

Shifting Sands:
Qaddafi's African Journey for Influence

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Introduction

On June 7, 1942, in a Bedouin tent near Sirte, Libya, Muammar Qaddafi was born to a family of the al-Qadhafa tribe, accustomed in the tribal and nomadic lifestyle of the desert region. Raised amidst the seclusion of Sirte's desert, Qaddafi received his formal education in accordance with Islamic traditions, instilling in him an ardent commitment to his faith. From an early age, he hosted aspirations to reshape his country's governance, viewing the existing regime as a hindrance to Libya's progress (BBC News, 2011)(Jewish Virtual Library, 2011). He attended the University of Libya until he decided to enroll in the military academy in 1961. At the military academy, Qaddafi was inspired by the words of Gamal Abdel Nasser and became an Arab nationalist. By the time he graduated in 1965, received additional training in the UK, he joined the Libyan army and sought out like minded officers to actualize his ideas of overthrowing the Libyan monarchy (BBC News, 2011).

The political landscape of Libya underwent a significant shift on September 1st, 1969, when Qaddafi, alongside the Free Unionist Officers, orchestrated a military coup that overthrew King Idris I, who had ruled since Libya gained independence from Italy in 1951. This coup heralded the dawn of a new era for Libya, with Qaddafi at the helm of the new government. The establishment of the Libyan Arab Republic marked the beginning of Qaddafi's ascendancy to power, as he assumed multiple roles within the administration, including Prime Minister, Minister of Defense, and Chairman of the Revolutionary Command Council (RCC). Under Qaddafi's leadership, the RCC wielded unparalleled authority, consolidating control over the nation's political and military apparatus.

Despite holding formal positions within the government, Qaddafi emerged as the ruler of Libya, exercising near-absolute power over the country's affairs. His vision for Libya's future was marked by a blend of Arab nationalism, Islamic principles, and revolutionary escapades, setting the stage for a transformative period in the nation's history. In the ensuing years, Qaddafi's leadership style and policies would shape Libya's trajectory, leaving an enduring imprint on the country, Africa, the Arab world and all its people.

Background on Qaddafi's Regime

When Qaddafi and the RCC assumed power, Libya began to transform in ways that would change its political and cultural course for decades to come and long after Qaddafi's time lapsed. The rule of Qaddafi was distinguished by several controversial policies, with a volatile relationship with the West. He worked to enhance the Libyan oil industry and continued to use the revenue to fund social programs first initiated under the Idris regime, including free education, housing, and healthcare. He is remembered for his idiosyncrasy and erratic personality, as well as his charismatic and standout leadership style. Qaddafi's Libyan regime was founded on principles of Arab nationalism, Islam, socialism, and anti-imperialism. While his leadership was characterized by military adventurism, political repression, idealism, and an oscillating foreign policy (Ruth, 1974).

He established what he called Jahamiriyya, an ostensibly stateless society governed by direct democracy through committees overseen by the people. As his leadership progressed, power made its way back to Qaddafi's firm grip; and he created a regime that too held a firm

hand in suppressing dissent within and without Libya, imprisoning and executing those who spoke against him and amassing high numbers of political prisoners throughout his reign.

Internationally, the colonel pursued an assertive foreign policy remembered for its fervent anti-Western initiatives promoting Arab nationalism or pan-African unity. He positioned himself as a champion of Africa with the wealth Libya amassed in oil—fighting against colonialism through the financial assistance to revolutionary causes across the African continent and cultivating alliances with his neighbors to establish unity against the West and Israel. His adventures time and time again landed him in political or economic turmoil--as the West retaliated against him for undermining their African interests, and Libya's regional neighbors' heads of state grew weary of his intervention in African cleavages or funding of militant groups aiming for their demise.

Qaddafi saw Africa as a means to expand Libyan influence and challenging Western hegemony, through economic integration, military intervention, and distribution of oil wealth to buy-off or buy-in supporters and opposers—he curated ambitious initiatives that rose and fell. As he underwent domestic unrest and international condemnation, Qaddafi remained committed to his goals of united Africa while maintaining a violent and repressive regime within his own borders.

This project aims to observe the way Qaddafi manipulated hard power, such as military intervention and economic integration, and soft power, such as cultural practices and rhetoric, to exert a significant influence on the regimes in the Middle East, North Africa, and sub-Saharan Africa. This work will explore his foreign and economic policies, as well as strategic methods he employed to increase the stature of Libya in the international community which will thereby

challenge the widespread notion that embraces this idea that Qaddafi's foreign policy lacked coherence and focus.

First, I will examine a selection of literature spanning Muammar Qaddafi's 42-year reign to gain insight into how scholars characterized and analyzed his foreign policy and diplomatic relationships. Following that, a brief analysis of "*The Green Book*", which ostensibly provides a foundation for understanding more than just the inner workings of Qaddafi's political mind, but his approach. I will engage with the personality of his early days of leadership which boasted with Arab nationalism and Islamization through speeches, forging of regional alliances, and merger proposal and attempts. Next, the heart of the project will consist of Qaddafi's interactions with sub-Saharan Africa, turning a keen eye to liberation movements and economic endeavors that fueled his voyage to become influential in the region. Highlighting his intervention in Chad, Liberia, and Sudan; these cases will subsequently illuminate the way he wielded hard power to gather support from African leadership and the direct and indirect ways he created a precarious legacy. Then this study will look at his use of language as a soft power tool to shape and manipulate cultural identity in the Arab world and later in the African world. I will discuss Qaddafi's relationships with the West particularly during the height of his Arab world and sub-Saharan African intervention endeavors, further analyzing how they affected each other. Lastly, the projects turn to legacy Qaddafi left on Africa, seeking to further discuss the effects of his activity on the region, whether he was successful in his journey for influence, and the sentiments he left African leaders riddled with.

A brief review of the literature

Over the span of 42 years, Qaddafi's rule in Libya prompted a prolific output of literature exploring various facets of his foreign policy, economics, politics, volatility, and ambitious vision for the Arab and African world. This cursory examination of the literature seeks to provide insight into scholars' characterization of Qaddafi's foreign policy and how academics understood his political ideologies and thought processes. Through this brief review, we aim to gain a nuanced understanding of Qaddafi's leadership and its impact on Libya, the Arab world, and the continent of Africa as a whole. This preview of information will allow a broader understanding as I progress into detail throughout the following chapters, providing a detailed account into the personality of his leadership and the complexity of his foreign policy where Africa was involved.

The literature on Qaddafi's foreign policy consistently highlights a lack of cohesion and a singular ideology guiding his approach. In *Libya's Foreign Policy in Flux* Hussein and Swart position Qaddafi as an important figure in the Middle East and North African socialism especially during the earlier years of his leadership. Qaddafi begins his regime with building his identity on the back of Arab nationalism, positioning an Arab history riddled with prestige and cultural abundance. These ambitions, argued by St. John in his book *Qaddafi's World Design*, are attributed to Qaddafi's self-determined path to take on the ideals of Arab nationalism from Egypt's Gamal Abdel Nasser (St. John, 1987). His ideology, following the death of Nasser, is inherently "*Pan-Arabism, Islamic Reformism, and a type of utopian socialism*" (Hussein and Swart 2005 pg. 360) and Qaddafi paints this vision that the region must become a united Arab

state to condemn and show strength against Israeli and Western ideals. Dirk Vandewalle, in his work titled *A History of Modern Libya*, published in 1987 further outlines how Qaddafi in his early years of rule dedicated considerable efforts to his foreign policy to promote ideas of Arab unity and socialism, calling for Arab nations to rally against the West and Israeli forces. Furthermore, his efforts, in part, failed as most of the influential leadership of Libya's neighbors viewed Qaddafi and his efforts with 'suspicion and disdain.' These reservations, Vandewalle and St. John agree, are largely due to Qaddafi's volatility in foreign policy, lack of cohesion, controversial activity in other African and Arab states, and the complexity in demographics between countries to be unified.

As the colonel's foreign policy pivots away from arab nationalism and toward African unity during the late 1980s, the literature shares how the revenue from the Libyan oil sector allowed for Qaddafi to use his financial abundance to sway opinion and curate influence in his newly shifted foreign policy focus. Adversaries and allies alike look to his knowledge in his 1975 volume of *The Green Book*, with hopes to gather insight in understanding of the n of fluctuations in his foreign policy which they repeatedly argued lacked cohesion and conciseness. In his 1997 work titled *Libya's Qaddafi: The Politics of Contradiction*, Libyan political scientist Mansour El-Kikhia suggests that Libya's foreign policy, particularly in Sub-Saharan Africa, was shaped not only by Qaddafi's "radical and opportunistic" approach but also by his temperamental personality, geography, and oil wealth. Vandewalle argues Qaddafi's charismatic leadership was the key feature in what he deemed such utopian ideologies and unrealistic politics. Qaddafi strategically allocated a significant portion of Libya's tangible and intangible assets toward his foreign policy endeavors in Africa ranging from military assistance in domestic cleavages, and economic support to African countries with heavy debt (Huliaris, 2001, pg. 17). He consistently

advocated for the liberation of African states from the grip of imperialism and colonialism, a sentiment echoed in the literature.

Despite a few exceptions, Qaddafi's approach in Sub-Saharan Africa primarily involved providing financial assistance and inserting himself into African divisions; this would be the means by which Qaddafi attempted to gather a grip on Africa (El-Kikhia, 1997).

