

**‘Talking to the Desert’
Discourse, Power, and Libyan Geopolitics
1969-2009**

BY

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Abstract

This research examines Libyan geopolitical discourse over the 40 years from 1969 to 2009 — that is, the period following the revolution which brought Muammar Abu Minyar Al-Qaddafi to the leadership of that country. It asks how and why Libyan geopolitical discourse changed over this period. To answer this question, it reviews the scholarly literature bearing on Qaddafi and Libya's international and strategic relations; it analyses 188 speeches delivered by Qaddafi; it examines interviews, books and documents by him; and it draws on interviews conducted by the author with Libyan political commentators. It hypothesises that, in response to threats to Libyan sovereignty and survival, Qaddafi repeatedly shifted Libyan geopolitical discourse in a way that amounted to a tactically polyvalent responsive-defensive strategy. In sustaining the hypothesis, it makes several findings. It methodically establishes that Qaddafi was the progenitor of Libyan geopolitical discourse. It reveals the ideational content of Qaddafi's discourse in terms of its lexicology, placing him within the Arab nationalist lexicon derived from Nasserism. It demonstrates that Qaddafi used, mainly, three verbal discursive strategies in constructing and reconstructing Libyan geopolitical discourse — lexical reiteration, presupposition and indexicals — plus visual imagery and symbolism. It argues a three-stage periodisation of Libyan geopolitical discourse: pan-Arab, pan-African and Libya as a nation-for-itself. These changes at geopolitical level, however, never challenged Qaddafi's and Libya's commitment to their Arab identity. It finds that discursive change came as a response to threats to Libyan sovereignty or security and was intended to defend Libya against, or mitigate, these threats. It reveals subtleties in his view of Libyan security as a means to unite Arab and African worlds, rather than preferring one over the other. That is to say, Qaddafi's move towards Africa implied a rejection of Arab governments but not of the Arab world, of which he continued to consider himself and Libya a part. And, finally it finds that, although discourses appeared sometimes to be mutually or internally contradictory, they were intended to serve the same strategy: namely to protect Libyan sovereignty and security. That is to say, discursive change served a tactically polyvalent responsive-defensive strategy.

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Abbreviations

AMU	Arab Maghreb Union
ASU	Arab Socialist Union
AU	African Union
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
BPC	Basic People's Congress
CEN-SAD	Sahel and Saharan States
CDA	Critical Discourse Analysis
DA	Discourse Analysis
FUO	Free Unionist Officers
GA	UN General Assembly
GPC	General People's Congress
IRA	Irish Republican Army
LIFG	Libyan Islamic Fighting Group
NAM	Non-Aligned Movement
OAU	Organization of African Union
PLO	Palestine Liberation Organisation
RC	Revolutionary Committee
RCC	Revolutionary Command Council
UAR	United Arab Republic
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
US	United States
USSR	Soviet Union
WMD	Weapons of Mass Destruction
WCAR	UN World Conference against Racism

Glossary of Arabic Terms

<i>Abeed</i>	Slaves
<i>Al</i>	Arabic definite article (the)
<i>Al-adow</i>	Enemy
<i>Al-andema al-Arabiya</i>	Arab regimes
<i>Al-ard al-moqadasa</i>	Holy Land
<i>Al-atehad al-Afriqe</i>	African Union
<i>Al-awlama</i>	Globalisation
<i>Al-fadah al-Afriqe</i>	African space
<i>Al-Hodud al-mostanah</i>	Artificial borders
<i>Al-ishtirakiyya</i>	Socialism
<i>Al-Jama'a al-Islamiya al-Muqatila bi-Libya</i>	Libyan Islamic Fighting Group
<i>Al-Maghreb</i>	Western Islamic World
<i>Al-Mashrek</i>	Eastern Islamic World
<i>Al-Masjid Al-Aqsa</i>	The Farthest Mosque
<i>Al-qawmiya al-Arabiya</i>	Arab nationalism
<i>Al-Sakhra</i>	Rock
<i>Al-salebiyah</i>	Crusade
<i>Al-Sunisia</i>	Religious reformist order in Libya
<i>Al-shab al-Arabi</i>	Arab people
<i>Al-uruba</i>	Arabism
<i>Al-uruba al-shamela</i>	Pan-Arabism
<i>Al-wajoud</i>	Existence
<i>Al-walayyat al-motaheda al-Afriqiyah</i>	United States of Africa
<i>Al-Wuhda</i>	Unity
<i>Al-Wuhda al-Arabiya</i>	Arab unity
<i>Al-Wuhda al-Arabiya al-samela</i>	Pan-Arab unity
<i>Al-Wuhda al-Afriqiyah</i>	African unity
<i>Amir</i>	Commander
<i>Amn</i>	Security
<i>Ard alarab</i>	Arab land
<i>Ard Wahda</i>	One land
<i>Asabiya</i>	Solidarity
<i>Ba'ath</i>	Resurrection
<i>Baitul-Maqdis</i>	Jerusalem
<i>Caliph</i>	Successor
<i>Defah</i>	Defence
<i>Diafa</i>	Hospitality
<i>Estamar</i>	Colonialism
<i>Furusiyya</i>	Chivalry
<i>Harakat al-Lajan ath-Whawrea</i>	Revolutionary Committee Movement
<i>Haram ash-Sharif</i>	Sacred Noble Sanctuary
<i>Hesar</i>	Sanctions
<i>Huriyya</i>	Freedom
<i>Gographiyah</i>	Geography
<i>Ihtelal</i>	Occupation
<i>Imperialiah</i>	Imperialism
<i>Intifada</i>	Popular resistance

Iqlimiyya
Isra' and Mi'raj
Istqlal
Istekrar
Italia
Jamahiriya
Jihad
Kaabah
Karama
Keyana
Kowa
Lugoa
Makkah
Meccan
Moqawama
Moamara
Moujabah
Nasserism
Onsorea
Qibla
Sahyouniah
Shab Arabi Wahd
Shab Wahd
Sultat al-sha'b
Shaykh
Tahade
Tahrier
Tarekh
Turath
Umma
Umma Wahda
Wajeb watane
Watan
Youjabah
Yum al-hedad

Regionalism
Prophet Mohammed's Night Journey
Independence
Stability
Italy
State of the Masses
Holy war
Cubic building in Mecca
Dignity
Betrayal
Strength
Language
The holiest city in Islam
Place
Resistance
Plot
Confront
The thought of Gamal Abdul Nasser
Racism
Muslims' praying direction
Zionism
One Arab People
One people
The Authority of People
Tribal leader or religious teacher
Challenge
Liberation
History
Heritage
Community of Muslims
One Nation
National duty
Fatherland
Confront
26th October: day of sadness

Chronology of major events of Libyan political history

1551: Ottoman rule begins in Libya

1804: US frigate Philadelphia captured off coast of Tripoli.

1911: Italy invades Libya.

1931: Omar al-Mukhtar captured and hanged by the Italian fascists.

1943: Italy defeated by the UK and French forces.

1951: Libya achieves independence under constitutional monarchy of King Idris.

1953: Libya joins Arab League.

1955: Libya joins UN.

1959: Oil discovered in Cyrenaica.

1961: Libya becomes major oil exporter.

1964: Jamal Abdul Nasser calls for the closure of the foreign bases in Libya.

1969: September 1 1969: King Idris overthrown by group of young military officers led by Muammar Al-Qaddafi. **September 13 1969:** Qaddafi nominated president of Revolutionary Command Council.

