

## Libyan War: A Just or Sinful Intervention

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**Abstract** The paper explores the recent invasion of another Muslim state under the auspices of UNSC's resolution 1973 and shouldered by NATO. The crisis in Libya leading to the invasion demands deeper understanding of the societal foundation of this North African country. It is equally important not to analyze the events in isolation and independent of the unfolding realities in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA). The Libya crisis is significant because unlike similar uprising in the region, it was singled out for foreign intervention. Thus, this piece is therefore looking at the invasion with a multifaceted lens by exploring competing worldviews on the intervention. This piece will also not fail to identify the possible fallouts of the invasion, keeping in view the opportunists and losers of the intervention. This paper argues that the military intervention in Libya depicts the continuous transformation facing the modern state system and more particularly contributes to our understanding of state sovereignty and its alterations.

**Keywords:** Humanitarian intervention, irrational action, rational choice, solidarity,

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### 1. Introduction

The treaty of Westphalia remains an undisputable watershed in international relations. It was a break and turning point from the parochial, existential, old regime of feudalism (David Held et al, 1983) The treaty paved way for the manifestation and rise of nation-state as a political player and unit. State sovereignty turned out as the most critical and prime aspect of the treaty, but such distinctive feature of the state which according to Korbin implies a world of exclusive geographic jurisdictions, where economic and political control arises from control over territory (Stephen Korbin, 1997) is getting transformed.

Arab world has long been characterized as one of the centres of authoritarian rule and oppression where the public has no gut to challenge the rulers. Such representation was demystified by recent uprisings across the Middle East and North Africa (MENA).

Giving this background, it is deem worthy to scan through competing views expounding the justification of the intervention, whether just or sinful meddling.

### 2. The Westphalian School

To start with, every critical mind of world politics and international relations abhors the invasion in all respects. The rejection of the invasion which most likely could turn out to be informal occupation is not an acknowledgement and approval of the atrocities perpetrated by Col. Gadaffi, rather a staunch belief that the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Libyan should remain impregnable. Systemic change demands no external meddling instead changing the bearing of action should always come from within. Protagonists of this argument fundamentally subscribe to the core and enshrining Westphalia framework of non-interference in internal affairs of state and the equality of state (William Nester, 2001).

### 3. Post Westphalian School

This school opined that sovereignty cannot be upheld sacred in the case of Gadaffi's brutality of his own

people that daunts every reasonable mind. Violation of human rights or aggression of state on its citizens falls into the category of violation of international norms, wherein human rights dwell. These norms have become acceptable consensus and a breach is potential enough to trigger collective reaction of the international community. Therefore, Michel Foucault helps us to better understand that the response of the UNSC at the behest of Western powers pints to the essential role of the theory of law, which is often geared at fixing and consolidating the legitimacy and domination of power that be (Michel Foucault, 1983).

Deductively, the power that be will cease to condone violation of the set of international rules and norms, particularly when such violation is sensitive to the power's interest. The latter argument settles down well with the rationalist, believing that state's choice and action is rational and appropriate because such actions suits state's national interest. The school holds that sovereignty of the second state is less substantial or more likely less important; because failure to take action might end up undermining the national interest of the state that failed to be pragmatic.

#### 4. Globalist

The afore discussed school is complemented by the Globalist. Accordingly, the demurring question to the mind of the globalist is whether the concept of sovereignty should still be respected and if at all does the foundation laid down by the Westphalia treaty is anything of substance in today's increasingly changing world. It can be rightly argued that, the foundation has lost its grip and the pillars holding sovereignty has been damaged by history and developments. Human migration either voluntarily or forcefully due to manufactured or natural risk, unintended ramifications of natural disasters, interconnectedness of global geography, the influence of globalization, violation of human rights, the interconnectedness created by the order of information technology, regionalism, institutionalism, and the global civil society to mention few have all contributed to the change facing the concept of sovereignty.

Thus, the world is believed to be driving towards a more compressed world, where time and space can be bridged with ease. It is a world where we are increasingly going cosmopolitan and trekking towards a global commonwealth. (Daniele Archibugi, 2008) Hence, the lot of Libyans, suffering under the authoritarian claws of Gaddafi should be curtailed. This should also be true for all state irrespective whether they fall into the bracket of global north or south.

