensation for both the death of Yvonne Fletcher, a British policewoman who was killed by gunfire originating from the Libyan Embassy in 1984,<sup>135</sup> and the UTA Flight 772 bombing.<sup>136</sup> Indeed, it initially seems rather perplexing why Qaddafi would suddenly acquiesce to these three requirements for the lifting of the U.N. sanctions after many years of blatant refusal.<sup>137</sup>

Upon deeper analysis, there are indeed two very good reasons explaining this curious timing, both of which indicate Qaddafi is acting in his own interest rather than that of the state in this instance. The first reason is that the leader had silenced most of his domestic opposition by 1999, so the political cost of handing over these suspects was

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<sup>134</sup> Ibid., 238.

<sup>135</sup> Caroline Gammell, *Female Officers Injured in the Line of Duty*, Nov 2, 2007, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/1568135/Female-officers-injured-in-the-line-of-duty.html> (accessed Apr 13, 2015).

<sup>136</sup> Deeb, “Qadhafi’s Changed Policy,” 146.

<sup>137</sup> Ibid.

lessened.<sup>138</sup> The second reason is the economic deterioration of Libya due to the sharp decline in oil prices.<sup>139</sup> Deeb states,

Qadhafi, therefore, no longer feared the domestic political repercussions of handing over the two suspects. He did, however, fear the repercussions of the rapidly deteriorating economic situation and needed to open up the system in order to attract foreign capital.<sup>140</sup>

Qaddafi explicitly waited until 1999 to hand over the suspects, because only in 1999 was there the perfect combination of low domestic political costs and the opportunity for much-needed economic rehabilitation. With Qaddafi acting in his own interest, rather than in the interest of Libya, this is a clear case of David's concept of discerning between state interest and the interests of the leader of the state.

Another part of David's theory is that a Third World leader will change his international alignment in order to counter all threats.<sup>141</sup> A ready example of that is Qaddafi's bandwagoning onto the United States' War on Terror campaign following 9/11.

In the late 1990s, Libya began attempting to merge its own Islamist violence issues with those of the United States, claiming that they were facing a common enemy. Indeed, the two countries engaged in secret talks as early as 1999, agreeing to some cooperation on fighting al-Qaeda.<sup>142</sup> The negotiations picked up speed after the election of George Bush and following the conclusion of the Lockerbie trial in January 2001.<sup>143</sup>

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<sup>138</sup> Ibid.

<sup>139</sup> Ibid.

<sup>140</sup> Ibid.

<sup>141</sup> David, "Explaining Third World Alignment," 233.

<sup>142</sup> Ronald Bruce St. John, "Libya and the United States: A Faustian Pact?," *Middle East Policy* 15, no. 1 (2008): 134.

<sup>143</sup> Ibid., 135.

The real opening for Libya on this front came in the form of the 9/11 attacks. Musa Kusa reportedly met with CIA officials in Europe on September 12, offering Libya's condolences as well as help in the War on Terror in the form of lists of known Libyan Islamists.<sup>144</sup><sup>145</sup> An added benefit to this bandwagoning was that it prevented Libya from being labeled a terrorist state itself.<sup>146</sup> Shortly thereafter, an intelligence-sharing program began between the British and American services and their Libyan counterparts.<sup>147</sup> This coordination culminated in 2003 with CIA operatives actually meeting with Qaddafi himself in Tripoli.<sup>148</sup> Subsequently in 2004, Qaddafi reaped the benefits from this change of policy when the United States lifted its travel ban as well as most of the unilateral sanctions on Libya.<sup>149</sup>

By aligning with the United States in its War on Terror, Qaddafi was able to decrease two internal threats, militant Islamists and the economic decline from the sanctions. This is a clear example of David's omnibalancing. Moreover, Waltz is unable to explain Qaddafi's actions in both of these cases, as they are responses to internal threats to the leader's survival, rather than external threats to the state's sovereignty.