1970: Union between Egypt, Sudan and Libya (Tripoli Charter). **March 28 1970:** UK military installations at Tobruk closed. **June 11 1970:** US facilities at Wheelus Air Force Base near Tripoli closed.

1971: April 17 1971: Federation of Arab Republics (Egypt, Syria, and Libya).

1972: August 2 1972: Union between Egypt and Libya.

1973: April 15 1973: Qaddafi announces 'popular revolution'. **October 1973:** Libya nationalizes oil companies. **1973:** Union between Algeria and Libya (Hassi Messaoud Accords).

1974: January 12 1974: Union between Tunisia and Libya (Jerba Declaration).

1975: May 12 1975: September 12: First US economic sanctions against Libya.

1976: September 17 1976: Publication of part 1 of *The Green Book: The Solution of the Problem of Democracy* by Qaddafi.

1977: March 2 1977: Qaddafi declares the 'authority of the people', which he defines as a state of the masses governed directly by people through People's Congresses. Country's name changes to The Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya. **July:** Egypt-Libya border war. **November 1977:** Publication of the part 2 of *The Green Book: the Solution of the Economic Problem*. **November 6 1977:** The Revolutionary

Committee emerges to direct and further the aims of the revolution. **December 1977:** Creation of the Confrontation Front between Libya, Algeria, Syria, and the Palestine Liberation Front. It was a political initiative against the Egyptian President Anwar Sadat's visit to Jerusalem in November 1977 that led to peace with Israel.

1978: March 2 1978: Libyan cabinet is replaced by General People's Committees.

1979: January 1979: Libya sends troops to Uganda in support of President Idi Amin.

June 1 1979: Publication of part 3 of *The Green Book: 'The Social Basis of the Third Universal Theory'*.

1980: February 7 1980: President Jimmy Carter closes the US embassy in Tripoli.

September 1 1980: Union between Libya and Syria.

1981: Ronald Regan declares Libya a 'terrorist supporting nation'. US orders Libya to close its diplomatic mission in Washington. US imposes ban on imports of Libyan crude oil. **August 19 1981:** Clash between two Libyan and two US war planes 60 miles off Libyan coast in Gulf of Sirte.

1982: March 12 1982: US government bans all exports to Libya except food and medicine.

1983: June 1983: War between Libya and Chad.

1984: April 17 1984: UK accuses Libya of shooting UK policewoman dead outside Libyan embassy in London. **August 13 1984:** Union between Libya and Morocco (Oujda Treaty).

1986: January 1986: Washington accuses Libya of the responsibility for attack on Israeli Airline offices in Vienna and Rome, which killed 20 people including five Americans. US intensifies economic sanctions on Libya. Libya accused of being behind bombing of Berlin discotheque, which killed three people, including two US servicemen. **April 15 1986:** US, with UK cooperation, bombs Libyan military facilities and residential areas, killing more than 70 Libyans, among them Qaddafi's adopted infant daughter.

1987: September 10 1987: Unity between Syria and Libya. **September 11 1987:** Libya and Chad agree to a cease-fire in response to OAU call.

1989: February 17 1989: Libya joins Algeria, Morocco, Mauritania and Tunisia in (AMU) union.

1990: March 1990: US and Germany accuse Libya of building chemical weapons at Rabta.

1991: November 1991: US and UK accuse two Libyan citizens, of bombing Pan Am Flight 103 over Lockerbie, Scotland, in the late 1988.

1992: March 31 1992: UN imposes air-travel ban and arms sales sanctions on Libya in effort to force it to hand over for trial two citizens suspected of blowing up the Pan Am airliner.

1993: February 20 1993: US accuses Libya of building chemical weapons at city of Tarhunah.

1994: February 3 1994: International Court of Justice awards Aouzou Strip to Chad.

1995: September 1-8 1995: Islamists clash with Libyan government forces in Benghazi.

1996: US Congress passes the Iran-Libyan Sanctions Act. This punishes non-US firms investing more than \$20million annually in the energy sectors in Libya or Iran.

1997: October 1997: Nelson Mandela visits Libya to express support for the Libyan position that the two Lockerbie bombing suspects should be tried in neutral country.

1998: A number of African head of states visit Libya and declare support for Libya's demand that UN sanctions against it be lifted. **February 4 1998:** Establishment of Sahel and Saharan States (CEN-SAD) in Tripoli consisting of Libya, Sudan, Niger, Mali, Burkina Faso, and Chad. **May 19 1998:** Germany and Libya sign economic cooperation agreement. **June 1998:** OAU calls on member states to ignore all further sanctions against Libya after September 1998 unless the US and UK both agree to hold Lockerbie trial in neutral third country. **July 1998:** President of Burkina Faso flouts UN embargo on air flights to Libya by flying to Tripoli. **August 24 1998:** US and UK governments accept the Libyan proposal to try two Lockerbie suspects under Scottish law in The Hague, in the Netherlands. **August-September 1998:** Several African leaders violate UN sanctions by arriving in Tripoli by air. **September 1998:** Libya replaces ministry of Arab unity with the ministry of African unity. Daily television news programme replaces the map of the Arab world with the map of Africa. **October 1998:** The country's Voice of the Greater Arab Homeland radio station in Tripoli was renamed the 'Voice of Africa'.

1999: April 5 1999: Libya hands over two Libyan Lockerbie suspects for trial under Scottish law in a Dutch courtroom. UN suspends sanctions against Libya the same day. US Sanctions remains in place. **April 18 1999:** Libya mediates cease-fire agreement between Congo and Uganda. **May 1999:** Central African Republic also joins the (CEN-SAD) Community. **July 7 1999:** Libya acknowledges responsibility

for the death in 1984 of UK policewoman and compensates her family. **September 9 1999:** founding of AU in Sirte. **December 1 1999:** Italian Prime Minister Massimo D'Alema visits Libya.

2001: January 31 2001: One of Libyan suspects, Abdelbaset al-Megrahi, convicted for Lockerbie bombing. **May 2001:** Libya mediates in dispute between Sudan and Uganda. **September 2001:** Qaddafi condemns 9/11 attacks in US.

2002: July 9 2002: AU formally set up in Durban, South Africa.

2003: August 2003: Libya accepts responsibility for Lockerbie incident and agrees to pay 2.7 billion US dollars to families of victims. **September 12 2003:** UN Security Council lifts sanctions on Libya. **December 19 2003:** Libya agrees to dismantle programme to develop weapons of mass destruction. **December 2003:** US releases \$1billion of Libya's funds that had been frozen in US since 1986.

2004: January 2004: Libya agrees to compensate families of victims of the 1989 bombing of French passenger aircraft over North Africa. **February 2004:** US lifts travel ban to Libya. Libyan Secretary of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation Abdul-Rahman Shalqam visits UK. **March-April 2004:** Colonel Qaddafi receives visits from UK Prime Minister Tony Blair, Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi, French President Jacques Chirac, and high-ranking officials from US State Department. **April 23 2004:** President Bush removes most remaining sanctions on doing business in Libya, authorizing establishment of a diplomatic mission in Tripoli. **April 27 2004:** Qaddafi visits European Union Headquarters in Brussels. **May 5 2004:** Libyan court sentences five Bulgarian nurses and a Palestinian doctor to death by firing squad for deliberately infecting more than 400 hundred children in Benghazi children's hospital with HIV. **June 2004:** US formally resumes diplomatic relations with Libya. **August 2004:** Libya agrees to pay \$35m to compensate victims of the bombing of Berlin nightclub in 1986. **October 11 2004:** European Union lifts army embargo on Libya.