#### 5. Islamic Perspective

The Libyan campaign received an obvious mixed reaction from the Muslim world. While many were dismayed by the attack as a repetition of Iraq and Afghanistan scenarios, the invasion played into the hands of religious experts of Islamic studies and law. Ian Markham among others reverberates the just war tradition, according to him eight essential principles are indispensable values even respected within the framework of Islamic concept of war. (Markham 2009) The point of argument for the latter goes deep into the Islamic jurisprudential injunction of the right to protect the oppressed people (Mustad'afin) as stated in the Qur'an

And if it were not for Allah checking some people by means of others, the earth would have been filled with mischief and corrupted, but Allah is full of bounty to the worlds. (Q2 vs. 251)

In support of the Qur'anic verse, the traditions of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) also argue in similar direction.

Narrated Anas: Allah's Messenger, peace be upon him, said, "Help your brother, whether he is an oppressor or is being oppressed." People asked, "O Allah's Messenger! We help the one being oppressed but how do we help an oppressor?" The Prophet said, "By seizing his hand (preventing him from oppression). (Sahih Bukhari, Volume 3, Book 43, Number 624)

Abu Sa'id Al-Khudri reported that messenger of Allah (PBUH) said Whoever sees something wrong should change it with his hands. If he is unable to do so, then he should do so with his tongue. If he is unable

to do so, then he should do so in his heart, and that is the weakest of faith. (Sahih Muslim, Volume 1, Number 79, p.33)

The Qur'anic verse and traditions are clear indication that Islam as a religion does not cherish the ideas of authoritarianism, oppression and aggression. This argument is an entrenched principle of the concept of enjoining good and forbidding mischief, *Amr bil Ma'ruf wa Nahy an al Munkar* امر بالمعروف و نهى عن المنكر. The debate created by the Libyan campaign within the epistemic Islamic community was a testimony that argumentative and intellectual enterprise is not a dead exercise amongst the Muslims. It further shows that Muslims like every other citizens of the world can abide by the international norms guiding global conduct. Conspicuously, this explains why the Arab League conceded to the UN resolution<sup>1</sup> that action should be taken to change the cause of event in Libya.

## 6. Psychological Approach

One needs to comprehend the rationale behind Gaddafi's behaviour. In recent past history of Libya not much has been articulated on human right violation by the Gaddafi's networking regime. Clear enough the domino and neighbourhood effect of the uprising in North Africa is explicable for the behavioural change in Gaddafi. Michie et al (2008) identifies environment, consequences, emotion and capabilities among others as behavioural determinants for which Gaddafi's action can better keep a meaning (Michie et al 2008).

Gaddafi's actions turned out as departure from the pace set by the street uprisings against authoritarian North African regimes. The transition from authoritarian to aspired democracy, though unexpectedly caught the imagination of the advance democracies wanting no stone unturned in the region. Therefore, in the perspective of the advance democracies, Gaddafi's shocking response to the street actions is un-condonable, thereby inspired the UNSC's resolution<sup>2</sup> to put a stop to unwarranted mass killing of Libyans.

The UN resolution and NATO intervention in Libya requires a deep psychological and sociological appraisal. The extent to which the intervention can alter behavioural determinants and behavioural change was not articulated.

Psychologically speaking, the efficacy of the intervention can actually be measured if it targets the causal determinants and behavioural change in the context of Gaddafi. Therefore, failure to understand the causal determinants delineates the deficiency in the planning of those who hastily launched the campaign against Libya.

## 7. Humanitarian Premise

The resolution was punctuated with the language of humanitarian intervention as justification for the technical violation of Libya's integrity and sovereignty. Michelle Maiese opined that "humanitarian intervention is the threat or use of military force primarily for the purpose of protecting the nationals of the target state from gross and systematic human rights violations, (Maiese 2004) intervention deliberately and nonconsensual invades state's sovereignty agencies. The ultimate aim of intervention cannot be disconnected from the intention to weigh in considerable pressure on the invaded state to change cause of action.<sup>3</sup>

Humanitarian intervention is a muddy discourse in International Relations, a polarizing debate between

<sup>1</sup> Arabnews.com, "Arab League chief says respects UN resolution; Putin likens Libya force to Crusades," March 21, 2011  
<http://arabnews.com/middleeast/article324324.ece>

<sup>2</sup> Department of Public Information, News and Media Division, "Security Council Approves 'No-Fly Zone' over Libya, Authorizing 'All Necessary: Measures' to Protect Civilians, by Vote of 10 in Favour with 5 Abstentions," New York, March 17, 2011..  
<http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2011/sc10200.doc.htm>

<sup>3</sup> Paul Taylor, "The United Nations and International Order," in *The Globalization of World Politics*, ed. John Baylis and Steve Smith, 340 (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 2001).

the realist and idealist, highly controversial because it raises the question of legitimacy.<sup>4</sup> The legality of military intervention often brings a shadow of doubt on the United Nations, which has become the platform for certain nations to clamour for global governance.<sup>5</sup> This view espouses the rationalist theory of international relations that state's sovereignty becomes immaterial when issues of global consequences surface. The question raised by this standpoint is that the international system will remain anarchic and every state will strive protecting itself and acting according to its will, without respecting international norms.