Through this project, I immerse myself to the left of the foundational literature to delve deeper into the intricacies of Qaddafi's utilization of both hard and soft power mechanisms in pursuit of his vision of a united Africa under his leadership. Moreover, I seek to explore the ramifications of this endeavor, challenging previous held convictions of Qaddafi's activity in Africa. I am looking to understand the impact of his reach on the continent and the complex relationships he built over a 42-year reign that was instrumental in his search for influence. Thus, examining if the impact of his military and economic intervention, which he recurrently embraced, in African cleavages became obstacles in his quest to unite Africa and the Arab world. I will explore his softer tactics through culture and language which gradually created what he may have considered an African vision fair and examine the Western role in these instances—questioning the motives behind both Qaddafi and the West. A detailed look at all listed above along with a characterization of Qaddafi as a leader will allow an objective analysis of Qaddafi's success or failure for influence, and whether he himself became an impediment to the goals he set forth.

The Green Book

The Green Book, first published in English in 1977 serves not only as a political

manifesto but also as a testament to Qaddafi's unorthodox ideologies and ambitions. We see some of these ideologies and principles take shape in his foreign and economic policy through the Arab and later, African world. In the wake of decolonization, Qaddafi's *Green Book* emerged as a distinctive voice challenging prevailing norms and advocating for a radical departure from the hegemony of Western political systems and practices.

In understanding Qaddafi's foundational arguments against representative democracy and Western intervention, we gather a glimpse into his alternative vision for a more direct and egalitarian political and economic order including but not limited to the preservation of Arab culture, the condemnation of neo-colonialism, economic dependence, and Western influence in the Arab and African world.

Further, Qaddafi outlines his proposed solution to the economic problem, challenging both capitalist and socialist models—searching for a third way, Qaddafi argues against private ownership of the means of production, asserting that it inevitably leads to social inequalities. Instead, he advocates for a system of popular or communal ownership where individuals collectively control and benefit from economic resources--*Jamahiriyya*. Further, Qaddafi's thoughts and ideas around a decentralized economic structure that empowers local communities to manage their own affairs and resources, eliminating the disparities inherent in capitalist systems was dictated in the early years of his reign primarily through speeches and displayed in *the Green Book* (Qaddafi, 1971). This ideology takes shape in radical forms through Qaddafi's tenure as the leader of Libya and through his endeavors in unifying the continent of Africa. Qaddafi noticed, studied, and condemned the African dependence on Western economic support.

Qaddafi's *Green Book* emerges as a controversial and thought-provoking polemic piece that challenges the foundations of traditional political thought elicited by Western societies. The

existence of Qaddafi's work allows for understanding his action in his own government, foreign policy as it relates to the continent of Africa and the Arab world, as well as the continuity of his ideas in theory and practice. Additionally, "The Green Book" came to be the only cohesive body of work meant outline Qaddafi's political ideology, which has constantly been characterized as unpredictable and incoherent. In examining his foundational work in *The Green Book*, primarily shaped for Libya, we gather an objective perspective to understand the variation between who Qaddafi tells us o he is and his political ideologies and the way he behaves in the international community, oscillating in foreign policy and political stance.

Unity through Pan-Arabism and Islam

From the onset of his leadership of the Revolutionary Council of Libya, and his 1969 success in overthrowing King Idris I as head of Libya, Qaddafi spoke of ridding Africa and the Arab world of western imperialism and colonial practices. On June 22, 1970, as reported by the al-Bayda domestic radio service, at a rally in the Libyan capital of Tripoli to celebrate the evacuation of American military bases, Colonel Qaddafi stated Libya had only achieved political freedom, and the revolution for economic and social freedom was still ongoing. He made sure to mention the embrace of freedom, unity, and socialism, a slogan he adopted from the Arab Republic of Egypt and the new law Libya went on to embody:

"We must wage the struggle for economic freedom while politically free and also free from reaction, imperialism, and foreign bases. We can now enter the new stage while free and in unified ranks in a democratic atmosphere and on a national progressive line. As we

pledged to you, we will not barter on the slogans which reflect this people's aspirations, and which have been stirring in their souls for a long time."

Qaddafi proceeded to discuss the adaptation of Arab socialism, making certain to distinguish it from Marxism and Leninism. He asserted Libya's intention to foster respectful relations with Western nations while stressing the importance of maintaining independence in decision-making (Qaddafi, 1970). Furthermore, he proclaimed a policy of reciprocity, responding to hostility with hostility and friendliness with friendliness (Qaddafi, 1970). He emphasized that the accomplishments of the Arab world would be futile without the realization of comprehensive Arab unity, and he made it clear—that was his goal (Qaddafi, 1970).

With this speech, Qaddafi not only set the tone of his leadership but also showcased his firm stance in intra-Arab politics. This was only heightened with his preceding Five Point speech made at Zwara in 1973, an event that moreover ignited the cultural revolution. The Zwara speech completely revolutionized the administrative structure of Libya, eliminating all existing laws to be replaced with revolutionary measures and redesigning the power dynamics that allowed a strong bourgeoisie hold on society (El-Khawas, 1984). Further, with this speech, Qaddafi declared the start of a “cultural revolution against all that is reactionary, misleading and ruinous to young people’s minds” which subsequently led to the persecution of thousands of Libyans belonging to the factions Qaddafi deemed problematic and unfit for the new Libyan society (El-Shahat, 1978). In addition to his grand claims and changes with the Five-Point speech, Qaddafi spoke to his views on Israel and Arab world, expressing frustration with lack of a collective Arab stance with Libya against Israel and support for the Palestinian cause, further

revealing doubt that Arab countries would be able to unite against a common enemy. (Little, 2013).

His public addresses within the first few years of his leadership ignited both notions of Arab unity and doubt, symbolizing the culmination of Libya's liberation from foreign military presence within a year of his rise to power. By declaring that the revolution had only just commenced, he signaled his unwavering commitment to revolutionary change within Libya's borders and foreign policy. However, beyond these critical initiatives, how exactly did Qaddafi envisage realizing his vision of a unified region? Qaddafi's pursuit of Arab unity extended within the first decade of his Libyan control; he employed multifaceted strategies in unification endeavors with and economic relations that primarily hinged on religion, shared borders, and Qaddafi's own interests all of which are discussed in more detail later.

Qaddafi made swift efforts to rid Libya of the cultural and social remnants of Italian colonial rule by ushering in symbols and institutions rooted in Arabism and Islam. There was closure of cathedrals and churches and their subsequent conversion to mosques, removal of Latin script from local signage, the adoption of principles of Islamic sharia, and the banning of the use of alcohol. These methods, coupled along with his foreign policy, were used to garner support for himself and his revolution. Qaddafi had gone on in his quest to encourage Arab unity by using rhetoric coated with notes of rich Arab history and drawing on the history of Libyan suffering at the hands of Western imperialism and colonialism. He had hoped to curate a strong sense of unity not only among Libyans but the greater Arab world in these reiterated allusions to a greater Arab Homeland prior to the mass invasion of Western governing bodies for the sake of Western interests (First, 1974).

Another concept Qaddafi employed in speeches was the longevity of his revolution. Stating in the same 1970 speech referenced above, that the revolution in Libya did not end with the Free Officer's 1969 coup but marked the beginning of a greater effort to unite the Arab world by denouncing any and all Western practices, culture, politics, and thought, with a specific aim at combatting the Israeli state and Zionism. And this revolution was the backbone justification of Qaddafi's ambitions to unite the Arab world which was initiated with his long-time hero, Egypt's Gamal Abdel Nasser.

Uniting Libya, Sudan, and Egypt, the 1969 Tripartite Pact was an Arab Revolutionary Front that came to fruition following the defeat of Egypt against Israel in the Arab-Israeli War of 1967 and Nasser's subsequent disappointment with the response from Arab neighbors to replete Egyptian resources. Qaddafi began his revolutionary journey as an avid admirer of Egypt's Gamal Abdel Nasser from his time in the military academy; he had embraced some key facets of his ideologies, and at many points in his career adapted his style of governance and diplomacy. Qaddafi seized an opportunity for unity which he viewed as an 'essential strategic move.' The Tripoli Charter, though signed by all three parties in April 1971 did not result in a full political unity. This could be credited to the sudden death of Nasser and the reservations of his successor, Anwar Sadat, with Qaddafi. As well as worry from Nimeiry of insurgency in southern Sudan and objections from the Sudan Communist Party (El-Kikhia, 1997).

Qaddafi's efforts of cooperation and unity continued through the 70s and into the 80s, he had become involved in financially supporting liberation movements in Uganda, Oman, Palestine, Somalia, South Yemen, and Eritrea which stirred disdain amongst Arab leaders in Sudan and Egypt to name a couple (El-Kikhia, 1997). In May of 1982 Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak, who had received a great deal of United States aid since his rise to power, made a

statement discussing the rise of anti-Qaddafi campaigns in Egypt and Sudan and the ongoing movements by such to create a trial where he will be forced to “face his crimes against Africa” (Paris AFP, 1982). Qaddafi had been actively in contempt with the governments of Egypt, Sudan, and Somalia as by this time, they were all anti-Libyan regimes. President Hosni had revealed his intention to be more aggressive against Tripoli dealings in Sudan, which may have been in part attributed to The Cooperation Treaty between Ethiopia, South Yemen, and Libya that had been signed in the previous August of 1981.

The Cooperation Treaty marked another effort made by Qaddafi to form alliances to strengthen the Libyan position in international politics. Each nation involved had distinct motivations for participating in the agreement, effectively dividing the Arab political landscape. Qaddafi's primary aim was to undermine American influence and interests, as revealed in a 2011 CIA document release. In May of 1981, Qaddafi publicly declared that the Libyan government would support resistance fighters in Oman and Somalia against what he termed "American imperialism," symbolized by US military bases in Egypt, Oman, Somalia, and Palestine. This treaty, which pledged assistance to relieve a \$4 billion arms debt owed by Ethiopia to the USSR and to support a skeptical Southern Yemen regarding Americanism, served as a catalyst for Qaddafi to propagate anti-imperialism, pan-Arabism, and Pan-Africanism.