2005: January 2005: Libya's first auction of oil and gas exploration licences heralds the return of US energy companies for the first time in more than 20 years. **February 9 2005:** US assistant secretary of state William Burns meets Qaddafi. **August 19 2005:** Chairman of powerful US Senate Foreign Relations Committee Republican Senator Richard Lugar visits Libya to strengthen rapprochement between Libya and the US.

2006: June 30 2006: Condoleezza Rice rescinds US designation of Libya's as state sponsor of terrorism.

2007: October 2007: Libya elected for two-year term on UN Security Council.

2008: August 29 2008: Libya celebrates Italy's first apology for colonial period.

September 5 2008: Condoleezza Rice becomes first US of state to visit Libya in more than half a century.

2009: April 2009: Libya chosen as vice-chairman of the UN World Conference against Racism (WCAR), also known as Durban (2). **May 11 2009:** The US raises its flag over its embassy in Libya. **June 10 2009:** Qaddafi makes first visit to Rome since 1969 revolution. **June 11 2009:** Libya was elected as president of the 64th session of the UN General Assembly. **July 9 2009:** Qaddafi attends the G-8 summit in Italy as head of African Union. **August 19 2009:** Scottish Justice Secretary releases Al-Megrahi from prison. **September 23 2009:** Qaddafi gives his first ever address to the UN.

Chapter One

Introduction

States frequently alter policies or alliances in response to events. They seldom, however, respond to new circumstances by declaring that their geopolitical positioning in the world has changed. States can, of course, do so — and some do. Yet the number of times that Libyan geopolitical discourse changed over the 40 years to 2009 was, by any standards, exceptional.

The question is: *Why* did it change?

That is what this study is about.

As a young Libyan I witnessed a bewildering series of dramatic political events and changes in the world around me and in my own country's place in it. These events touched me personally. In 1986, as a 12-year-old, I lay shocked and terrified in my bed at home in a suburb of Tripoli as American jets screamed across the darkness overhead, sirens wailed and bombs made my bedroom walls shake. Twelve years later, my mother was deprived by United Nations sanctions of access to the medicines and supplies she needed for a health condition. The family could get her to Tunisia, but the only way to travel the 1,000km for medical help was by road — sanctions had also closed off air links between Libya and the outside world. She succumbed of exhaustion in the car on the way back from Tunis.

A few years later, Muammar Al-Qaddafi, the man who had been described by *Time* magazine in the mid-1980s as “the most dangerous man in the world” (cited in Anderson, 2003: 333), and Libya, which had been attacked and isolated by the West for almost three decades as a godfather of international terrorism, suddenly won favour in the west. Qaddafi was now feted by the Western leaders who had earlier condemned him.

Again, the question is why?

On the Libyan side, how had its leader come to seem to have abandoned the redemptive view of pan-Arab nationalism that he had promoted for 30 years? How had he shifted his geopolitical focus to Africa?

I have now reduced the many questions I then had to a single research question, around which this study is organised: How and why did the Libyan leader repeatedly reconstruct Libyan geopolitical discourse over the 40 years to 2009? The opportunity to ask and to answer this question about Libya’s place in the world in an academic environment at Cardiff University has been personally valuable and intellectually rewarding.

The first task this study undertakes is to explore the conceptual environment in which my questions arise. This has meant examining the scholarly literature on discourse, geopolitics, identity and nationalism. Chapter Two, the literature and historical review sheds light on these concepts, provides a historical perspective and raises some

relevant theoretical considerations. These concepts and approaches are significant to my attempts to identify and explore Qaddafi's thought processes on geopolitics and to understand the apparent ease with which he recast versions of Libyan geopolitical discourse.

Chapter Three explains the theoretical approaches and methods that I employ in the course of my research. It concludes with a statement of my hypothesis. It is that, in response to perceived and actual threats to Libyan sovereignty and survival, the Libyan leader repeatedly shifted Libyan geopolitical discourse in a series of manoeuvres that amounted to a tactically polyvalent responsive-defensive strategy.

The next four chapters analyse the original data gathered that form the evidential base on which the thesis draws. The first of them, Chapter Four, examines Qaddafi's speeches from the 1969 revolution to 2008. It establishes the major part of the data sample on which this study draws and the basic characteristics of the speeches by means of a quantitative content analysis. I offer this approach in order to identify the shifting primacy of Libya's geopolitical focus over this period.

Chapter Five aims to shed light on Qaddafi's discursive practices, and to understand the language used by the Libyan leader to express his geopolitical discourse. Here I focus on the discursive strategies that Qaddafi uses. These strategies include the use of lexical reiteration, presupposition and indexicals. This section also points to the discontinuities and transitions that Libya underwent in the development of its geopolitical discourse. Chapter Six is also concerned with discursive practice — this time Qaddafi's use of visual images and symbols.

I also pay attention to those factors that contributed to changes in Libyan geopolitical discourse. Chapter Seven does so. It investigates both why the primacy of Libya's geopolitical concerns changed over the 40-year period and their articulation. It does so by means of an analysis of the social-historical context in which these changes occurred.

This study concludes with a summary of findings, and identifies and discusses the relationship between Libya's different expressions of geopolitical discourse. And it appraises the hypothesis stated in Chapter Three.

Chapter Two

Literature and Historical Review

Introduction

This study challenges itself to understand the many shifts in Libya's geopolitical discourse which occurred over the 40 years to 2009. It seems unlikely that there can have been a more assiduous, rapid and chronic recasting of geopolitical positioning than that undertaken by Muammar Al-Qaddafi, Libya's leader, over this period. It was an extraordinary saga — one that prompts a number of questions. What drove this repeated reconstruction of geopolitical discourse? On what basis were these many shifts in geopolitical position crafted? How credible were these shifts? Is geopolitical discourse something that lends itself to rapid fire and repeated reconstruction? And more — more questions than one study of this kind can answer.

The notion at the centre of this study, geopolitical discourse, is generally constructed around a set of one or more markers. Existing scholarship tells us that principal among these markers are geography and space¹; political, economic and strategic advantage; imagination and consciousness; tradition, culture, language, history, religion, descent, ethnicity and other indicators of national identity. This suggests that shifts in geopolitical discourse are likely to depend upon some rearrangement or reprioritisation of these, or similar, markers. So it is to these markers and to the role that scholars accord them in the construction of geopolitical discourse that we first

¹ Some would translate this from the Arabic as 'spheres'.

turn. This approach should also help us to gauge the ease with which a change in geopolitical discourse can occur.

I begin with a brief analysis of space, geopolitics and identity formation in which, I will rely mainly on the work of Gearóid Ó Tuathail (1998), Ó Tuathail and John Agnew (1998), Ó Tuathail and Simon Dalby (1998) and Ó Tuathail; Dalby and Paul Routledge (1998). This will be followed by an analysis of the more significant theories and approaches to nationalism. Focus will fall on Benedict Anderson's view (1991) that nations are "imagined communities"; on Eric Hobsbawm's insights (1990) into how a nation can conceive for itself different identities in response to particular challenges or frustrations; on Michael Billig's investigation (1995) of the general themes of nationalist consciousness and its habits of thought, as well as everyday representations of the nation to a citizenry; and on Hobsbawm's and Terence Ranger's suggestion (1983) that what is said to be a tradition of a group of people is very often a product of what they call "invention". I will discuss other European understandings of nationalism, focusing in particular on the nineteenth-century German romantic school. The stress this school places on language and culture in the construction of national identity resonates through Arab nationalist, particularly Pan-Arab, thought. I will also discuss the scholarly approaches to the origins and evolution of Arab nationalism itself. This review will help situate the shape and deployment of nationalist sentiment by Qaddafi and other Arab nationalist practitioners. Doing so will involve an examination of Edward Said's work on culture and imperialism (1993), and on 'orientalism' (1978). Said's passionate account of Arab feelings of humiliation at Western hands and of the Arab quest for self-definition will provide important insights into the political views of young post-World War Two Arab

intellectuals such as Qaddafi. It will also throw secondary light on Qaddafi's and other modern nationalist practitioners' responses to the West. This will be followed by a brief discussion of Qaddafi's own approach to Arab nationalism, and of other political and nationalist choices that the Libyan leadership made over the four decades to 2009.