Mufti, synthesizing David and Stephen Walt's balance of threats, provides another, more effective means of analyzing Qaddafi's policies. In his book on pan-Arab unification initiatives in Syria and Iraq, Mufti presents a historicized approach to the theories of neorealism and omnibalancing. Arguing that unification projects are more alignments of elites across state borders than alliances of states, he, like Ayoob and David,

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<sup>144</sup> Lisa Anderson, interview by Bernard Gwertzman, *Libyan Expert: Qaddafi, Desperate to End Libya's Isolation, Sends a 'Gift' to President Bush*, (December 22, 2003), 2.

<sup>145</sup> Steven Stottlemire, "Libya and the International System: Retracing the Aftermath of the Lockerbie Bombing," *Digest of Middle East Studies* 20, no. 1 (2011): 59.

<sup>146</sup> *Ibid.*, 58.

<sup>147</sup> St. John, "Libya and the United States," 135.

<sup>148</sup> Anderson, "Rogue Libya's Long Road," 46.

<sup>149</sup> *Ibid.*

critiques the concept of the state as the unitary actor in international politics.<sup>150</sup> Mufti continues on to contend that David's omnibalancing is far better suited for explaining Arab unionism than Walt's neorealism.<sup>151</sup>

The most relevant part of Mufti's work for the Libyan case is his historicization of International Relations theory. Mufti, in tracing the evolution of "stateness," describes how the elites in Iraq and Syria in the 1950s and 1960s felt the need for unification projects out of their own perceived domestic frailty.<sup>152</sup> This is the period when David's omnibalancing is most relevant in the case of Iraq and Syria.<sup>153</sup> However, as the elites developed stronger state institutions in the following decades, the states themselves became stronger. As stronger states, their foreign policy changed to "one aimed at securing and enhancing national sovereignty and thus one that conforms more and more closely to the behavior predicted by neorealists."<sup>154</sup> Thus, Mufti links the development of a state's foreign policy actions to the development of domestic institutions.<sup>155</sup>

This historicized approach is very relevant for Libya under Qaddafi. While Mufti shows how Iraq and Syria went from internally weak states to internally stronger states, I contend that Libya was strongest as a state during the 1970s and 1980s. In the following decades, Libya was domestically far weaker, to the point of Qaddafi's overthrow in 2011.

At the time of the coup that brought Qaddafi to power in 1969, Libya had progressed little beyond where it began as a country in 1951, as three largely independent

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<sup>150</sup> Malik Mufti, *Sovereign Creations: Pan-Arabism and Political Order in Syria and Iraq* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1996), 5.

<sup>151</sup> *Ibid.*, 8.

<sup>152</sup> *Ibid.*, 8-9.

<sup>153</sup> *Ibid.*, 9.

<sup>154</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>155</sup> *Ibid.*

territories united only by a loose federal system.<sup>156</sup> The monarchy had done little in the way of developing state institutions during its 18 years of rule. King Idris banned political parties early on and had created no real national state apparatus.<sup>157</sup> Anderson summarizes the situation:

Unlike Tunisia's patronage, however, that of Libya did not supplement an orderly, continuous administration and an emerging domestic class structure, for Libya had neither a stable public bureaucracy nor an integrated nationwide social structure. The legacies of the Italian regime and the rentier oil economy were to mean that the government neither reflected nor developed the ability—military or administrative—to make demands upon its citizenry.<sup>158</sup>

This low level of state development would severely restrict Qaddafi's options for state building upon his seizing power.

Despite this, Qaddafi was able to create a very different type of state that became significantly stronger than the monarchy that preceded it. Almost immediately after taking power, Qaddafi began several successive popular mobilization efforts. He announced the creation of the Popular Congresses in January 1971 only to abandon the project in favor of the Arab Socialist Union, a copy of Nasser's Egyptian model, in June 1972.<sup>159</sup> However, the ASU also failed to provide the mobilization Qaddafi wanted: "Reducing the remaining power of the country's tribal chiefs had been more arduous than expected."<sup>160</sup> Qaddafi next launched in 1973 his Popular Revolution that would come to be codified in *The Green Book*.

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<sup>156</sup> Lisa Anderson, *The State and Social Transformation in Tunisia and Libya, 1830-1980*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986), 256.

<sup>157</sup> *Ibid.*, 257.

<sup>158</sup> *Ibid.*, 259.