Qaddafi remained undeterred in his pursuits, persisting in his efforts to forge alliances. He embarked on merger plans with Arab states a total of six times before redirecting his sights toward Sub-Saharan Africa in the coming years of the 1980s. These attempts included the Benghazi Treaty with Syria in 1971, a unity endeavor with Egypt in 1972, the Hassi Messaoud Accords with Algeria in 1973, an attempt with Tunisia in 1974, a 1981 initiative with Chad, and a final failed attempt with Morocco in 1984. Recognizing the potent force of religious identity in

the Arab world, he sought to harness Islam as a unifying principle for the Arab world. Moreover, he leveraged Libya's geographic proximity to other Arab states, capitalizing on shared borders as a conduit for fostering collaboration and interconnectedness.

Beyond these initial approaches, Qaddafi's quest for Arab unity unfolded through a series of ambitious initiatives. He advocated for economic integration, envisioning a pan-Arab economic bloc that would promote mutual prosperity and development (Vandewalle, 2006). We see the longevity in these projects with the African Union and an economic community he founded that we'll discuss more later. Additionally, he championed cultural exchange programs and educational initiatives aimed at fostering a sense of collective Arab identity and solidarity. Qaddafi exhibited a steadfast commitment to Arab unity through his foreign policy initiatives. Inspired by the legacy of the revered Egyptian President Nasser, whom he greatly admired, Qaddafi aspired to fill Nasser's influential role on the regional stage (Little, 2013). Despite the setbacks encountered in his endeavors for Arab unification, he refused to abandon his vision of unity. Instead, he turned his gaze towards Sub-Saharan Africa, where he crafted a new dream grounded in Pan-Africanism, aiming for the creation of a United States of Africa.

Qaddafi shifts to Pan-Africanism

Qaddafi left an enduring mark that extended across North Africa and vast regions of the African continent, attempting to shape the political landscape for decades. Rooted in Pan-Africanist ideals, his political ideology aimed to unite African countries against external interference, a vision he pursued until his death in 2011. This commitment manifested in various initiatives each with both negative and positive outcomes, including efforts to merge with

neighboring nations, establishment of regional organizations, formation of alliances through coalition building, and substantial support for African liberation movements.

Adapting his foreign policy to align with his personal convictions, Qaddafi discerned whom to trust and whom to distrust, distinguishing between those he deemed champions of the people and those he did not. This section examines Qaddafi's early foreign policy engagements with Sub-Saharan Africa, while the subsequent chapter delves into his utilization of both hard and soft power to wield influence. Furthermore, It can be argued the Africanism of Muammar al-Qaddafi influenced Libya in its internal policies, methods, and reputation towards the outside world. The colonel hoped to establish a powerful influence for his country on the world stage by forging alliances among African countries while improving security and reducing dependence on western powers. The pursuit of Pan-Africanism demonstrates how Qaddafi believed that a country's international presence was directly proportional to its alliances and partnerships. To achieve this Qaddafi employed several methods encountering both success and failure.

Libya, for a time, had become one of the richest countries on the continent. Qaddafi continued in the efforts of the previous Idris regime to use Libyan oil riches to cultivate a socialist state in which every Libyan was guaranteed housing, food, and clothing; an endeavor and value not shared across Western borders (Middle East Journal, 1975). But with Libyan oil revenues on the decline post 1979, Qaddafi arguably became obsessed with securing the path he had forged for his country with its wealth by means of aligning itself with its geographical neighbors. He supported and financed several African liberation movements against governments he felt aligned too closely with Western ideology or were weary of his rule as well attempts to further unite African nations against Western intervention, even if this choice in geopolitical activity sometime exacerbate violence and insurgency (Ogundabejo, 1983). He

promoted programs such as de-dollarization policy that aimed at reducing Africa's dependence on Western economic tools (Suh, 2017). Security-wise, the participation of Qaddafi in establishing CEN-SAD/COMESSA and the South Atlantic Treaty Alliance (SATA) was for regional efforts towards cooperating to solve shared security issues (St John, 1987).

Early notes of African geopolitical support

His early views regarding geopolitical support of Sub-Saharan African nations mostly consisted of intervention of Israeli influence through the promotion of Islam and economic aid; which overlap with that of his efforts in Pan-Arabism. As stated earlier Colonel Qaddafi began his leadership with Arab nationalism and Islam at the forefront. He did not reserve his financial abundance in oil to strictly Arab nations, but additional African nations with large Muslim populations, especially those riddled with Israeli diplomatic missions (Kaiser, 1983). Israel, by the time Qaddafi rose to power, had more diplomatic missions in Africa than the entire Arab world; and would fund and oversee small projects in African states that bought about satisfaction among African leaders. Through this diplomacy, the Israelis were successful in securing the support of many African states during the 1967 Arab-Israeli War and the greater question of Palestine which lie at the heart of the Arab-Israeli conflict (First, 1974).

Between 1970 and 1975, Qaddafi had established an array of counter-Israeli Islam-centered initiatives like the Jihad Fund, the Islamic Call Society, and the Islamic legion. And with increase in oil revenues in the mid 1970's, Qaddafi was better equipped to use his monetary resources to have his way in his foreign policy. He provided funding for mosques, housing, and schools that instilled Islam and Arabic among Muslim populations in African countries. He

further embraced a strategy that would aid African states and in turn encourage them to break off diplomatic relationships with Israel (El-Ghariani, 2000). Libya cultivated joint venture companies which operated in Africa, allocated contingency loans, bought natural resources from African states, and began to establish diplomatic ties that were never fully brought to fruition under the monarchy. His early involvement in states below the Sahara, though could be characterized as aligned with his initial messages of unity through Islam—would soon become increasingly precarious as he would find new ways to carry out his stern outlook on anti-Western and Israeli politics.

Understanding Qaddafi's Military & Economic Power Grabs

Qaddafi's involvement in Sub-Saharan Africa, initially avoiding use of military force or involvement in widespread conflict, quickly became entangled with complex political upheavals toward the late 1970s. His involvement in political conflicts across multiple African countries was pervasive and multifaceted. Depending on who you were asking, he was either a supporter of liberation movements or rebel groups, leveraging Libya's resources to shape political landscapes and establish new governments. With Qaddafi's control over significant oil revenues, it became commonplace for rebel factions to seek his support in their endeavors for widespread regime change. Seizing these opportunities, Qaddafi would often insert himself in inter-state cleavages while framing the existing regimes as complicit in facilitating Western exploitation of African resources. He capitalized on these narratives to justify his support for rebel groups and liberation movements, presenting himself as a champion of African sovereignty against external interference (El-Kikhia, 1997).

Moreover, Qaddafi built alliances with neighboring leaders, leveraging these relationships to promote economic integration and regional cooperation, while increasing Libya's influence and pursue his expansionist ambitions. These alliances not only bolstered Qaddafi's regional power but also facilitated his efforts to project Libyan influence across the continent (El-Ghariani, 2000). Nonetheless, these relationships with neighboring governments were often fraught with tension and volatility. Qaddafi would express frustration with the governments of Sudan, Chad, Liberia, and more for various reasons, including their failure to comply with his requests, their inability or unwillingness to establish unified states, or their perceived complicity in Western attempts to undermine his leadership. This frustration was sometimes channeled into destabilization antics with Libyan military, or financing and backing faction groups within these regimes. This section will take a detailed look at Qaddafi's involvement in Africa and the outcomes of his use of military and economic strategy to carry out his goals for regional influence.

Chad-Libyan Relations

The dissonance surrounding the Chad-Libyan diplomatic relationship primarily revolved around the prolonged dispute concerning the Aouzou strip. This contested territory had been at the heart of conflict between the two nations dating back to the leadership under Chad's Tombalbye and Libya's King Idris I during the height of the Chadian Civil War in 1968. Qaddafi, who ascended to power in 1969, promptly asserted Libya's sovereignty over the strip by 1970, citing a vaguely defined treaty and the absence of a clearly demarcated southern border ('Mistakes of Revolution', FBIS, 1987). It can be speculated that Qaddafi was attracted to Chad

for its natural resources as well as its geographical location on the continent, being close to Libya and remote from pro-Western influence. These factors created an opportunity for Tripoli to extend and embed its influence in a strategic capacity. With Chadian opposition groups within Chad seeking out his support, this created an advantage for Qaddafi in controlling the outcome of his invasion of Chad (Time Magazine, 1981). He had gone from a quiet occupation of the strip in 1973 to deploying approximately 5,000 troops of the Islam Legion to northern Chad by the latter half of the 1980s. Qaddafi had recognized the strategic importance of the Aouzou strip in his quest for regional dominance and influence across Africa and took proactive measures to sustain what he believed belonged under Tripoli's control; launching a full invasion into Chad in 1980 (Pollack, 2002).

Qaddafi had previously stirred division amidst Chadian leadership when he began supporting the Transitional Government of National Unity (GUNT) in 1976, support that was welcomed from President Goukouni Oueddei, then head of GUNT and resisted by Vice President Hissene Habre, later head of FAN. After many attempts from the OAU and Nigeria to solve the internal conflict between the leadership of Chad, eventually a resolution would result in Habre to serve as Prime Minister of Chad, after forming the Armed Forces of the North (FAN), and Oueddei to serve as President backed by France; whom they backed because they viewed Oueddei as more agreeable than Habre. These two dynamic leaders, being northern and southern respectively, struggled in their relationship, primarily due to their conflicting views on the type of relationship they should have with Tripoli. A conflict so intense that it would embroil the country into civil war led by GUNT and FAN forces; and would result in Libya's sizable 1980 invasion (Ogunbadejo, 1983).