Geopolitics

Though the literature on geopolitics itself is varied, geopolitics itself is difficult to define. Generally, however, geopolitics is thought to concern "the geography of international politics, particularly the relationship between the physical environment (location, resources, territory, etc.) and the conduct of foreign policy" (Ó Tuathail and Agnew, 1998: 95). Yet, there are different theoretical approaches to how to examine and study geopolitics. There is, in particular, debate between what is seen as a more traditional approach to geopolitics and one grounded more in critical theory. The traditional approach gives to geopolitics a fairly "precise history and meaning". It claims that "geopolitics is a foil to idealism, ideology and human will" (Ó Tuathail and Agnew, 1998: 95). On the other hand, critical theorists of geopolitics, such as Ó Tuathail, Agnew and Dalby, argue for a different level of analysis — one that "investigate[s] geopolitics as a social, cultural and political practice, rather than a manifest and legible reality of world politics" (Ó Tuathail and Dalby, 1998: 2).

Ó Tuathail and Agnew draw on Michel Foucault's notion of discourse², as described by him in *Power and Knowledge* (1980) That means, briefly, that they attribute

² The notion of discourse will be examined in the next chapter (methodology chapter)

significance to the conditions that decide what constitutes knowledge or make a particular speech or written statement meaningful (Foucault, 1980).

Ó Tuathail and Agnew argue that “geography is never a natural, non-discursive phenomenon which is separate from ideology and outside politics.” They suggest, rather, that “geography as a discourse is a form of power/knowledge itself.” Hence, Ó Tuathail and Agnew continue, geopolitics should be studied as “a discursive practice by which intellectuals of statecraft ‘spatialize’ international politics in such a way as to represent it as a ‘world’ characterized by particular types of places, peoples and dramas” (Ó Tuathail and Agnew, 1998: 95).

Ó Tuathail defines geopolitics as “discourse about world politics, with a particular emphasis on state competition and the geographical dimensions of power” (Ó Tuathail, 1998: 1). Geopolitical discourse, Ó Tuathail continues:

deals with compelling questions of power and danger in world affairs. Where are the axes of power and conflict in the world? What are the dangers and threats that face the world? These are important questions for political elites and educated segments of the general public (Ó Tuathail, 1998: 1-2).

He adds:

there is also a self-interested agenda behind many geopolitical questions. Ruling elites and an educated general public usually want to know what distribution of power and danger in world affairs mean for their state and its role in world affairs. What are the emergent threats *we* face? How should *our* state conduct its foreign policy in a world of dangers and enemies? What resources and friends do *we* need in order to protect *ourselves* from *them*? Obviously, these questions are not neutral inquiries but bound up with varied political agendas and nationalist identity formation —

particular construction[s] of our, we and them — within states
(original emphasis, Ó Tuathail, 1998: 2).

Ó Tuathail concludes by saying that to study geopolitics we must “[study] geopolitics as discourse and the cultural context that gives it meaning” (Ó Tuathail, 1998: 7). Ó Tuathail also explores what they refer to as the cultural embeddings of geopolitics. He argues that, “geopolitics is more than an elite activity. While geopolitical discourses may be articulated by those at the centre of state power, they emerge from the historical cannon of narratives about state formation and identity” The political leaders’ speeches, Ó Tuathail continues, explaining Agnew’s view

draw upon already existing images, metaphors and storylines from a state’s historical and geopolitical experiences to produce the required affect. They construct geopolitical storylines that are embedded within a much broader set of cultural practices marked by boundaries between good and evil, friend and enemy, self and other, and ‘our’ space and ‘their’ space (Agnew, 1983 in Ó Tuathail, 1998: 7).

Ó Tuathail argues, moreover, that “[c]ritical geopolitics distinguishes between three different types of geopolitical discourses.” These are *formal geopolitics*, *practical geopolitics* and *popular geopolitics*. He defines these types of geopolitical discourses as follows:

Formal geopolitics refers to the advanced geopolitical theories and visions produced by intellectuals of statecraft ... *Practical geopolitics* refers to the narratives used by policy makers and politicians in the actual practice of foreign policy. The public forms of these storylines — in speeches and public addresses — are the raw materials of practical geopolitics. *Popular geopolitics* refers to the narratives of world politics that find expression in the popular culture of a state, in its cinema, magazines, novels, and even cartoons (original emphasis, Ó Tuathail, 1998: 9).

Yet, while the critical approach to geopolitics focuses on the analysis of the discourse within which geopolitics originated and has been situated, the realist schools of geopolitics — especially those derived from traditional realist and neorealist approaches — hold that “the nation-state is the most important unit of analysis” in international relations (Deeb, 1991: 1).

Traditional realism was developed particularly by the political scientist Hans Morgenthau (1948), while neorealism was outlined most notably by Kenneth Waltz (1979). While both realist schools share many assumptions, there are a few differences between them. For Morgenthau, for example, “international politics is a struggle for power and ... states seek to maximize their power.” In contrast, “Neorealists contend that definitions of power by theorists such as Morgenthau are murky because they fail to distinguish between power as the capacity to influence the behavior of others and power as a resource” (Deeb, 1991: 2).

Ó Tuathail sees weaknesses in the political realist approach. He recounts Morgenthau’s view that: “Political realism, or the power politics school of thought, holds that international relations is characterized by a struggle for power between competing sovereign states” (Morgenthau, 1985, in Ó Tuathail, 1998: 6). And he recalls Waltz’s argument that “[b]ecause of this structural condition, states must compete to survive” (Waltz in Ó Tuathail, 1998: 6). Ó Tuathail then goes on to identify what he sees as three problems with political realist approach. The first is that

political realism provides a very poor guide to the empirical history of international politics. While states do, indeed, compete and go to war, they also have long histories of cooperation and friendship. Many develop joint institutions together. We cannot explain the European

Union, for example, within the terms of political realism (Ó Tuathail, 1998: 6).

The second problem, Ó Tuathail continues, is that “political realism is a discourse that thinks it is not a discourse; rather it is ‘the real’.” And, the third problem, Ó Tuathail argues, “is not specific to political realist storylines but is common to most approaches to world politics: divine methodology. Most geopolitical discourse assumes that ‘the world is independent of our beliefs and understandings about it’” (Ó Tuathail, 1998: 6).

Ó Tuathail adds:

Because we can know the world only through the conceptual schemes provided by our cultures and languages, we cannot ever assume that the world is independent of the representation conventions we use to describe it. Human beings, after all, are embedded in cultures, places and histories (Ó Tuathail, 1998: 6).

Morgenthau’s realism is often associated with rational choice theorists, who according to Snidal, argue that any explanation of any political action “should proceed in terms of relevant actors, the goals they seek and their ability to do so” (Snidal, 2002: 75). Rational choice, Snidal adds, “has traditionally assumed that the actors and interests are fixed in any analysis and has explained change in terms of changing constraints. The reason is that preferences are impossible to observe directly whereas constraints are usually more observable” (Snidal, 2002: 84). Rational choice, moreover, Snidal argues, “is often criticized for assuming what is of greatest interest — including the identities of the actors, their interests and the institutional structures or rules of the game” (Snidal, 2002: 75).