But more importantly, intervention requires a huge budget and coalesces with the operation of the world system guided by few powers, paranoid of seeing their interest undermined in foreign nations, hence necessitating intervention cloaked with different narratives and names. Such an argument amplifies the concept of hegemonic stability,<sup>6</sup> a premise for powerful states to combine mercantilist and dependence strategies for the maintenance of global order.<sup>7</sup>

Foreign military intervention shatters the territorial integrity and integration of states. This is true for the Indian intervention in the conflict of United Pakistan leading to the creation of Bangladesh.<sup>8</sup> Same is true for the dismemberment of Yugoslavia.<sup>9</sup> Our understanding of international affairs remains fresh as to how NATO's intervention on the premise of humanitarian and just war ultimately dismembered Yugoslavia into seven sovereign states.<sup>10</sup>

Regardless of the veracity of humanitarian intervention, the implicit yet obvious paradigm is the continuation of hegemonic stability and infringement of a free state's sovereignty.

In the heart of this discussion surfaces the strong role of foreign intervention as impetus and stimulus for further creation of states on world map on one hand and on the other as energizer for secessionist tendencies among rebel groups.

The Libyan intervention shares certain commonalities with the Balkan intervention although dissimilar in many degrees. The intervention policy of the interveners exacerbates the tempo of enmity instead of reducing the moral hazard the intervention was expected to achieve.<sup>11</sup> It is true from all newspaper reports that though before the intervention animosity between the rebel and Gaddafi was incubating, upon the intervention the enmity further strengthened and unwarranted killing of innocents on both sides exacerbated.

Among the compelling arguments of scholars is that foreign military intervention is often expected to bring about socio-economic and political changes, particularly from authoritarian to democratic system and a total transformation of the invaded society.<sup>12</sup>

Such theoretical approach does not necessarily portray the ground reality. The empirical military intervention in Iraq and Afghanistan evidently challenges this approach. If the disciplines of social sciences scout for patterns, therefore Iraq and Afghanistan are recent most empirical reality explicable to predict the outcome of intervention of Libya.

The ironic face of international affairs is that belligerent actions have not been efficacious enough to transform invaded society. The lesson from American intervention in Latin America, Indian involvement in

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<sup>4</sup> Charles W. Kegley Jr. and Eugene R. Wittkopf, *World Politics: Trend and Transformation*, 9<sup>th</sup> ed. Wadsworth, London: 2004), 258.

<sup>5</sup> Paul Taylor, "The United Nations and International Order," in *The Globalization of World Politics*, ed. John Baylis and Steve Smith, 341 (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 2001).

<sup>6</sup> Tim Dunne and Brian C. Schmidt, "Realism," in *The Globalization of World Politics*, ed. John Baylis and Steve Smith, 151 (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 2001).

<sup>7</sup> William Nester, *International Relations: Politics and Economics in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, Belmont: Wadsworth. 2001), 12.

<sup>8</sup> Onkar Marwah "India's Military Intervention in East Pakistan, 1971–1972," *Modern Asian Studies*, 13, (1979): 549-580

<sup>9</sup> P. H. Liotta, *Dismembering The State: The Death of Yugoslavia and Why It Matters*, (Maryland: Lexington Books, 2001), 11.

<sup>10</sup> Mona Fixdal and Dan Smith, "Humanitarian Intervention and Just War," *Mershon International Studies Review*, Volume 42, Issue 2, (November, 1998): 283–312.

<sup>11</sup> Alan J. Kuperman, "The Moral Hazard of Humanitarian Intervention: Lessons from the Balkans," *International Studies Quarterly*, Volume 52, Issue 1, (March, 2008).

<sup>12</sup> Jeffrey Pickering and Emizet F. Kisangani, "Political, Economic, and Social Consequences of Foreign Military Intervention," *Political Research Quarterly*, Vol. 59, No. 3 (Sep., 2006): 363-376

United Pakistan, NATO operation in former Yugoslavia, US-led invasion of Iraq and Afghanistan are all reality checklists. It is not therefore implausible to surmise the end to the Libyan campaign, more importantly giving the networking of the tribal political culture of the Libyan society.<sup>13</sup>

Thus, a rethinking of strategy by the matured democracies is overdue that military intervention on the premise of promoting democracy and harmonious international environment requires a reappraisal.<sup>14</sup> Actual social and democratic change is bound to germinate only from within without forceful meddling by external entity.