Following a Libyan and GUNT military success against FAN, Tripoli Radio, as well as the Washington Post disseminated a joint communique from Chad and Libya announcing they would merge into one state united under a defense treaty (“Tripoli radio comments”,1981). A move that revealed the underlying motives for Qaddafi’s grandiose military action. This endeavor coupled with their general consensus of disapproval of Qaddafi’s Chadian intervention, would put African leaders on alert to Qaddafi’s plans for the Sahel, thus creating a domino effect that led to the eventual withdrawal of Libyan troops from throughout Chad. An action that was preceded by the OAU’s intense pressure on President Goukouni to expel Libyan forces and await the deployment of a peacekeeping contingent and the dissolution or at least, hard pause to any sort of Chad-Libya merger plans. In addition to the fervent American, French, and African opposition to merger, the ethnic heterogeneity and multi-layered politics of Chad might have constituted obstacles to a full economic and political union.

A little over a year after the retraction of Libyan military back to the Aouzou strip and out of Chad Hissene Habre was installed into power, a move backed financially and politically by both the United States and France. Habre proved early on he would maintain an extremely violent and harsh regime, characterized by extrajudicial killings, unexplained disappearances, and refusal to cooperate with international peacekeeping initiatives, but he initially hoped to reach cordiality with Libya--an ambition that would fall short (Amnesty International Report, 1983). A few years later, in 1985, Qaddafi reinstates his support of the former President of Chad, and the Transitional Government of National Unit with both monetary and military support in the south. Idriss Deby, previous Chief Military Advisor to President Habre, had joined up forces with GUNT in disdain of his grotesque and immoral leadership. Deby was determined to wrench Chadian government and politics from under the harsh thumb of the Habre dictatorship. He

believed this could be done with the help of Qaddafi, and Qaddafi obliged eagerly hoping to attain control of the Aouzou strip and influence on Chad.

One of the glaring reasons Habre's violent regime maintained control for so long was in large attributed to the United States. The US ambition to halt Qaddafi in any and every action that would allow him to expand or attain additional influence in African nations by merging with Chad meant to install a Libyan adversary who wouldn't agree to such a merger proposal. At this time, U.S. President Ronald Reagan had declared Qaddafi as one of America's enemies, a position well reflected in his foreign policy we discuss in a later chapter. By backing Habre's leaderships in Chad, the U.S. was able to prevent the reinstatement of President Goukouni who had co-signed the Chadian-Libyan merger plan, demonstrating a determination to destabilize any threat to Western power grips in the region. Citing Qaddafi's antagonism to Western influence and intervention in African affairs, President Reagan and U.S. ally, France, supported and funded the Habre dictatorship leaving him unopposed in its conduct of torture, rape, and murder campaigns to preserve imperial interest in the region they feared Qaddafi would end.

Although Deby was successful in the removal of Habre from power, he would declare that Chad would continue its efforts in controlling the Aouzou strip and eventually, Qaddafi would lose his case at the Hague on the contested territory which settled that Chad had rights to the land. And by 1994 the military of both countries would withdraw from the territory, leaving Qaddafi to turn to other mechanisms by which to expand his influence and subsequently leaving the United States one less item to worry about in dealing with Libya's ongoing efforts to limit Western influence in the region.

The years of 1980-1981 before Libyan withdrawal from Chad would become a cornerstone in understanding Qaddafi's foreign policy in Africa as many states rallied against

him. Along with Western powers adamant on preventing Qaddafi from gaining significant control in the region, several African nations leaders and policymakers including Senegal, Ghana, Gambia, Gabon, and Uganda would all express caution and discontent with Qaddafi and his foreign policy. Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Sudan, Somalia, and Liberia broke off their diplomatic relationship with Libya, and closed Libya's embassies in the countries. The concerns they shared were related to the complex regional linkage of religion and politics, and what an increased Tripoli influence would mean post-war. And Qaddafi's implication in interfering in the inter-state conflicts of Nigeria, Senegal, and Mauritania would only make matters worse (St. John, 1987). Once he agreed to withdraw from Chad, Libya's relations with most of the sub-Saharan Sahara would gradually improve, but Qaddafi would only temporarily adjust his mechanisms for influence as he would continue to insert himself in other African domestic clashes.

Navigating Regional Strains After Chad: Sudan

"Brothers, sons of the great Sudanese people, as I have said to you, the whole world is mesmerized by Sudan; it is waiting for the outcome of the people's revolution which was adopted by all the masses of the revolutionary Sudanese people, who Nimeiry sentenced to be excluded from the theatre of life, action, and effectiveness. He sentenced you to hunger and thirst while [having] your own rivers, the White and Blue Niles and others. He shamed you in front of the world when he begged for water while your own rivers [are there]. He begged from America and refused the Libyan Arab aid which we offered to our people in Sudan. He refused the honorable Arab aid from a brother to his brother and went to beg from America." (FBIS, 1985)

Qaddafi delivered this message to the people of Sudan amidst the 1985 coup d'état that would remove President Nimeiry from power, sending him to seek refuge in Uganda. Qaddafi called for the revolutionary people of Sudan to seize control of communication mediums i.e., the

radio stations, and form a government ran by the masses; condemning Numayri of having forsaken his Arabism and ridiculing the decision of seizing assistance from Zionists and America.

The relationship between Qaddafi and Nimeiry had been tense since the 1976 Ansar attempt to overthrow Nimeiry, an event in which Qaddafi's involvement was widely suspected. Prior to this incident, Qaddafi had actually supported Nimeiry against a coup attempt in 1971; the dynamics quickly shifted when Sudan threw its support behind Egypt's Anwar Sadat following the 1978 Camp David Accords. And Qaddafi retaliated when he extended financial backing to the Sudanese People's Liberation Army (SPLA), predominantly composed of Christians and led by John Garang. Over time, despite sporadic efforts at regional intervention and mediation, diplomatic relations between the two regimes never fully recovered to their previous state (Huliaris, 2001). Nimeiry was especially wary of Libya's movements in Chad between 1980 and 1981, with exceptional consideration following the January 1981 Chado-Libyan unification announcement. In 1982, in a sort of standstill of the Chad and Libya conflict, Nimeiry described the Libyan leader as a "danger to Sudan and Africa" whilst also stating he didn't feel Sudan was at high risk for Libyan subversion but expressed concern of Qaddafi's possible infiltration in Sudan through Ethiopia, being that Libya, Ethiopia, and Southern Yemen had recently entered an alliance(to be discussed more later) and Sudan shares a border with Ethiopia (Africa News, 1982).

Tensions between the Sudanese and Libyan heads of state only continued to rise. In 1983 Qaddafi offered to pay Nimeiry for the heads of a Libyan opposition radio station operating in Sudan and Nimeiry refused (El-Kikhia, 1997). Qaddafi would go to bomb the radio station and initiate recruitment campaigns amidst Sudanese opposition groups in the south into the Islamic

Legion, a military group who were trained in combat in Libya but consisted of various Muslim nationalities—also sent in by Libya in the 1981 invasion of Chad (El-Kikhia, 1997).

Sudan's population, in 1981, was estimated at 21 million, comprising two distinct cultural groups: Black Africans and Arabs, with approximately 18 million Arabic-speaking Muslims (Bureau of African Affairs, 1995). Qaddafi would use Sudanese demographics to appeal to his Pan-Africanist views through Islam. And when Habre had gathered a considerable following along the borders of Darfur and Chad, prompting Qaddafi to bomb them through Libyan airstrikes, he'd make use of a pristine opportunity to attack both of his opponents at one time. In leveraging the geographic remoteness of Darfur from Sudan's capital, Khartoum, Qaddafi strategically exploited this isolation, anticipating Nimeiry to have difficulty in exerting control over the region. The two leaders would continue to antipathize each other, Nimeiry openly called for Qaddafi's overthrow and there were still anti-Nimeiry Ansar in Libya. Qaddafi had new possible Sudan entries rooted from new alliances, and Nimeiry would not dismiss his Libyan dread, even with United States financial support issued post airstrikes (Brewer, 1982).

When Nimeiry was overthrown in 1985 in a military coup Qaddafi would switch his support from the Christian SPLA to Sadiq al-Mahdi's Umma party; a Muslim group of the north. And Sudan-Libyan relations would improve with all the subsequent Sudanese leaders Rahab, al-Mahdi, and Omar al-Bashir with entering military and economic cooperation agreements between the 80s and the 90s. But such niceties and politics of co-existence in the waning days of the Qaddafi regime would dwindle, as al-Bashir would accuse him of intervening in Darfur rebel groups and Bashir providing support to the Libyan-opposition groups who would help to expel Qaddafi from power in 2011 (BBC, 2011).

During the Chadian-Libyan conflict, Qaddafi endeavored to garner support from the people of Darfur and Sudan by highlighting what he perceived as Nimeiry's incompetence and betrayal of Arab interests, particularly by seeking assistance from American and Israeli leaders. He propagated rhetoric rooted in pan-Arabism and Africanism, asserting his loyalty to these ideologies. He integrated himself into Sudan's separatists' movements and played on those divisions to pursue a greater goal of influence and suppression of opposition to Tripoli. Qaddafi inserted himself into these types of divisions to ideally shape African politics the way he saw fit for his vision of unity. Qaddafi's intervention in the Nimeiry regime marked a pivotal point in the political future of Sudan. The continue financial support to SPLA Qaddafi provided contributed to the destabilization of Sudan and eventual secession of southern Sudan in 2011. And his financial and military assistance would help to fuel divisions that threw the country into a war-torn destabilized regime (St. John, 1987).

Qaddafi in Liberia

Liberia presents another striking example of Libyan involvement in sub-Saharan intrastate turmoil. During the early years of Samuel Doe's rule in Liberia, the populace expressed admiration and gratitude, as he liberated the country from the hegemonic control of the Americo-Liberians who had committed atrocities against indigenous Liberian communities. And in the case of Tripoli, Doe took a pro-American position and closed the Libyan embassy. Doe and Qaddafi's relationship, like with several other heads of state, was fluctuating. And as Doe's regime became increasingly violent and oppressive, characterized by extrajudicial killings and the suppression of opposition, both domestic and international opposition grew subsequently

plunging the country into war (Amnesty International Report, 1989). While Qaddafi and Doe maintained an unsteady diplomatic relationship, Qaddafi built a strong one with Charles Taylor, leader of the National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL). Taylor initially found refuge in Libya after escaping from prison under the Samuel Doe regime in 1989. With Taylor at the helm, Qaddafi not only provided funding and training for armies, but also organized and provided artillery in nearby West African countries to fight for the NPFL cause, a decision that help perpetrate one of the deadliest conflicts in African history (Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Liberia, 2009).