Snidal argues that rational choice cannot explain change. He suggests that:

The ultimate challenge for rational choice is not whether it has been too formal or has focused insufficiently on empirical matters in the past, but how it can handle emerging issues in the future. While many of these issues will be driven by changing substantive problems — increasing globalization, shifting economic and military power, emerging issues, and so forth — rational choice will be judged by how it addresses the theoretical and empirical questions that they raise (Snidal, 2002: 82).

However, Hans Morgenthau and Ken Waltz, leaders of two tendencies in the realist school of geopolitics arrive at a conclusion about the centrality of power in geopolitics that is similar to Ó Tuathail's, though they do so by different routes. The role of power in geopolitics and the relationship between power and discourse lie at the heart of the matter of this study — and are explored in more detail in later chapters.

Western Theories of Nationalism

I now survey different approaches to nationalism and nationality. Focus will fall on those developed by Benedict Anderson (1991), by Michel Billig (1995), by Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger (1983), and by the German theorists, prominent among them John Gottfried Herder. These scholars ask, variously, how we might best understand what nationalism is, what constitutes a nation, how people come to feel that they belong to a certain nation, and whether a nation may, in response to changing circumstances, conceive for itself different identities.

Benedict Anderson sees a nation as an “imagined community” (Anderson, 1991). Anderson writes: “It is imagined because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear from them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion” (Anderson, 1991: 6). He

argues that, the nation is, saliently, of limited size, a sovereign construct and a community. The nation is limited because it has finite, though elastic, boundaries beyond which lie other nations. The nation is sovereign because it came to maturity when freedom was a rare and precious ideal which seemed to demand that, as a unique community, a nation should be free from the control of outside forces. Hence, each nation believes it should have the power to determine its own destiny. Its first function is to build a sense of connection and shared fate among disparate individuals. Nations serve to build “deep, horizontal comradeship” among their members, despite any actual inequalities or other social differences that might exist; hence the nation as community (Anderson, 1991: 7).

The view of French historian Ernest Renan (1882) resembles Anderson’s in that he, too, sees nationalism as essentially subjective. In Renan’s famous phrase, “nations are ‘a daily plebiscite’.” They are, as Gershoni and Jankowski summarise Renan, “the product of the subjective collective memory of communities rather than the result of objective ‘facts’ such as kinship, geography, history, language, religion, or economic interests” (Gershoni and Jankowski, 1997: ix). But Renan also “saw the role of the French monarchy as indispensable to the creation of the French nation”. In his essay, ‘What is a Nation?’ Renan asserts that the French nation was created by “the king of France, partly through his tyranny, partly through his justice” (Renan cited in Dawisha, 2003: 54).

Anderson identifies paradoxes in nationalism and nationalist thinking. Among them is “[t]he objective modernity of nations to the historian’s eye vs. their subjective antiquity in the eyes of nationalists” (Anderson, 1991: 5). This is a point remarked

upon by Painter and Jeffrey (Painter and Jeffrey, 2009). They categorise those who, like Anderson, see nationalism as originating only in recent centuries as representing a modernist perspective (Painter and Jeffrey, 2009: 152). They classify those who trace the existence of nations to the beginning of humanity as representative of a primordial perspective (Painter and Jeffrey, 2009: 148). And they speak of an ethno-symbolist approach.

An example of the ethno-symbolist perspective can be found in the work of Anthony Smith. He, according to Painter and Jeffrey,

does not wholly reject the notion of some aspect of national identity existing prior to the formation of the modern state, though he dismisses the idea that such formulations could be referred to as 'nations'. Instead, Smith argues that national identities develop around ethnic identities, given particular social, economic and political changes (Painter and Jeffrey, 2009: 149).

Smith argues that "most nations, including the earliest, were based on ethnic ties and sentiments and on popular ethnic traditions, which have provided the cultural resources for later nation-formation" (Smith, 1998: 12, cited in Painter and Jeffrey, 2009: 149).

Painter and Jeffrey point out that, although Smith believes that "the notion of some aspect of national identity [exists] prior to the formation of the modern state ... [he] suggests that nationalism is a modern phenomenon, stating that nations have emerged in the modern era with its specific modes of domination, production and communication" (Painter and Jeffrey, 2009: 149,151). But, they add that Smith "draws our attention to the strategies and techniques through which nations forge connections with pre-modern collectivities, cultural artefacts and events." Painter and Jeffrey continue: "Smith finds it difficult to conceive of a modern nation maintaining

itself as a distinct identity without such methodology, symbolism and culture.” They add, “Smith therefore draws our attention instead to the discursive construction of national identity, that particular concepts and ideas carry political power to change perceptions, attitudes and group identifications” (Painter and Jeffrey, 2009: 151).

A further example of the modernist approach can be found in the work of the philosopher Ernest Gellner. He claims that “Nationalism is not the awakening of nations to self-consciousness: it invents nations where they do not exist” (Gellner, 1964: 15). Gellner, according to Painter and Jeffrey, “debunks ideas of nations as a natural, God given way of classifying humans. Instead, Gellner argues that we need to explore nations through the conditions which brought such a phenomenon into being, that is, their social and economic context” (Painter and Jeffrey, 2009: 152).

Another modernist, Eric Hobsbawm, in his *Nations and Nationalism since 1780*, provides valuable insight into the changes in, and transformations of, nationhood or nationality that can occur. Hobsbawm’s approach is useful in considering how members of a nation can conceive for themselves different ways of defining themselves in response to particular challenges or frustrations. He argues that “the complex and multiple ways in which human beings define and redefine themselves as members of groups [cannot be reduced to] a single option” (Hobsbawm, 1990: 8). Hobsbawm offers the example of an Indian resident in England:

[I]t is perfectly possible for a person living in Slough to think of himself, depending on circumstances, as – say – a British citizen, or (faced with other citizens of a different colour) as an Indian, or (faced with other Indians) as a Gujarati, or (faced with Hindus or Muslims) as a Jain, or as a member of a particular caste, or kinship

connection, or as one who, at home, speaks Hindi rather than Gujarati, or doubtless in other ways (Hobsbawm, 1990: 8).

Hobsbawm goes on to note that national identification can change and shift not only over a period of years but in relatively short periods of time depending on the prevailing influences confronting an individual or community (Hobsbawm, 1990: 8, 11). “People can identify themselves as Jews even though they share neither religion, language, culture, traditional, historical background, blood-group patterns nor an attitude to the Jewish state” (Hobsbawm, 1990: 8).

But Painter and Jeffrey argue that the modernist perspective draws our attention “to the need for regular cultural practices to produce and reproduce the significance of national identities”. For Anderson’s ‘imagined communities’, they argue “the rise of the print media was particularly influential in communicating collective national identities.” Anderson, they add, also “draws attention to the role of museums, maps and censuses in fulfilling this function” (Painter and Jeffrey, 2009: 154). Anderson himself suggests that the establishment of borders on paper can lead to the acceptance of them on the ground. He argues that the map worked through history as a totalising classification. It was designed to demonstrate the antiquity of specific, tightly bounded territorial units (Anderson, 1991:170-178).