<sup>159</sup> Dirk Vandewalle, *A History of Modern Libya*, Second Edition (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 81, 82.

<sup>160</sup> *Ibid.*, 82-83.

Tangible results of these efforts against the private sector began appearing in the late 1970s as public sector employment ballooned to constitute three-quarters of the labor force.<sup>161</sup> Furthermore, rather than construct state institutions, Qaddafi chose to completely avoid state building: “Libya’s historical problem with state authority was resolved in principle by eliminating the state altogether.”<sup>162</sup>

Because of these policies, however, there was an increase in domestic stability, and consequently a reduction of internal threats (especially following a foiled army coup attempt in 1976).<sup>163</sup> Qaddafi’s policies severely fragmented the Libyan social structure, weakening the interests of both tribes and members of the private sector alike.<sup>164</sup> Further strengthening the regime was the distributive largesse endowed to Libya by a rapid increase in the global oil price after the Arab oil embargo of 1973:

The availability of oil revenues, by eliminating the scarcity of resources that engenders both social conflict and distinctive social and political identities, encouraged the regime to try to replace these allegiances with the acquiescence in the revolution that permitted access to goods and services.<sup>165</sup>

Oil money and the atomization of society in the 1970s provided Qaddafi with a much internally stronger Libya than the one that existed in September 1969.

This stronger state was reflected in Libya’s foreign policies. Indeed, as the Libyan state grew stronger, Libyan policy became more “state-like;” it more closely

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<sup>161</sup> Anderson, *The State and Social Transformation*, 266.

<sup>162</sup> *Ibid.*, 268.

<sup>163</sup> *Ibid.*, 263.

<sup>164</sup> *Ibid.*, 268.

<sup>165</sup> *Ibid.*, 269.

conformed to neorealism.<sup>166</sup> Thus, Deeb's model becomes quite an effective means of analyzing Libyan policy in this era.

Similarly, as the state became weaker in the 1990s and 2000s, Qaddafi's policies transform to better resemble David's omnibalancing.<sup>167</sup> Anderson is rather prophetic of this internal weakening:

Prolonged failure to develop a stable state administration not only hinders state capacity to mobilize resources domestically, a weakness whose deleterious consequences will presumably become manifest as oil revenues decline, but also inhibits formulation and implementation of development policies.<sup>168</sup>

Oil prices indeed fell sharply in the 1990s. Combined with the Lockerbie sanctions, Libya's economy rapidly deteriorated. The internal stability enjoyed during the 1980s began to break down, fueling militant Islamist violence as well as widespread social discontent. As demonstrated above, Qaddafi's policies during this period better reflect omnibalancing than Waltz, because the greatest threats to the regime were internal. Moreover, Qaddafi's actions were in the interest of his own survival over the interest of the Libyan state. Thus, Mufti's historicized approach explains why Deeb's model fits so well in the 1970s and 1980s and then fails as the Libyan state weakened in the subsequent decades.

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<sup>166</sup> Mufti, *Sovereign Creations*, 14.

<sup>167</sup> *Ibid.*, 9.

<sup>168</sup> Anderson, *The State and Social Transformation*, 274-275.

## CHAPTER VI

### CONCLUSION

In this paper I have begun with an analysis of the efficacy of Mary-Jane Deeb's pyramidal model for analyzing Libyan foreign policy. Her proposed model is in fact very successful at portraying Libyan actions during the 1970s and 1980s. Moreover, it demonstrates how Qaddafi was not purely a megalomaniacal leader, but, rather, a rational actor that made policy to counter threats.

However, the model falters in the 1990s and 2000s, as it cannot account for all of these threats. This breakdown can be attributed to Deeb's reliance on Waltzian neorealist principles. The principles take for granted the domestic stability and internal strength of a state. Therefore, as Libya had become weak as a consolidated state in the 1990s and 2000s, Deeb's model became ineffective.

Ayoob, David, and Mufti all present corollaries to Waltz that introduce a consideration for the internal nature of a state. These works are far more applicable than Waltz not only for the Libyan case, but also the Third World in general. The Third World had long been a gap in neorealism, and these authors have provided new ways to envision the Third World's perception of security.

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