Qaddafi, still reeling diplomatically from the Chadian conflict, which had drawn condemnation from several states, seized the opportunity to fund the NPFL. Doe made comments about Qaddafi's activity in West Africa, claiming he was "sending bribes, terrorists, and ammunition throughout African in an effort to overthrow governments and take over the continent" (The New York Times, 1983). Doe went on to exclaim Liberian caution around a relationship with Tripoli and was allegedly in talks with Israel about military advisers and weaponry (The Washington Post, 1983). It can be argued that Doe's alignment with the United States and Israel along with his general anti-Tripoli sentiments and severance of diplomatic ties with Libya prompted Qaddafi to back Taylor. Given Liberia's longstanding friendly relations with the United States and Qaddafi's vehement anti-Western stance in Africa, this intervention seemed logical. In the 1980s, Libya had hosted and trained hundreds of Liberian soldiers, while also arming and financially supporting Charles Taylor (Pargeter, 2013)(Bureau of African Affairs, 1990-1992).

Raging from 1989 to 1996, The Liberian Civil War resulted in over 200,000 deaths and the displacement of a million people. Despite Taylor's subsequent victory in the 1997 Liberian

presidential election, his tenure was marked by both rebellion and violence. His reputation suffered greatly due to his involvement in the Sierra Leone Civil War, where he was accused of illegally arming dissident forces, recruiting child soldiers, and financing violence and war crimes against civilians (Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Liberia, 2009).

Taylor eventually resigned in 2003 amidst mounting pressure and sought refuge in Nigeria, with Libya providing financial support. In 2004, David Crane, a special prosecutor for Sierra Leone, called Qaddafi out for having been just as responsible for the violence that shafted the region during the war (Africa News, 2005). The aftermath of this political meddling left Qaddafi's influence in Africa diminished and subjected him to criticism for further involvement in devastating conflicts.

African involvement continued.

Whilst Chad and Liberia demonstrate the harsh realities that followed Libyan support for African states, Qaddafi dabbled in several other African crises. In 1978, he sent in military forces to support the Ugandan dictator Idi Amin Dada and sent troops again in 1999 after having brokered a peace agreement between Congo and Uganda to help implement it. He was rumored to be involved in 1979 coup in Ghana by Jerry Rawlings, though it was later discovered the extent of Libya's involvement in the coup was the training of soldiers (The Washington Post, 1982). In 1999, he deployed Libyan troops to the Central African Republic to prevent the overthrow of President Ange-Felix Patasse, an effort that was short-lasting, once Libyan troops withdrew from the regime the opposition leader was able to seize power. He supported coup attempts in Tunisia in the 80s to usher less West sympathetic leadership. Notably, he exhibited a large change in policy when he discontinued his long support of the POLISARIO front in the Western Sahara fighting against Moroccan colonialism among a

Morocco-Libya unification announcement, in 1984. A choice that would throw his relationship with Algeria in flux; with Algeria having long recognized the POLISARIO front and being shunned by Morocco for it.

Throughout the precarious decades of the 1980s and 1990s, a substantial segment of Muammar Qaddafi's military ventures ostensibly adhered to the principles and goals outlined by the Organization of African Unity (OAU) or its later iteration, the African Union (AU), as Qaddafi would assert. Yet he freely wielded military might to advance his regional agenda, even though the outcomes often led to profound and calamitous repercussions. However, alongside his military campaigns, Qaddafi also employed alternative to hard power strategies. These included seeking alliances and the strategic manipulation of economic resources to attain his objectives. Thus, amidst the complexities of regional politics, Qaddafi's tactics encompassed a multifaceted approach, combining military strength with diplomatic maneuvering and economic leverage.

	1957	1960	1963	1964	1965	<i>Libyan Oil Wealth</i>
Merchandise exports, other than oil, f.o.b.	5.2	3.5	2.3	3.2	2.4	Even before
Government	25.1	24.9	19.5	16.7	12.5	Qaddafi assumed power,
Oil operations ²	4.3	21.3	59.5	95.6	131.4	Libya had already
Miscellaneous ³	1.6	7.0	5.8	7.2	10.5	established itself as one of
Total	36.2	56.7	87.1	122.7	156.8	the largest oil producers in
						the Middle East. Prior to
						1960, the Libyan economy
						relied heavily on foreign

Figure 1 source: International Monetary Fund, Balance of Payments

exchange receipts, which included aid for economic and technical projects as well as direct cash payments for foreign military bases within the country. However, with the expansion of oil operations, non-oil-related receipts dwindled (*See Figure 1*) and the discovery of oil liberated the desert nation from poverty and foreign intervention, gradually reducing its dependence on external intervention (International Monetary Fund, 1967). Qaddafi and the RCC played a pivotal role in this transformation. Throughout the 1970s, Qaddafi advocated for the use of oil embargoes as a weapon for challenging the West, hoping that an oil price rise and embargo in 1973 would be persuasive enough in ending western nations support of Israel (First, 1974). This advocacy for oil economy redesigning both within and outside of OPEC, leading to the nationalization of foreign-owned assets and greater control over Libya's resources, resulting in increased government revenue (OAPEC Bulletin 1971-1976). Initially adopting a conciliatory approach, Qaddafi later adopted a more assertive stance in negotiations with oil companies and government bodies, threatening to reduce reliance on oil sales by cutting oil production sectors if price demands were not met (Vandewalle, 2006). By the late 1970s, Libya had established commercial relationships worldwide, accumulating significant oil wealth. This newfound financial independence allowed Qaddafi to pursue an autonomous foreign policy, amassing modern weaponry and positioning himself as a champion of Africa albeit with both positive and negative associations. His foreign policy epitomized a newfound freedom, underpinned by unwavering confidence in Libya's limited natural resource.

As previous sections dictated, Qaddafi would be extremely active in various parts of the continent from the 1970s through the 1990s, but his oil-dependent economy would not remain consistent in considerable outputs. Between 1981 and 1982, oil exports would drop by almost

50% for a year (OAPEC Bulletin 1979-1983). This would trigger an economic struggle for Qaddafi in oil market between 1982 and 1987 as he attempted to recover from an expensive intervention in Chad his other African projects. Libya was actively trying to decrease oil production to 14 million bpd but in 1986 agreed on a 16.5 million bdp deal with OPEC (St. John, 1987). This internal struggle with Libya and OPEC would prompt Qaddafi to co-found the African Petroleum Producers' Association (APPA) (now known as African Petroleum Producers' Organization, APPO in 1987, founding members consisting of Algeria, Gabon, Nigeria, and Libya. African OPEC member nations recognized that the surge in oil prices disproportionately affects African countries. The governments acknowledged that the OPEC Fund alone wouldn't be able address all the challenges faced by these nations—the realization prompted the four mentioned countries to take action. As a result, they reached an agreement to supply oil to African nations grappling with balance of payments issues hindering their ability to import oil. They committed to allocating 4% of their production to address these needs (APPO Secretariat). Qaddafi's involvement in the establishment of this alliance would strike controversy, with some OPEC members believing he would use it to sway decisions in OPEC councils (St. John, 1987). But the APPA would not serve as the only power groups Qaddafi initiated or joined for influence. Qaddafi would continue to cultivate new alliances and relationships through different dynamics of political economies in the wars to come. But the 1988 Lockerbie bombing would way Qaddafi off his path and leave him economically isolated.

Terrorism, Sanctions, and Economic Isolation

By the latter half of the 1980s, due to the concerted efforts of the US, Qaddafi found himself increasingly isolated in the international community. Particularly in the aftermath of the 1988 Lockerbie bombing. Libya was previously under fire because a component of the bomb on French UTA flight 772 in 1989 was traced back to Libya, and the motive was claimed to be revenge on France for their support of Chad at the height of the Chado-Libyan conflict around the Aouzou strip discussed earlier. This tragedy didn't receive as much national attention as the Lockerbie bombing, but Libyan suspected involvement then would shoot Libya to the top of the list of suspects for the Lockerbie bombing.

When two Libyan suspects were named after tens of thousands of interviews conducted by UK officials that yielded substantial evidence against Libya, Qaddafi attempted to petition for the accused to be tried in a neutral Arab country, Libya, or Malta instead of in Scotland but was denied. He didn't want to be seen giving in to the will of the West and also he didn't want to further isolate Libya in the international community. By this time, Qaddafi was determined to take a new path in his Western policy and reposition himself from being an international outcast (Sharab, 2021). The pressure against Qaddafi to hand over the suspects in 1992 when sanctions were imposed by the United Nations Security Council. With UN Resolution 748, the UNSC would impose isolating sanctions onto Libya, each member state would be required to:

- (a) deny permission of Libyan aircraft to take off from, land in or overfly their territory if it has taken off from Libyan territory, excluding humanitarian need;
- (b) prohibit the supply of aircraft or aircraft components or the provision or servicing of aircraft or aircraft components;
- (c) prohibit the provision of weapons, ammunition or other military equipment to Libya and technical advice or training;

- (d) withdraw officials present in Libya that advise the Libyan authorities on military matters;
- (e) significantly reduce diplomatic and consular personnel in Libya;
- (f) prevent the operation of all Libyan Airlines offices;
- (g) deny or expel Libyan nationals involved in terrorist activities in other states ([UN Digital Archive, 1992](#)).