Michael Billig’s work, *Banal Nationalism* (1995), advances a similar argument. Billig uses the concept of banal nationalism to refer to how the idea of the existence of a nation is repeatedly implied to those said to embody it through terminology and symbols conveyed by, among others, television and newspaper coverage, school curricula, posters, and in official and public places. He refers to this process as ‘flagging’ (Billig, 1995: 6). Nationhood is also linguistically promoted by the use of

the lexical items such as 'I', 'you', 'we', 'us', 'our', 'here' or 'now' in the speeches of political leaders. (Billig, 1995: 6, 106) He writes:

National identity embraces all these forgotten reminders. Consequently, an identity is to be found in the embodied habits of social life. Such habits include those of thinking and using language. To have a national identity is to possess ways of talking about nationhood. As a number of critical social psychologists have been emphasizing, the social psychological study of identity should involve the detailed study of discourse.... Having a national identity also involves being situated physically, legally, socially, as well as emotionally: typically, it means being situated within a homeland, which itself is situated within the world of nations. And, only if people believe that they have national identities, will such homelands, and the world of national homelands, be reproduced (Billig, 1995: 8).

Hobsbawm and Ranger (1983) contribute the concept of "invented tradition" to the debate over how the notion of nationhood can be mobilised and maintained. They show how nationalist ideologues, political leaders and others create a reservoir of legitimising symbols and ceremonies, sometimes through the interpretations of existing beliefs and customs, to justify their contemporary policies. They argue that "traditions which appear, or are claimed, to be old are often quite recent in origin and sometimes invented" (Hobsbawm and Ranger, 1983: 1). They define 'invented traditions' as:

a set of practices, normally governed by overtly or tacitly accepted rules and of a ritual or symbolic nature, which seek to inculcate certain values and norms of behaviour by repetition, which automatically implies continuity with the past. In fact, where possible, they normally attempt to establish continuity with a suitable historic past ... However, insofar as there is such reference to a historic past, the peculiarity of 'invented' traditions is that the continuity with it is largely fictitious. In short, they are responses to novel situations which take the form of reference to old situations, or which establish their own past by quasi-obligatory repetition (Hobsbawm and Ranger, 1983: 1-2).

For Billig, “[the] nationalist way of thinking, even when it is ingrained as habitual, is not straightforward.” He gives an example of US presidents. He says that, when, today, US presidents

claim to speak simultaneously on behalf of their nation and a new world order, they are placing these aspects side by side in the same utterance ... or creating a novel synthesis from the thesis of nationalism and the antithesis of internationalism (Billig, 1995: 61).

Nationalist categories have become less straightforward with increasing globalisation.

Billig writes that if, as some commentators suggest, the nation state is being superseded in post-modernity and globalisation, “then banal nationalism is a disappearing ideology, with a politics of identity replacing the old politics of nationhood”. From this, it would, he adds, be “no wonder that states are combining to form supra-national economic and political organizations, such as the European Union or even the United Nations” (Billig, 1995: 11).

Similarly, Featherstone states that:

In effect [national identity], the tendency towards centralisation that accompanied the state formation process, in which attempts were made to eliminate differences in order to create a unified integrating culture for the nation, has given way to decentralisation and acknowledgment of local, regional and subcultural differences in the Western world (Featherstone, 1991: 142 cited in Painter and Jeffery, 2009: 155).

The economist Kenichi Ohmae uses stronger language. For him, the nation state has become “an unnatural, even dysfunctional, unit for organising human activity and managing economic endeavour in a borderless world”. He takes the view that the nation state “represents no genuine, shared community of economic interest”. Nor, he

adds, does it even define any “meaningful flows of economic activity”. (Ohmae, 1993: 248 cited in Painter and Jeffrey, 2009: 162).

Painter and Jeffrey point out that

the solution for Ohmae and others is to focus instead on the region. As a concept, the region is suitably supple to allow for multiple territorializations set by economic, political or cultural interests. For Ohmae, the benefit of the region is that political interests do not fix its boundaries, but rather they are drawn by the deft but invisible hand of the global market for goods and services (Painter and Jeffrey, 2009: 162).

In these new circumstances, according to Billig:

The order of the national world gives way to a new medievalism ... And those, who see their identities in terms of gender or sexual orientation, are, like monks before them, bound by no earthly *terra*, restricted by no mere sense of place. Thus, a new sensibility — a new psychology — emerges in global times (original emphasis: Billig, 1995: 134).

In Friedman’s words, globalisation has become a “new defining drama in world politics as geoeconomic stories [have] eclipsed geopolitical ones in public discourse” (Friedman, 2000 cited in Ó Tuathail *et al.*, 1998: 119).

German thinkers on nationalism generally differ substantially from the theorists surveyed thus far. For most German theorists on nationalism, language and history are the primary elements constituting the nation, as Dawisha explains. For the Germans, a nation could not

depend on such ephemeral bases as the ‘will of the people’; rather, a nation is objectively based through the unity of its linguistic community and the coherence of its history. It is the individual’s language and history, regardless of his own preferences, that determine his national identity (Dawisha, 2003: 64).

German thinkers on nationalism have also generally made a basic distinction between state and nation. The form of government has often been of little interest to them. They “sought not to secure better government, individual liberty, and due process of law, but ... to drive out a foreign ruler and to secure national independence.” (Dawisha, 2003: 64) According to Tibi, “[German theorists] generally consider the *nation* to be something sacred and eternal” (original emphasis, Tibi, 1997: 126) English and French thinking on nationalisms, by contrast, “could not conceive of the *nation* without its political corollary, the *state*. ... [T]hey tended to see the nation almost as a creation of the state” (original emphasis, Dawisha, 2003: 52).

Dawisha’s insight stimulates several questions which, as will become apparent, resonate in Qaddafi’s political thought. First, can a nation exist without a state? The Palestinians continue to exist as a group that claims to be a nation even though they lack a state. Qaddafi would insist upon the Palestinians’ right to statehood. Second, can a state embrace more than one nation? Yugoslavia evidently did before its break-up in the 1990s. And the United Kingdom — with its Scottish, Welsh and (Northern) Irish national components — claims to be just such a multi-national state. A related, third question is: can a state embrace more than one ethnic group? The United States, like South Africa, evidently does. Qaddafi would develop a view that a multi-national state — and, by extension, it seems a multi-ethnic state, too — was doomed to break up (Al-Qaddafi, 1980: 80). Fourth, can a state embrace only one nation? Norway and many other countries evidently do. Qaddafi would say it could. And finally: can a single nation be spread across many different states. Some would say — and many,

including Qaddafi for most of his political life, argued — that this precisely describes the situation of Arabs. These issues resonate through Qaddafi's geopolitical discourse.

The Origins and Development of Arab Nationalism

In reviewing major historical developments in the evolution of Arab nationalism, my focus falls on the period from the 1920s to the 1960s. This was the period following the Ottoman Empire's collapse in 1918, a time in which many Arab intellectuals became disillusioned with empires, including the British and French which had justified occupation of Arab countries by claiming to be defending Arab lands against the Ottomans. A significant feature of the period, particularly of the years between the two world wars, was the evolution of a new politics in the Arab world: nationalism.

The term Arab nationalism needs some clarification. It tends to be used in the literature of Middle Eastern politics and history interchangeably with other terms such as Arabism, Pan-Arabism, and Arab unity. Dawisha (2003) distinguishes the term *Uruba* (Arabism) from *al-qawmiya al-Arabiya* (Arab nationalism). Arabism, in his usage, is the cultural heritage such as language, religion and history, which he believes ties Arabic-speaking people to each other. For Dawisha, Arabism plus the desire for political unity of Arab states is Arab nationalism (Dawisha, 2003: 8-13). Gershoni believes, similarly, that Arab nationalism originally emerged as an impulse towards cultural autonomy that was subsequently transformed into the idea of establishing a single Arab state (Gershoni, 1997: 8). The term *Uruba al-shamela* (pan-Arabism) is commonly understood to describe the aspiration for broad Arab political unity (Dawisha, 2003: 11). Hourani takes a similar view of the term *al-Wuhda al-Arabiya* (Arab unity):

the newly independent Arab states had enough in common, in shared culture and historical experience as well as shared interests, to make it possible for them to come into closer union with each other (Hourani, 1991: 401).