The extent to which military interventions have actually produced the objectives for which it was launched is questionable. In the case of Libya, NATO shouldered the task of protecting Libyan civilians but there have been reports challenging the legality of NATO operation. NATO forces have been accused of killing civilians they claimed to have come to protect. The news was challenging as to the justification of fighting Gaddafi for killing civilians.<sup>15</sup>

This further probes into the discourse whether military intervention is efficacious enough to effect a democratic dispensation. The action of the interveners has often resulted to either regime change or certain degree of political transformation, but has always failed to produce, instead facilitating illiberal democratic systems.<sup>16</sup> In the case of Libya, things could be much complicated owing to the tribal political culture on one hand and on the other, the actual readiness of the rebel to move on with democratic dispensation.<sup>17</sup> The question raised by this is whether the prerequisites for democracy are actually in place and how trustworthy is the democratic pedigree of the rebel leaders, who now shake hand of western leaders and believes to be hero if not later villain like Gaddafi.

The attack on Libya under the auspices of the UNSC's resolution was laden with both implicit and explicit intentions. Craving for humanitarian intervention crept up as the unambiguous intent yet embedded with hidden agenda by the invaders to phase out Gaddafi from political scene. Even if Gaddafi gets eliminated from the larger picture of Libyan political landscape, it is hard to tell the extent to which the intervention can bring about democratization process, another covert intention of the invaders. Gaddafi's Libya is remotely far from such transition; transformation from authoritarianism to democracy as facilitated by the U.S and EU in Latin America<sup>18</sup> requires preexisting domestic effort and political institutions that can help drive the invaded country to the shore of democracy instead of foreign military intervention by democracies.<sup>19</sup>

## 8. Fallouts of the Invasion

Authoritarianism is a cancer in the developing world and must be treated within. Change has never been effective if dictated or forced by external forces, though ideas for change can be imported. The Arab Spring authenticates this argument as Tunisians set the page for the rejection of authoritarianism in the region. It was a great structural shock for the governments of the region that their subjects can one day ask for their exit or display enormous discontentment for undemocratic governance. Such developments further confirm

<sup>13</sup> Amal Obeidi, *Political culture in Libya*, (Cornwall: Curzon Press, 2001), 131.

<sup>14</sup> Charles W. Kegley Jr. Margaret G. Hermann, "Military intervention and the democratic peace," *International Interactions: Empirical and Theoretical Research in International Relations*, Volume 21, Issue 1, (1995): 1-21.

<sup>15</sup> Valentina Pop, "NATO frets over civilian casualties in Libya," *Euobserver*, April 1, 2011  
<http://euobserver.com/13/32106>

<sup>16</sup> Fareed Zakaria, *The Future of Freedom: Illiberal Democracy at Home and Abroad*, (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2007)

<sup>17</sup> Ben Hubbard, "Official: Libyan rebels seek democracy," Associated Press Sunday April 3, 2011  
[http://news.yahoo.com/s/ap/20110403/ap\\_on\\_bi\\_ge/af\\_libya\\_931](http://news.yahoo.com/s/ap/20110403/ap_on_bi_ge/af_libya_931)

<sup>18</sup> Richard Youngs, "The European Union and Democracy in Latin America", *Latin American Politics and Society*, Vol. 44, no. 3 (Autumn, 2002)

<sup>19</sup> Bruce Bueno de Mesquita, George W. Downs, "Intervention and Democracy," *International Organization*, Vol. 60, No. 3, Summer, (2006): 627.

and endorse the assertions of John I. Esposito and Dalia Mogahed that Muslims do not share dissimilar democratic views as the rest of the world.<sup>20</sup>

The new World Order of information technology has not isolated the Muslim world, rather it has spotlighted and integrated them with the rest of the world in the new apolitical, non economic public sphere characterized as social networking. Due to the independence of this new World Order, both the anti-government and pro-government street protests take advantage of this medium as platform for the galvanization of support.

The social networking was a representation of the circulation of ideas at the people's level, while the humanitarian intervention in the case of Libya stands for the arrival of the messiah. But the problem with the latter is that ovation do not always last long for messiah. Iraq and Afghanistan attacks indicated that the invaders were welcomed and given fairly good reception at the inception but time became the determinant factor revoking this ovation. The image of the other played a great deal to demystify the messiah. In case of Libya, such image is bound to be enlarged giving the tribal configuration of the society. In fact the exasperation of the Libyan uprising reminds one of the Khaldunian theory of *Asabiyah*, a solidarity which is responsible for the rise and fall of a government, regime, empire, dynasties and civilizations.<sup>21</sup> The dislocation of the social capital or solidarity (*Asabiyah*) became more salient upon the incursion of foreign forces and time will be the best judge to adjudicate if Libyan society will further splinter into a civil war in after out-facing Gadaffi.