This resolution was not the end of the UN wrath on Qaddafi, as Resolution 883 passed in November 1993, would impose harsher sanctions on Libya including the freezing of Libyan assets, and prevention of equipment sales that allowed for gas and oil sector production (UN Digital Archive, 1993). Libya was commanded to take responsibility of the actions of the bombers and to surrender them for trial, but Qaddafi saw this as an “attack by the West on the Arab world as a whole, orchestrated by Israel” (Sharab, 2021).

Qaddafi, having only fragile relationships with many of its regional neighbors in the Arab world and not receiving the support he craved, turned toward the sub-Saharan for advocacy on behalf of Libya and lifting its sanctions. Several African states had taken a pro-Libya stance, the OAU even petitioned the UN to lift the sanctions. By 1998, leaders of Chad, Niger, Central African Republic, Zimbabwe, Uganda, Gambia, Eritrea and Mali had all violated the sanctions by traveling to Tripoli. Although it was rumored that Qaddafi was promising heaps of financial assistance to African states who agreed to back him against the sanctions, Qaddafi still established new relationships with Black African leaders including, South Africa’s Nelson Mandela, whom Qaddafi supported since the 1970s and served as a mediator between the US, UN and Libya. In 1999, Qaddafi agreed to handover the two Lockerbie suspects and pay millions of dollars to the families of the Lockerbie bombing casualties. Daad Sharab, a close confidant to Qaddafi, would state she never heard the colonel admit any involvement, nor had she

witnessed any type of evidence or conversation that would lead her to believe Libya was involved in any regard. Once the UN sanctions were lifted after handing over the Lockerbie suspects, and “Qaddafi was in demand like the latest pop star” , as he immersed from political, economic, and international isolation he continued in his pursuit for an United Africa by forging new alliances and initiating joint investments (Sharab, 2021).

Economic Alliances and Investments

In 1998, Qaddafi used his newfound African popularity and influence, from the power of his wallet, to create the Community of Sahel-Saharan States (CEN-SAD) or (COMESSA) to become a vehicle for the economic integration, security interdependency, and serve as a regional economic community among Sahel Saharan countries. It was Qaddafi's confidence in the potency of regional organizations as he saw with the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) established in 1975 and the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) established in 1983, that yielded his initiative to establish the community. The countries to join up at its inception was Burkina Faso, Central African Republic, Chad, Eritrea, Libya, Niger, Mali, Sudan, and Libya.

He intended to cater to Sahel-Saharan countries' demands and apprehensions, creating a sense of commonality among them. As a deliberative decision, the regional framework introduced appropriate intervention adoption and coordinated activities to address multidimensional issues like economic growth and security threats (ISS African Futures). At the second summit for the organization held in Chad in the winter of 2000, Qaddafi would call for a United States of Africa; stating that COMESSA should “become the cornerstone of an African

Union” which would later come to pass as to replace the OAU (Somalia Watch Archive, 2000). This ambitious vision gained traction in N’Djamena as members endorsed the creation of an African Union, aligning with the resolution passed by the Organization of African Unity. The conference bestowed upon Qaddafi gratitude and entrusted him with representing COMESSA's interests internationally. Widely regarded as an extension of Qaddafi’s foreign policy, COMESSA's significant funding from Libya (having funded more than 1/2) imbues it with considerable political influence across the continent. Though not economically affluent as initially intended, under Qaddafi’s guidance, COMESSA members committed to a security accord, pledging to resolve regional conflicts peacefully. Amidst heightened security concerns, Qaddafi's presence at the summit, flanked by prominent leaders, underscored his enduring influence on African affairs and would demonstrate his complete reinsertion in the international community.

After the lifting of UN sanctions against Libya following the Lockerbie bombing, Libya found itself in a favorable position to reinsert itself in the economic community. In August of 2006, the Libyan Investment Authority (LIA) emerged as a sovereign wealth fund tasked to oversee the nation's oil revenue and diversify the economic portfolio to decrease oil dependency. The LIA primary goal was to invest abroad for commercial basis with the first \$50 billion. The fund would support African highly indebted poor countries (HPICs) and fund commercial investment projects (International Monetary Fund, 2008). And by 2010, the fund had accumulated approximately \$56 billion in assets globally, with substantial investments in American and Italian companies and banks. In early 2010, Qaddafi vowed to invest a sum of \$97 billion dollars in African states in hopes to free them from Western aid economic dependence. This vow depended on the exchange of a promise to rid governments from corruption and

nepotism. He created the Libyan Investment Authority (LIA), a branch of the Libyan African Investment Portfolio (LAIP) and embarked on diverse investments across the continent. Notably, in 2007, LAP invested in Green Networks, a telecommunications service operating in multiple African countries, with the objective of fostering and maintaining strategic partnerships within Africa. The fund was also the largest shareholder in Afriqiyah Airways, a Tripoli based airline with a mission to connect African states operating in underserved routes in Cameroon, Burkina Faso, and Central African Republic (Reteurs, 2010).

In 2011, over 50% of the total budget derived from contributions from Libya, Nigeria, Algeria, Egypt, and South Africa, with each nation contributing 15% (AU Budget Report, 2011). Additionally, Qaddafi frequently covered the financial obligations of several African states that were unable to meet their annual dues to the

organization. By doing so, Qaddafi continued to use his financial abundance to bolster his influence within the Union and advance his vision of a united African state.



Soft Power: Influence through rhetoric and culture

In the realm of international relations, Muammar Qaddafi, the enigmatic leader of Libya, was not only known for his military and economic maneuvers but also for his adept utilization of soft power strategies. Among these, rhetoric and cultural changes emerged as potent tools in

Gaddafi's arsenal, allowing him to wield influence and shape perceptions both domestically and abroad. Through compelling speeches, ideological discourse, and cultural initiatives, Qaddafi crafted a narrative that projected Libyan identity and ideology onto the global stage. This section delves into how Qaddafi employed these soft power mechanisms, exploring the impact of his rhetoric and cultural transformations on Libya's standing in the world and its relations with other nations.

Only a few years before his demise, during his address at the 2008 Syria held Arab Summit he calls out American leadership with vehemence drawing on the ambiguity of the justification of the war in Iraq and their lack of weapons of mass destruction (WMDs) and involvement in the September 11th attacks on American soil. He denotes if Iraq indeed housed WMDs that would not render the destruction and death of over one million Iraqis without then seeing parallel destruction in a large group of countries whom which all house WMDs. Furthermore, Qaddafi speaks about the death of Saddam Hussein by way of Western intervention, emphasizing the once close relationships with American leaders in the time before his death. Qaddafi states: “they sold him out and hanged him,” after having fought alongside him against Khomeini. He leads into this warning, stating that any leader in the room could be next to suffer at the hands of the Americans—carefully, reeling in his argument of the lack of unity of Arab countries with its’ African neighbors over foreign powers. Including Libya’s lack of a strong relationship with Egypt and Tunisia over Italy. Being that Qaddafi supported Iran in the 1980s amidst the Iraq-Iran war, his shift in favor of Iraq in the 90s and 2000s is an early indication of his break away from Arabism and toward a global revolutionary outlook against imperialism.

Figure 2 Qaddafi circa 1975 Source: Vanity Fair Qaddafi Profile

Qaddafi often made simple of complex diplomatic and political relationships in his speeches. Boiling them down to the bottom line of a need to mistrust and move away from Western powers and interference in African and Arab autonomy. This sort of speech style is parallel to that of the speech he made at the United Nations headquarters in New York City, 2009. Qaddafi addresses the 64th general assembly of the United Nations only seven short months after being elected as chairperson of the African Union and a year after his address at the Arab Summit. This speech consisted of vast similarity to that made at the Arab summit but in some way shifted focus. He spoke to condemn the permanent five on the UN Security Council, made an appeal to the third world country member states, a power shift within the UN, and a once again questioning of the “destruction and pillage” of Iraq and Afghanistan.

Qaddafi spoke passionately about how deserving Africa was of a permanent seat on the security council in the case that the UN would be unwilling to change its’ power dynamics so that the general assembly would have the influencing grip on policy and resolution decision-making. Claiming “who could deny us this right, who is more deserving,” he referenced the long dark history of the relationships between the West and many African states. Speaking to the abuse and extortion in the name of imperialism and colonialism, as well as the theft of African resources used to uplift and maintain capitalistic Western regimes. Qaddafi implored reason on the podium, using a matter-of-fact tone and maintaining a voice for the African countries of which he felt the West had stomped on.

His speeches from the early 1970s until his death reflected deep anti-Western sentiment and the tumultuous and fluctuating relationships within economics and diplomacy would be factors considered in the intensity or calmness of such rhetoric in his speeches. He began his



Figure 3 Qaddafi and Barack Obama 2009 Source: Vanity Fair Qaddafi Profile

change to the “Voice of Africa”. Qaddafi began to embrace traditional African clothing. Often seen with a symbol of Africa on his chest or festive and traditional African kufis. Meeting leaders, joining conferences, and addressing governing bodies in such dress; as to earlier in his leadership he would be seen in his military uniform (*See Figures 2 & 3*). These changes would coincide with Qaddafi’s embrace of Africanism and his heightened importance unity in Africa.

Though Qaddafi would present very pro-African ideals and customs, he would rule over Libya with an armed fist. Between the years 1990 and 2011, Amnesty International would report several occurrences of extra-judicial killings, cases of torture, unexplained disappearances, and excessive uses of force. Qaddafi was not only hard on foreign powers who condemned him or opposed his views but within his own state repressed protests and opposition in violent ways. A few countries such as Ethiopia, Sudan, Ghana, and Mali attempted to reach Tripoli and seek

leadership using rhetoric to rally African and Arab leaders against Israel and the United States, a strategy continued well throughout his career.