In other words, the characteristic that distinguishes between the term 'Arabism' from the other terms is a political one. On the other hand, scholars have seemed to treat the terms 'Arab nationalism', 'pan-Arabism' and 'Arab unity' as synonyms to describe a form of commonality that goes beyond the cultural domain to the desire to establish some form of united polity. The term *Umma*, meanwhile, which "traditionally denoted the whole politico-religious community of Islam, became entirely secular in meaning and was now used to denote the whole of Arab nation" which was conceived of as an interstate entity (Haim, 1962: 39).

Khalidi (1991), however, dissented from the general trend that saw Arab nationalism as largely synonymous with pan-Arabism. He writes,

In most cases in which Arab nationalists have had a chance to put their ideas into practice, they have not favored the idea of a single Arab nation-state. It was certainly not the practical objective envisioned by the earliest Arabists who, when they had a brief opportunity to deliberate on and implement some of their ideas after World War I, worked through a Syrian and an Iraqi congress in Damascus for the establishment of three separate, independent Arab states east of Suez, to be linked by dynastic and other ties: one in Syria, one in Iraq, and one in the Arabian Peninsula (Khalidi, 1991:1365).

Khalidi's argument points to what came to be known among some writers as *wataniyya*, a term denoting "attachment to the *watan*, the fatherland." That is "a feeling of loyalty toward the specific country of one's birth" (Haim, 1962: 39). Gershoni too, describes *wataniyya* as "a patriotic affiliation with one's specific homeland" (Gershoni, 1997: 8). *Wataniyya*, according to Haim, is an expression of Arab

nationalism that stands in “contradistinction to *qaumiyya*, or a feeling of loyalty toward the whole Arab nation” (Haim, 1962: 39). However, Gershoni states “this distinction was meant [to nationalist thinkers] to regulate the relation between these two loyalties [*wataniyya* and *qaumiyya*] within one legitimate framework consistent with the aspiration for cultural and political Arab unity [*wahda arabiyya*]” (Gershoni, 1997: 8).

A variation on this was the way in which many Arabs gave their primary loyalty to their region rather than toward the whole Arab entity. This is what came to be known as *iqlimiyya* (regionalism). According to Haim, this “came to denote a reprehensible feeling of loyalty toward a part rather than toward the whole; for an Iraqi to put the interests of Iraq before those of Arabism was to be guilty of *iqlimiyya*” (Haim, 1962: 39). Gershoni also translates *iqlimiyya* as regionalism (Gershoni, 1997: 8). There are further key words and usages that appear in Arab nationalist texts. They include *alshab alarbi* (Arab people), *alard-almoqadasa* (the Holy Land), referring to Palestine, and *Ard alarab* (Arab land). These terms are significant, as they constitute conceptual beacons on the Arab nationalist landscape.

These various terms are important in this study. The terms or phrases that I will use most frequently in developing my approach to Qaddafi’s early political thought, however, are ‘Arab nationalism’ and ‘Arab unity’. I will use them to describe a form of commonality that goes beyond the cultural domain to the desire to establish some form of united polity. They were phrases that frequently appeared in Qaddafi’s speeches where they were used almost synonymously to mean the aspiration for the political establishment of an aggregated, single polity for Arab people.

The study of Arab nationalism can be said to have gone through different stages. Despite individual differences between scholars, most of them seem to reach broadly similar conclusions on its development, as will be evident below. The questions most commonly asked of Arab nationalism include: When did it emerge? When did it begin to flourish as an idea and as a framework for action? What approaches did Arab nationalists and associated intellectuals follow? What were the most important factors in the formation of Arab nationalism? What is the relationship between Islam and Arab nationalism? What are the reasons for the successes and failure of Arab nationalism? And how did it become, in one form or another, the premier ideological and political force in the Arab world during the 20th century?

In their periodisation, again as is evident below, many scholars suggest that Arab nationalism remained a minor tendency in the politics of the Arab world in the years prior to World War One — that is, before the collapse of the Ottoman Empire in 1918. After the Ottoman collapse, nationalism became the dominant political tendency in different territories of the Arab world. It became the creed of most opponents of other empires, such as the English and French, which were then eager to expand their power and domain in the Arab world. And most Arab historians argue that Arab nationalism emerged as a mature ideology only in the second half of the interwar period, becoming the premier political force in the Arab world and peaking in the 1950s and 1960s.

Some writers do, however, suggest that the beginnings of Arab national consciousness developed much earlier. Dawn (1988) argues that the first Arab awakening came as a

result of the action of one man, the Prophet Muhammad. Dawn quotes the words of the Muslim Barghuthi and Quaker Tuta, as saying that

The Prophet's teachings unified the Arabs and ended the dissension among them with a new bond, i.e. Islam, which was not merely religious in character but a national, political, social bond which united them and hurled them into the inhabited world (Dawn, 1988: 74).

Hourani, (1983), too, describes the metamorphosis that Islam brought to Arab people:

“Islam was regarded as the creator of the Arab nation, the content of its culture or the object of its collective pride” (Hourani cited in Gershoni, 1997: 8). According to Dawisha, Hourani argues that some form of Arab consciousness has existed throughout the history of the Arabs. Hourani, Dawisha continues, sees evidence of this in the life and world of Ibn Khaldun, the fourteenth century Arab philosopher. In Hourani's words, Ibn Khaldun's world, was one in which

a family from southern Arabia could move to Spain, and after six centuries return nearer to its place of origin and still find itself in familiar surroundings. [This world] had a unity which transcended divisions of time and space; the Arab language could open the door to office and influence throughout that world; a body of knowledge, transmitted over the centuries by a known chain of teachers, preserved a moral community even when rules changed; places of pilgrimage, Mecca and Jerusalem, were unchanging poles of the human world even if power shifted from one city to another; and belief in a God who created and sustained the world could give meaning to the blows of fate (Hourani cited in Dawisha, 2003:16).

Several generations of intellectuals influenced the development of Arab nationalism from the mid-nineteenth century through to the 1960s. Each of these generations differed in method, approach and theory. The first generation, as early as the 1860s, comprised historians and Islamic intellectuals. They were known as founders of the *Salafiya* movement — they represented “a return to the ways of the Prophet, his

Companions, and the Muslims of the early centuries, when Islam was in its pure state and the Arab caliphate in the heyday of its glory” (Haim, 1962: 21). Similarly, Joffé argues that, *Salafiya* movement represented “a return to the purity of early Islam that was to have a powerful influence in national liberation movements in North Africa” (Joffé, 1983: 161). Most of them came from Syria and Lebanon, and advocated the unity of all Muslims against foreign interests, such as those of the British, in the Muslim world. They argued for a return to the austere practices of the earliest days of Islam, and emphasised the period of history when Muslims were dominant across the Middle East, Central Asia, North Africa and large tracts of continental Europe from the 8th to the 13th centuries.