The aftermath of 9/11 and the war on terrorism were regarded as affront to Islam and the Muslim world. September the 11 was the launching pad for the attack of Iraq and Afghanistan, which invariably heightens global anti-Americanism in general and particularly in the Muslim societies.<sup>22</sup> 9/11 attack was on the heartland of American political, economic and military establishment and therefore the least was less expected as retaliation from world acclaimed super power. The democratic change that brought President Obama to the White House reviewed American foreign policy with the rest of the world and a careful attention to the Muslim world<sup>23</sup> in bid to emasculate the potency of anti-Americanism.

The accomplishment of such task was practically impossible at the shortest time, even though Obama's ambition was cynically received as nothing new from previous promises. The American government like every other power was caught by surprise when the Arab street protest emerged without a written signal on the wall. Hence, reaction was cautious and Washington carefully avoided a new wave of anti-Americanism. It has had enough in the Muslim world and getting bogged down in Libya could aggravate the yet to fully recovery American economy.

The Russian and Chinese UNSC envoys strategically played the alibi game during the UNSC deliberation whether or not to intervene in Libya. The abstention of the two can be read with different goggle. They are veto members and having the prerogative to veto the decision, but due to their own interest, being absent can always be the easy passage without drawing serious criticism. According to the International Energy Agency, Libya produces 1.6 million barrels per day of crude, 2% of the world's output.<sup>24</sup> This contribution matters to global economy, meanwhile being in crisis, that output is dwindling. According to the report compiled by Reuters

Europe is the customer most affected by Libyan oil export disruptions. About 32 percent of the oil goes

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<sup>20</sup> John I. Esposito and Dalia Mogahed, *Who Speaks for Islam, What a Billion Muslims Really Think*, (Gallup Press, 2008)

<sup>21</sup> Ibn Khaldun, *The Muqaddimah: An Introduction to History*, translated by Franz Rosenthal, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1967), xi.

<sup>22</sup> Yannis A. Stivachtis, "Understanding Anti-Americanism," Research Institute for European and American Studies (RIEAS) *Research Paper*, No. 109, MAY 2007

<sup>23</sup> The White House, Office of the Press Secretary. "Remarks by The President, On a New Beginning: Cairo University," Cairo, Egypt, June 4, 2009.

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/remarks-president-cairo-university-6-04-09>

<sup>24</sup> *BBC News*, "Oil prices hit fresh highs on Libya unrest fears," February 24, 2011.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-12563063>

to Italy, 14 percent to Germany, 10 percent to China and France and 5 percent to the United States. Libyan oil accounts for about 23 percent of Ireland's oil and about 22 percent of Italy's, according to the IEA. Around 13 percent goes east of the Suez Canal to Asia.<sup>25</sup>

Owing to the large scale political unrest in the Arab world and members of OPEC, it is evident that certain global power will take situational advantage of the moment. Russia as the world's number one exporter of natural gas and with the world's largest reserves arguably welcomes the consternation in the Arab world as that will further accord Kremlin the energy leverage it has always wanted. This sway, Europeans have nurtured with fear. In one analytical piece of *Stratfor*, the Kremlin is the one power that has the luxury to take stock of Arab Spring in relative comfort.<sup>26</sup> Therefore the attack on Libya does not necessarily affects Russia instead raises its economic and financial status and to muscle up while there is fire on the mountains of Arab OPEC countries.

Unlike Russia, China is not an energy giant rather a gigantic energy consumer. The Chinese economy needed no introduction as one of the fast growing economies, which now hold the status of the second largest economy outpacing Japan, but tailing behind the U.S economy.<sup>27</sup> This member of BRICS has extended its economic tentacle the world over; it has left no continent un-shocked. Irrespective of the claim of the Chinese National Petroleum Corporation that "Crude oil sourced from Libya only accounted for about 3% of China's total imports so the impact on crude supply is very limited," the fact still remain that China's 50 large scale projects in Libya that involving US\$18.8 billion cannot be underestimated.<sup>28</sup>

War is increasingly becoming an unpredictable phenomenon, thus, China is availing no chances to be left out from being part of end determinant factors. Increasingly, the rebels have made headway and now recognised as legitimate authority, prior to that they have indeed commanded the attention of all stakeholders in Libyan endowed natural resources. The European Union has been working with the rebels on the platform of building democratic institutions,<sup>29</sup> hoping that with democratic institutions, viable economic relations can be achieved. In similar vein, Chinese diplomat got hand shake with the leader of the rebel National Transitional Council,<sup>30</sup> an indication that upon an eventual Gaddafi's departure, China's position will still be relevant.