In addition to rhetoric, Qaddafi embraced cultural changes that would promote Africanism once his foreign policy became more saturated with economic and diplomatic campaigns in the sub-Sahara. The Tripoli radio station “Voice of the Greater Arab Homeland” underwent a name

answers for treatment of political prisoners and native residents in Libya, but few received substantial action in return. It could be speculated Qaddafi wielded enough influence over the region to almost silence his opposition in totality (Amnesty International Reports 1990-2012).

Qaddafi and the West

Upon emerging as the Libyan leader in 1969, Qaddafi's relations with the United States were bound to be tainted with conflict and disdain, given his rhetoric steeped in pan-Arabism and opposition to Western intervention. Nonetheless, his relationship with the West would be key in understanding the reach of his influence in Africa. Despite initially demonstrating an anti-Soviet stance, which did not draw opposition from the US, Qaddafi quickly showcased conflicting ideologies with America. The United States viewed his support for various African liberation movements as undermining its interests and potentially aligning with international terrorism. Nevertheless, in the early years of his leadership, the US prioritized access to Libyan oil, while Qaddafi benefited from American technology and opportunities for Libyan students to study in American colleges and universities.

Qaddafi consistently voiced his opposition to Israel, never failing to advocate for Palestinian rights in numerous speeches. He emphasized the importance of Arab unity rallying behind the Palestinian cause, positioning Palestinian liberation at the forefront of the struggle against imperialism and Western influence in the Arab world. He rejected every Arab-Israeli settlement proposal put forth by the United States, collaborating closely with Arafat, the leader of the PLO, and delivering impassioned speeches of bellicose nature urging Arab nations to unite against Zionism (St. John, 1987). This confrontational stance against Israel further heightened

tensions between Qaddafi, Israel, and the United States, the latter being a longstanding supporter of Israel since President Harry Truman led the international community in recognizing Israel as a state in May 1948.

But the engraved divide over the question of Palestine would only scratch the surface of Western unhappiness with the Libyan leader and wishes for a Libyan rehabilitation. Ronald Reagan's administration would kick up the pressure against Qaddafi's Libya hoping to isolate and destabilize his regime, and by the mid 1980s Qaddafi had all been declared an enemy of the United States. The Reagan administration closed the US Libyan embassy in Washington, DC in 1981, implemented additional visa security measures were in place for Libyan passport holders traveling to the US, and there was an increase in funding sent to countries who were at odds with Libya like neighboring Sudan and Tunisia (St. John, 1987). Reagan demonstrated a determinacy to remove Qaddafi and the CIA at this time had been keeping a close eye on all his activity in the Arab and African world, publishing reports around a great deal of his movement and meetings with leaders of countries the US had an interest in. NY Times author, Samuel Hersh, writes in his 1981 article titled 'Target Qaddafi' that the CIA had been involved since 1981 in "encouraging and abetting Libyan exile groups and foreign governments, especially those of Egypt and France, in their efforts to stage a coup d'état and kill the bizarre Libyan leader" (Hersh, 1981). Reagan was hitting the Libyans economically as well, he ordered the removal of American personnel from Libyan oil companies, and the discontinuance of Libyan oil to the States all in efforts to reduce the power of the Libyan economy. It was encouraged that Europe do the same, and as cheaper oil became available to European nations; countries subsequently relinquished their reliance on Libyan oil. NATO and its allies, notably Italy, at the behest of the United States, actively barred Qaddafi from visiting, and two Libyan aircraft were downed in confrontations

over the Gulf of Sirte by American military forces. Furthermore, the United States lobbied African member states of the OAU against Libya in the lead-up to the 1981 OAU Summit. It advocated for relocating the summit from Libya to other African nations in a bid to further isolate Qaddafi (Sharab, 2021).

It was exceedingly clear in US foreign policy how determined Reagan was to rid the world of Qaddafi and there were no means by which he was unwilling to pursue to carry out that goal. The United States had been involved in disinformation campaigns and the support of dissident groups in Libya against Qaddafi, as well as plots to assassinate him (Wright, 1981). CIA document, *Libya Propaganda and Covert Operations* written by Jeff McConell (1981) details the US involvement in a destabilization plan in the Qaddafi regime in the 1980s. He speaks of concern over public leaks of this covert operation and writes “Libya, like Cuba, Angola, Afghanistan, and Vietnam has already been targeted by policy planners for an intensified campaign of propaganda, isolation, and destabilization” (McConell, 1981). This coupled with the US agenda to seize control of the Gulf of Sirte lit fire beneath US foreign policy and escalated military activity between the two states.

By 1986, tensions over the Gulf of Sirte between the US and Libya had escalated to armed conflict and the United States, following a mutual bombing of fleets in the gulf, US pursued to bomb five different sites around Tripoli and Benghazi which Hersh writes in the primary aim was to kill Qaddafi, of which he concluded after a series of interviews with current and former US officials of the Central Intelligence Agency, National Security Agency, National Security Council, and the State Department.

Toward the late 1990s, the US was opposed to the heavy involvement Qaddafi had in the African insurgency in Liberia and Sierra Leone, claiming that he was contributing to the African

divisions more than he was helping as well as refusing to mend relations with Israel and training Palestinian opposition groups in Libya (Blanchard, 2011). London and the US took a particular interest in ridding Libya of its weapons of mass destruction (WMD) as well as misaligning Libyan policy with supporting insurgent groups across Africa--which they classified as international terrorism.

The Lockerbie attack gave the United States the game plan they needed to engage their plans of placing Libya in economic and political isolation, but once sanctions were lifted and other European nations were making strides to restore their strained diplomatic ties with Tripoli to carry out new commercial contracts, the early 2000s would be marked with Libya's gradual reinsertion in the international community and a possibility for diplomacy between Qaddafi and the US.

Strides in improving relations with the United States were made following the September 11th, 2001 terrorist attacks, when Qaddafi he funded counter-terrorism initiatives and subsequently declared Libya would do away with their weapons of mass destruction after which President Bush lifted US sanctions. With Libya's economy in increasing trouble, Qaddafi's decision to devalue the Libyan Dinar to attract foreign capital would also increase his contact with western nations through commercial and economic plans.

At the height of the Arab Spring in 2011, any gradual movement toward reconciliation between Libya and the United States had been squandered. Qaddafi's violent suppression of protestors caused President Obama to vehemently condemn him in his speech from the White House in 2011 saying the "suffering and bloodshed is outrageous, and it is unacceptable." The Arab League also called for the removal of Qaddafi. This stance reflected a unified Arab stance against Qaddafi's oppressive regime. The Arab League's call underscored what NATO deemed

an urgent need for decisive action to protect civilian lives and restore stability to the country. By collectively advocating for international intervention, the Arab League finally demonstrated unity against a common enemy—a recurring call of Qaddafi's, only he became the common enemy. The 2011 military Intervention in Libya (UNSCR 1973) led by NATO would lead to the death of Qaddafi after NATO forces struck his convoy, he was captured and killed by anti-Qaddafi fighters on October 20th, 2011, near his birthplace of Sirte (Reuters, 2011). President Barack Obama later admitted that the intervention in Libya amounted as one of his greatest regrets. Critics would concur this sentiment, arguing that the portrayal of the Libyan situation was exaggerated and there were other options to consider beside NATO intervention. Instead, they contended that Libyan opposition forces were better equipped to overthrow Qaddafi (Council on Foreign Relations, 2015).

NATO's involvement in the uprising, which some argue exacerbated other regional conflicts, highlights the enduring legacy of Western interference in Africa. It underscores Muammar Qaddafi's longstanding opinion and ideology that Western influence and intervention were hazardous to the continent, even if his own methods were not without criticism.

Qaddafi and Africa: A conflicting history

The African continent witnessed a split in opinion regarding the leadership of Muammar Qaddafi, characterized by both fervent criticism and enthusiastic praise, especially in the mid 1980s-2000s when he was well into Pan-Africanist politics and a dream of a United Africa. Qaddafi's influence during this period was extensive, particularly as he actively engaged in

various political struggles across Africa. His involvement in several conflicts, notably those discussed earlier, underscored his significant impact on the region's political landscape.

Qaddafi's role in supporting authoritarian regimes across Africa drew intense condemnation from African leadership that were eagerly spoke upon after his death. He was accused of not only sustaining oppressive governments but also of being complicit in heinous acts of violence, such as the Darfur genocide. These allegations further exacerbated the polarized opinions surrounding his leadership. Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir stated his country had no choice but to support the people in Libya in their revolt against Qaddafi in 2011 (Africa News, 2011). Sudanese official, Dr. Amin Hassan Omar, shared the sentiments of his boss, stating that in light of his death; Sudan would be spared many problems. Given the tumultuous relationship between Qaddafi and Sudan since the early 1970s, this response came as no surprise.

Central to Qaddafi's approach was his willingness to wield his considerable financial resources to sway African leadership in alignment with his vision. We see this strategy embraced time and time again throughout Africa and the Middle East. This strategy enabled him to exert influence over regional affairs, often at the expense of stability and human rights. Despite facing criticism for his actions, Qaddafi remained undeterred, persisting in his efforts to shape African politics according to his agenda. Despite facing harsh criticism before and after his death, some African leaders expressed remorse for him. Dr. Sam Nujoma, one of Namibia's founding fathers and its president from 1990 to 2005, was revealed in a New Era publications archive to be "shocked and saddened" by the killing of the Libyan leader. Stating that "the enemy is on the prowl and would attack Africa anytime as long as the continent continues to be divided." Former Ghanaian President John Kufuor, who held office from 2001 to 2007, referred to it as a "historic sad day for Africa" during a conversation with Kapital Radio in Kumasi. After all, Ghana and

Namibia were among the many countries Qaddafi contributed a great deal of finances to support and improve circumstances at some point.