Before the intervention, Libya-Italy relation had no stain; Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi and Gadaffi maintain good rapport, while economic and financial intercourse between them is represented by huge Italian investment in Libya. In addition, Gadaffi has always tour Europe, but having Italy as a core country, to the extent of addressing Italian parliament. Italy's proximity with North Africa pinches Rome the most as compared to the rest of Europe.

Italy's concerns in Libya are far more immediate. As the closest European nation to Libya, as well as to Tunisia and Egypt, Italy's economic well-being depends heavily on having a good relationship with North Africa. Italy consumes 32 percent of Libya's oil output and it handles much of the trade between North Africa and the rest of Europe. The Arab uprisings have severely disrupted both the flow of oil and of maritime trade. Italy's economic interest would have probably been best served by there being no intervention at all.<sup>31</sup>

Beside the economic gap created by the Libyan crisis, Italy had to struggle with the influx of immigrants

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<sup>25</sup> *Reuters*, "Factbox-Libyan Oil Production, Outage, Exports, Customers," March 2, 2011.  
<http://af.reuters.com/article/energyOilNews/idAFLDE72018W20110302>

<sup>26</sup> *Stratfor*, "Russia Rises Amid Geopolitical Events," Austin, March 15, 2011.

<sup>27</sup> Tomoko A. Hosaka, "China surpasses Japan as world's No. 2 Economy," *The Washington Post*, August 16, 2010.  
<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/08/15/AR2010081503697.html>

<sup>28</sup> *Chemconsulting*, "Will Libya's Unrest Affect Chinese Oil Companies' Businesses?,"  
[http://www.chemconsulting.com.cn/info\\_detail01.asp?id=8047&oid=53](http://www.chemconsulting.com.cn/info_detail01.asp?id=8047&oid=53)

<sup>29</sup> Andrew Rettman, "EU to open office in Libyan rebel stronghold," *Euobserver*, May 11, 2011 <http://euobserver.com/9/32310>

<sup>30</sup> Peter Graff, "China meets Libya rebels in latest blow to Gaddafi," *Reuters*, June 3, 2011.  
<http://www.reuters.com/article/2011/06/03/us-libya-idUSTRE7270JP20110603>

<sup>31</sup> Max Fisher, "Ghosts of Iraq: Why the War Against Libya Remains Leaderless," *The Atlantic*, March 23 2011.

<http://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2011/03/ghosts-of-iraq-why-the-war-against-libya-remains-leaderless/72916/>

pushed out by the uprising.<sup>32</sup> The immigration issue almost caused diplomatic brawl among EU members, as few of the Schengen members opted to enforce national prerogative on their borders in an attempt to stamp down unwanted immigrants.<sup>33</sup>

The memory of the past is psychologically un-detachable, as the shadow of man cannot be avoided. The reminiscence of segment of North Africa being part of larger French Empire remains a mesmerizing thought. The French cannot get over it, though upon assuming the Elysée Palace, President Sarkozy suggested a new dawn of relations between Paris and its former colonies. According to him, Paris should ditch the colonial partnership and should rather relate on the platform of "partnership between equal nations"<sup>34</sup> Such propensity could help understand the rationale behind the creation of the 43-nation Mediterranean Union established in July 2008 in Paris by France and Egypt in a bid to foster cooperation, promoting stability and prosperity throughout the Mediterranean region.<sup>35</sup>

Paris could not absolve the humiliation following the Tunisian uprising and the ultimate ousting of Zine el-Abidine Ben Ali.<sup>36</sup> Hence, the domino effect created by the Tunisian crisis was carefully monitored by Paris and thus the hasty intervention impulse of President Sarkozy to craft a diplomatic stunt as champion of the Mediterranean.

The Libyan crisis equally turned out to be a political exploit moment for President Sarkozy, whose political circle was fallen apart as France prepares for next presidential elections. Sarkozy's political rating remains at record low and facing critical contest within his own UMP party and from arch rivals like the Far-right party and the Socialist. Tapping into the sensibility of the French, the French president has to perform a magic, potential enough to make UMP retain the Elysée Palace.

The North African political uprisings and particularly the Libyan outrageous scenario became the magical momentous moment for Sarkozy to upgrade his rating and showcase the diplomatic weight of Paris in global affairs. The situation could be likened with the American system, where domestic politics is not always at the grip of the White House and when the tough gets going, American presidents always exploit events of foreign affairs to rebound their positions,<sup>37</sup> same could be deduced from the action of President Sarkozy.

The Arab uprisings have no direct effect on the British government but tacitly having to do with British economic and financial interest in the region. Although, London like few within its caucus could claim that the international community will spare no time to accommodate further atrocities of Gaddafi and therefore military intervention on premise of humanitarianism is justified.

The release of Abdel Basit al-Meghrahi, the man convicted of the 1988 Lockerbie bombing in which 270 people died<sup>38</sup> was still fresh and was an unsettled business for the British Conservatives as well as many who held the release as swap politics for Libyan oil, though the then ruling Labour Party rejected that

<sup>32</sup> Leigh Phillips, "Italy and Malta want special summits on Africa crisis," *Euobserver*, February 14, 2011  
<http://euobserver.com/9/31803>

<sup>33</sup> *Warsaw Business Journal*, "EU official says no to North African migrants," February 25 2011  
<http://www.wbj.pl/article-53409-eu-official-says-no-to-north-african-migrants.html?typ=ise>

<sup>34</sup> Henri Astier, "Sarkozy's Africa policy shift," *BBC News*, September 26 2007.  
<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/7014776.stm>

<sup>35</sup> *AFP*, "Mediterranean summit delayed to allow Mideast dialogue," May 21, 2010.  
<http://www.thedailynewsegyp.com/egypt/mediterranean-summit-delayed-to-allow-mideast-dialogue.html>

<sup>36</sup> Toby Vogel, "Tunisia's president ousted," *EuropeanVoice*, January 14, 2011.  
<http://www.europeanvoice.com/article/2011/january/tunisia-s-president-ousted/69942.aspx>

<sup>37</sup> George Friedman, "U.S. Midterm Elections, Obama and Iran," *Stratfor*, Austin, October 26, 2010

<sup>38</sup> Ian Cobain, Amelia Hill, Kartik Mehta, "Saif al-Islam Gaddafi: LSE-educated man the west can no longer deal with," *Guardian*, February 21, 2011  
<http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2011/feb/21/saif-al-islam-gaddafi>



insinuation.<sup>39</sup>

Maneuverability theory is an elucidating window for the understanding of how interest groups manipulate their ways to making their objectives achieved. This is a clear indication that an individual or group can mobilizes appropriate resources to sway others actions.<sup>40</sup> The leverage of multinational companies like the British Petroleum (BP) in global financial happenings and particularly in the energy sector remains uncontested. Being within the bracket of the third world, endowed with large reserve of crude oil but lacking the technology know-how to explore and exploit it endowment puts Libya at the mercy of the developed multinational oil companies. It requires less logic to surmise that BP would be interested in Libya's oil sector, a sector that has long been dominated by other European companies. The renewal of relations and visit of ex-PM Tony Blair to Libya cleared the path for BP to make footing in Libya.<sup>41</sup> Despite the tight relation, Washington was cynical of Blair's visit as depicted in one of the US embassy cables.<sup>42</sup>

Britain's participation in the swift UNSC resolution is more or less pay back time, as the Conservative-led government still had an axe to grind with Gadaffi

## 9. Irrational Rational Choice

The power tussle state system makes every state believes it choice of decision and actions are rational. Humanitarian intervention in Libya comes under the purview of rational choice. This debate remains an unfinished discourse in international relations domain, dragging between the idea of morality and sense of responsibility. If the choice of decisions and actions of states are rational, therefore the existence of negative externalities from state's decisions demand critical recheck.

Arms conflict is assumed to be the extension of diplomacy and politics<sup>43</sup> and the cogent objective of war is always to incapacitate the other party. In the case of Libya like every other war in the modern times, the belligerent action cloaked humanitarian as yet to signal an eventual end. The Libyan campaign was a hasty and inept decision, lacking strategic plan. The disagreement among NATO members whether or not to shoulder the responsibility delineated such lack<sup>44</sup> and in fact depicted the myopic understanding of the French general opinion that the Libyan operation should be done in weeks.<sup>45</sup>

If being democratic will bring the world to the shore of harmonious co-existence as Kant suggests in his idea of democratic peace. Democratic state will neither fight nor threaten other democracies as an integral rational disposition of democracy.<sup>46</sup> But where rest the rationality and justification for democracies to be instrumental in the regression of development in a country like Libya. The new nature of warfare makes us more beastly and irrational than animals. We act then think instead of otherwise, yet we claim civility. The amount galvanized and expended on belligerent actions could be best channeled to many productive areas.