Understanding Qaddafi's legacy means understanding the rifts he created in African countries, the fallout of his relentless ideological shifts and pursuance of such in concepts of Islamism, Pan-Arabism, and Pan-Africanism. Pivoting in direction based on where he predicted himself to yield the most success. Amidst his late 1970s through 1980s political conflict with Sudanese President, Nimeiry, Qaddafi was in support of the Sudanese People's Liberation movement, which consisted of a Sudan non-Muslim minority, of which Qaddafi had no history of supporting groups of this making. Following the removal of Nimeiry, Qaddafi would go on to discontinue support for SPLM and call for Ethiopia to follow suit. He was subsequently ridiculed for his lack of cohesion in African policy, promotion of state destabilization, and failure to make his ideas align with his actions (Lesch, 1985).

Qaddafi's relations with King Hassan and Morocco also demonstrated unease on both diplomatic ends for Qaddafi's financial and cultural support of the Polisario Front in Morocco and in turn, Morocco's condemnation of Libya's foreign policy in Chad which we discussed earlier. Their relationship since Qaddafi emerged as the leader of the Revolutionary Command Council and Libya had been unsustainable. Qaddafi was not shy about accusing the regime of corruption and being too close with the West, which Qaddafi was extremely against as shown through various speeches and his foreign policy (Crozier, 1973). But following Saudi pressure against King Hassan in 1983 to speak with Qaddafi, Qaddafi and Morocco were finally in a position to enhance diplomacy. Eventually, the Arab-African Treaty was signed between the two countries at Oujda, Morocco in August 1984 and approved through referenda in both countries. This treaty would mean a lot to Libya, especially considering the several failures Qaddafi had

amassed of attempts to unify with neighboring states of: Egypt, Syria, Tunisia, Algeria and Sudan. Qaddafi demonstrated a determinability to lift Libya from the isolation earlier policy decisions and political aggression had found them in (Moroccan-Libyan Union: Status and Prospects, 1984). Economically, Qaddafi would be able to lean on Moroccan advancements in agriculture to allow Libyan agriculture dynamics to diversify its oil-dominated economy.

Libya under Qaddafi underwent fluctuating foreign policy changes in Africa, especially in the 1970s and 80s. Qaddafi came under fire for his intervention in Chad by the OAU which we discussed earlier, he was also heavily condemned by African leaders of Niger, Ghana, Nigeria, Mauritania, Senegal, and Gambia for being involved in their internal affairs. His plans to create an Islamic Republic were of particular concern for Nigeria, who would later accuse Qaddafi of supporting an Islamic insurgency against local officials in 1981 (Cooley, 1984). In inserting himself into an array of African insurgencies, Qaddafi would constantly defy the regulations laid out by the OAU but would still become a founding father of the African Union. In 2001, at the annual African Union summit the leaders would issue Qaddafi collective praise, recognizing him for his extraordinary efforts in and for Africa, further expressing their support of his vision for a unified state (Geldenhuys, 2003). The AU became a governmental staple for the continent that would give western imperialist projects and poverty struck countries security in allegiances; even though it would fall short of his original dream of a single borderless African state with one currency and one flag.

Qaddafi's ideology fell short in his own backyard as well, Libya's proletariat became hostile toward migrant African workers in the early 2000s, with Qaddafi having zero visa restrictions against Africans, Libya faced an influx of 1.5million illegal workers whilst maintaining 200,000 unemployed Libyans. Qaddafi's Africanization policies would create strife

amongst the people of his country and play a large part in the growing dissent of his regime; for while he remained steadfast in unification dreams, everyone within his country and government would not share those ideals (Sharab, 2021) (Hussein and Swart, 2005).

Tripoli's leader faced waning influence in additional sectors. Despite his ongoing opposition to Israel and his struggles to maintain his previous influence in Africa, largely due to international isolation following the Lockerbie bombing, Qaddafi faced challenges in preventing the resurgence of African states reestablishing diplomatic ties with Israel of which had previously been so vocal about and placed at the center of his Arab unity policies. The Reagan administration maintaining continuity in the campaign to isolate and destabilize him employed various economic, diplomatic, and political strategies to thwart Libya's efforts to expand its influence in Africa, but Qaddafi would go on in later years to restore diplomatic ties with a handful of African states.

Qaddafi was and is still revered as a controversial figure in Africa and the larger international community. He has been revered as a 'champion of Africa' by the Kumasi Radio, and as the "lion of Tripoli and revolutionary who fought against oppressive establishments" by the Nigerian Daily News. He forged friendships with the likes of Nelson Mandela, as he opposed apartheid in South Africa. He also was implicated in the perpetuation of harsh regimes and detrimental insurgency of Ethiopia's Mengistu Mariam, Liberia's Charles Taylor, POLISARIO in Western Sahara, FROLINAT in Uganda and more. His African legacy would continue to reveal the complexity of his character and the opinion amongst the masses would vary based on what side of 'liberation' you fell in alignment with.

Conclusions

Muammar al-Qaddafi's pursuit of regional influence in Africa was a multifaceted endeavor, marked by a combination of hard and soft power mechanisms. Qaddafi consistently and strategically employed various tactics to extend Libya's reach across the continent oscillating between Arab-nationalist and pan-Africanist foreign policy. Qaddafi had proven himself to be a complex character of charisma and power. He constantly reaffirmed through his foreign policies that he would carry out any agenda best suited to his own interests and those of Libya. Depending on where your seat in history was and who you asked, he was either a 'mad dog of the middle east' as President Reagan called him or a 'champion of Africa' as many African nations referred to him as.

This project has delved into the intricacies of his approach, shedding light on the dynamics of power, diplomacy, and resource leverage that fueled his efforts. Moreover, it has examined the complexities of his relationship with the West, and the consequent challenges he faced in realizing his ambitions in Africa.

His intervention in Chad demonstrated Libya's first notable military success but would thwart his influential plans for Africa in not only the failed merger attempt but the critical and vast opposition from various African heads of state. He would spend the remainder of the 1980s and some of the 1990s attempting to rehabilitate relationships. Further involvement in Chad and contention over the Aouzou would result in an embarrassment for the leader, pushing his political capital under what it would need to gain significant influence. In hindsight, Chad completely set the tone for Qaddafi's topsy turvy relationship in African politics. Stirring up

feelings of weariness and tension leading leaders away from dealings with Tripoli. But Qaddafi and his money persisted throughout his leadership, forever characterizing it with intervention.

Sudan demonstrated a vindictive Qaddafi, his decision to throw his support behind the SPLA was more of a retaliatory response to Nimeiry's vocal condemnation of Qaddafi and his politics than it was an attempt to end violence in the regime. He broke from his previous pattern of supporting Muslim majority revolutionary groups to supporting a Christian led group to rid himself of a leader that did not agree with his actions and promptly returning once that leader was removed. His support for Sudanese rebel groups not only served to destabilize the government but also enabled him to exert considerable influence over Khartoum's policies.

His activity in Sudan was similar to that of Liberia, but less sanguinary. Qaddafi's intervention with Charles Taylor and the NPFL associated him with one of the deadliest wars in African history. Here, he followed his pattern of intervening in intrastate conflict and exacerbating it, though Taylor and his armies would commit the atrocities on the ground, Qaddafi would financially back it. His financial and proliferate contribution to the Liberian Civil War would not stray US-Liberia relations for long and leave Qaddafi complicit in hundreds of thousands of murders.

On the other hand, Qaddafi would have a hand in brokering peace agreements between conflicting states, issuing financial assistance on the promises of using diplomacy resolving of issues, and fund and found African governing bodies. His diplomacy mechanisms post-Lockerbie, though largely reliant on oil wealth distribution, would raise his stature in international community and increase Libya's regional influence even if briefly. Economic integration and ventures like COMESSA and LIA would enhance African economies and

communities in perpetuity. His oil wealth with uphold the AU from its inception and be a large part of its sustainability and longevity.

Crucially, Qaddafi's approach to exerting influence in Africa extended beyond conventional power dynamics. He recognized the value of soft power in cultivating relationships and garnering support, employing tactics such as cultural diplomacy, economic aid, and pan-African rhetoric to bolster Libya's standing on the continent. Through initiatives like the African Union, he sought to present Libya as a champion of African unity and economic development, further enhancing its influence in regional affairs.

At any rate, Qaddafi's ambitions in Africa were not without impediments, chief among them being the opposition he faced from Western powers. His confrontational stance towards the West, coupled with Libya's alleged support for terrorism, led to international isolation and economic sanctions that hindered his ability to pursue his agenda in Africa. The West's intervention in Libya's internal affairs, exemplified by the NATO-led intervention in 2011 and the Reagan administration sheer dedication to destabilizing Libya through propaganda and funding of regional adversaries, not only curtailed Qaddafi's influence domestically but also undermined his efforts to project power across the continent.

Moreover, Libya's reliance on oil wealth as a means of exerting influence in Africa proved to be a double-edged sword. While the country's energy resources provided the colonel with significant leverage, fluctuations in global oil markets and the volatile nature of the industry left Libya vulnerable to external pressures. Forcing Qaddafi to further shift and sway from initial foreign policies and political ideologies; instead needing to adapt his politics and diplomacy to the tide of the petroleum sea. Additionally, the attempts to merge Libya with a handful of African nations, while ostensibly aimed at enhancing regional cooperation, were met with

skepticism and resistance from both domestic and international actors. Qaddafi, a political power player through and through succeeded in cultivating alliances and extending Libya's reach across the continent. But his erratic personality would stray him away from a coherent foreign policy and pull him into a direction that aligned with his personal agenda more than the greater good of Africa and Libya. His ambitions were hampered by opposition from Western powers, the volatile nature of Libya's oil-dependent economy, and the reverberations of his own military, economic and political choices. Nonetheless, Qaddafi's legacy in Africa remains a testament to his vision of pan-African solidarity and his relentless pursuit of power and influence on the continent. He will forever be etched into the fabric of African and Arab leaders who exercised significant power and influence through any means necessary, evoking neither complete hatred nor complete adoration.

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