<sup>39</sup> *MSNBC*, "Britain denies oil link to bomber's release," August 22, 2009

[http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/32513985/ns/world\\_news-terrorism/t/britain-denies-oil-link-bombers-release/](http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/32513985/ns/world_news-terrorism/t/britain-denies-oil-link-bombers-release/)

<sup>40</sup> William Nester, *International Relations: Politics and Economics in the 21st Century*, Belmont: Wadsworth. 2001), 81.

<sup>41</sup> Jason Drew, "BP Expanding Oil Interest in Libya," *Electric.co.uk*, August 19th, 2009

<http://www.electric.co.uk/news/bp-expanding-oil-interest-in-libya-12341083.html> and Nabila Ramdani, Tim Shipman and Tom Leonard,

"Please help us, my good friend Tony Blair: Gaddafi's son asks for former PM's help to 'crush enemies'," *Dailymail*, February 25, 2011

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-1360472/Libya-Gaddafis-son-asks-Tony-Blairs-help-crush-enemies.html>

<sup>42</sup> *Guardian*, "US embassy cables: US suspicion surrounds Tony Blair's visit to Libya," December 7 2010

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/us-embassy-cables-documents/221905>

<sup>43</sup> Richard Ned Lebow, *The Tragic Vision of Politics: Ethics, Interests and Orders*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 37.

<sup>44</sup> Patrick Goodenough, "United Nations, NATO Divided Over Libya 'No-Fly Zone' Proposal," *CNSNews.com*, March 10, 2011

<http://www.cnsnews.com/news/article/united-nations-nato-divided-over-libya-n>

<sup>45</sup> *Radio France International*, "Operation in Libya over within weeks, says French military," March 25, 2011

<http://www.english.rfi.fr/africa/20110325-no-fly-operation-libya-over-within-weeks-says-french-military>

<sup>46</sup> Michael Edward Brown, Sean M. Lynn-Jones and Steven E. Miller, *Debating the Democratic Peace*, (Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1996), 160.

This is not the juncture or argument for pacifism rather a critique of how rational choice has caused more damage than bringing bliss.

Where rest the rational choice for destruction then followed by reconstruction. The damage of Iraq and Afghanistan wars aggregately outmatched the period before the war. The blood spilled by Gaddafi before the humanitarian intervention is relatively lesser and thus explains the ire of Libyans against President Sarkozy.<sup>47</sup> One, NATO superior war machineries have the potential to cause more destruction than the moribund apparatus of Gaddafi. Two, NATO infringement of Libyan's sovereignty further aggravated Gaddafi's absurd temperament to apparently cause more ruin on lives and properties. Three, the combine actions of NATO, pro-Gaddafi and anti-Gaddafi actions constitute the irrational rational choice.

Thomas Jefferson is believed to have said "war is as much a punishment for the punisher as it is to the suffer," doubting such classic and sagacious thought will be standing aloof from the truth.

It is not a debatable matter that Gaddafi should have been allowed to continue striking fear in the heart of innocent Libyans. It is legitimate that Gaddafi should be made to fathom the need to conform to international norms as in the protection of human rights. But the question, how much time was accorded to diplomacy to make him see sense. Little or no time was spare, instead the power that he had their ulterior motive for swift action against the long seated leader of Libya. If Gaddafi is complicit and should be held accountable for such criminal actions, then nothing should have stopped the same powers to intervene when Israel assaulted Gaza in 2008<sup>48</sup> and to the extent to using White phosphorus on Gaza civilians.<sup>49</sup>

The Libyan campaign further justifies the realist school of power politics that characterizes the world order. The attack on Libya was selective as far as rational choice is concerned and a message of time out continues to be relayed to Gaddafi. The latter should also make a choice whether to adhere to international norms or endangers Libya's sovereignty due to his own irrational rational decision. However, it worth mentioning that neither Gaddafi, anti-Gaddafi nor the NATO's action goes well with Pope Benedict's assertion that "violence never comes from God, never helps bring anything good, but is a destructive means and not the path to escape difficulties,"<sup>50</sup>

Meanwhile, if selective justice is not detracted from international affairs, otherwise authoritarian states and leaders would not discontinue their illogical temperament. The attack could be a stimulus for the likes of Gaddafi to revisit nuclear ambition, hoping to protect their power and deter belligerent force from infringing their sovereignty.

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<sup>49</sup> James Hider and Sheera Frenkel, "Israel admits using White Phosphorous in attacks on Gaza," *The Times*, January 24, 2009.

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