Key figures in this generation included Jamal al-Din al-Asadabadi, better known as al-Afghani (1838-1897), Muhammad Abduh (1849-1905), Muhammad Rashid Rida (1865-1935), and Abd al-Rahman al-Kawakibi (1854-1902). Al-Afghani was a religious thinker, political activist and Islamic nationalist in Afghanistan, Persia (now Iran), Egypt, and the Ottoman Empire during the 19th century (Haim, 1962: 20). He was considered the initiator of the *Salafiya* movement (Joffé, 1983: 161). According to Haim, al-Afghani and his disciples’ main aim was “return to the ways of the ancestors (*salaf*)” (Haim, 1962: 20). For al-Afghani, the chief purpose of this return was, as Haim states, “to renovate the solidarity³ of Muslims and make them into a world power that was feared and respected” (Haim, 1962: 20). Bashiri views al-Afghani as “a philosopher and politician, who promoted the concept of unity of all Muslims against British rule in particular and against global western interests in general” (Bashiri, 2000). Haim argues that “al-Afghani’s political program of pan-

³ “Solidarity — *asabiya* — was a concept developed originally by Ibn Khaldun to explain the vitality of nomadic society as opposed to urban society in his theory of the tribal circulation of elites and applied specifically to the Arab world” (Joffé, 1983: 162)

Islamism sought to mobilize Muslim nations to fight against Western imperialism.”

Al-Afghani justified his political activism, Haim adds, by a simple theory,

The Islamic peoples of the world were in a deplorable situation; the states which ought to protect them and procure for them a good life were weak, misgoverned, and the prey of European ambitions. To remedy this state of affairs, the Muslims had to take matters into their own hands; they had to force, even terrorize, their rulers into governing efficiently, and they had to band together in order to present a powerful and united front to the encroaching European[s]. In this enterprise Islam was the essential factor. It was the only bond of union between the Muslims, and if this bond could be strengthened, if it were to become the spring of their lives and the focus of their loyalty, then prodigious forces of solidarity would be engendered to make possible the creation and maintenance of a strong and stable state (Haim, 1962: 9).

However, as Haim comments,

Such a view of the role of Islam in the life of the Muslims is very different from the traditional one. The traditional and orthodox view is that the Muslims are Muslims because they believe in the revelation[s] of God to Muhammad, and because they order their lives according to divine law. They are not Muslims because Islam constitutes a powerful political force which enables men to band together in a strong state and successfully withstand their enemies (Haim, 1962: 9-10).

Al-Afghani, Haim says, “transformed Islam into an ideology which the shrewd statesman [could] utilize to effect his ends” (Haim, 1962: 10). Haim also observes that, for al-Afghani, the term solidarity (*asabiyya*) “sums up all the desirable features of a polity, which make it strong and able to look after the welfare of its members.”

(Haim, 1962: 13) For al-Afghani,

It was the Islamic religion ... which earlier endowed the disunited Arab tribes with a strong enough solidarity ... to enable them to conquer and maintain a powerful empire [the age of the Prophet Mohammed (470-632) and the first four caliphs] in less than eighty years. This empire declined and disappeared ... [and] the reason was ... the weakening of the influence of religion in the soul of the Arabs, a religion which had been able, better than any feeling of

race and kinship, to unify them and make them into a great conquering force (Haim, 1962: 13).

The opinions of al-Afghani influenced other Muslim figures such as Muhammad Abduh and Rashid Rida. Abduh was an Egyptian scholar and liberal reformer known as another founder of Islamic modernism. According to Said, Abduh, like al-Afghani, “argued either that Islam had better modernize in order to compete with the West, or that it should return to its Meccan [(Place)] roots the better to combat the West (Said, 1993: 39). Abduh “tried always to show that the evidence of Islam and its prescriptions were fully rational and consonant with the conclusions of modern science and philosophy” (Haim, 1962: 17). He was another Islamic figure whose writings, according to Hourani, “were to have a great and lasting influence throughout the Muslim world” (Hourani, 1991: 307). Abduh, like al-Afghani, advocated Pan-Islamism to resist European colonialism. Abduh, according to Reid, believed that “Muslims everywhere must cooperate to reverse internal decline and counter European imperialism” (Reid, 1998: 537).

Haim claims that both al-Afghani and Abduh are entirely unconnected with Arab nationalism (Haim, 1962: 19) However, Haim sees Abduh's most prominent disciple, Muhammad Rida, as an important intellectual figure whose contribution “we may date the beginning of the movement of Arab nationalism” (Haim, 1974:19). Rida, like al-Afghani, called for the unity of the Muslim *umma*, or community. Yet, the term *umma* to Rida had a different meaning. As Haim notes, “[t]raditionally, the word [umma] meant the body of all Muslims, and made no distinction based on race, language, or habitation” (Haim, 1962: 22). But Rida, Haim continues, seemed “to be saying that the Turks, [though] Muslims as they were, were not really part of the

umma, that the *umma* consisted only of Arab Muslims.” Laoust, according to Haim, has remarked that “[Rida] was more an Arab Muslim than a Muslim Arab” (Haim, 1962: 24). However, Dawisha argues that Rida was very much against the idea of Arab nationalism, seeing it as a Western-inspired assault against the solidarity of the Islamic *umma* (Dawisha, 2003: 22).

Many scholars see in developments around Rida in the last two decades before the World War One the first indications of Arab nationalism. The movement developing around his ideas appeared to be a way of opposing the Ottoman Empire, whose writ had extended over most of the Arabic-speaking peoples since the early sixteenth century. According to Gershoni, Arab nationalism was “an opposition movement in the Arabic provinces of the Ottoman Empire, for the most part seeking cultural autonomy within the framework of the Ottoman state” (Gershoni, 1997: 3). Dawn also argues that Arab nationalism arose as an opposition movement to the Ottoman Empire but, he suggests, it remained a minority influence until the years immediately prior to the World War One (Dawn, 1991: 23). In this period, most Arabs, mainly Muslims, were content to remain within the framework of Ottoman unity and remained committed to the empire. Even after the Ottoman collapse in 1918, as St John points out, “many Arab leaders, for example the ... Muslim nationalist Shakib Arslan, found it difficult to adapt to the changed circumstances.” They “continued to hope for an Ottoman restoration, and thus refused to commit themselves to a purely Arab political movement” (St John, 1987: 22).

The case of the Arabs against the Turks “was put in a much more resounding manner by Rida’s fellow Syrian, Abd al-Rahman al-Kawakibi” (Haim, 1962: 27). However,

as we will see, al-Kawakibi adopted a different line from Rida. According to Haim, al-Kawakibi went further to say that “Arabs were better people than the Turks” (Haim, 1962: 27). Al-Kawakibi was “a journalist and administrator” best known for two short treatises. The first was *Umm al-Qura* (‘The Mother of Towns’, i.e., Mecca), while the second treatise was *Tabai al-Istibdad wa Masari al-Istibdad* (‘The Attendants of Despotism and the Destruction of Subjugation’) His book *Umm al-Qura*, according to Haim, “attempts to explain the stagnation of Islam and to provide a remedy for it” (Haim, 1962: 26). For al-Kawakibi, according to Haim, the Muslims,

are now a dead people with no corporate being or feelings. Their stagnation is the result of tyranny, of the decline of Islamic culture, and the absence of racial and linguistic bonds among Muslims, and partly for this reason the Ottoman Empire is not fit to preserve Islam ... Thus the Ottoman Empire cannot effect the regeneration of Islam. Regeneration should be the work of the Arabs who would supply a caliph, residing in Mecca, and acting as the spiritual head of an Islamic union (Haim, 1962: 26).

St John also argues that “[i]n addressing the problems of Islam in his day, al-Kawakibi concluded that the strength of an earlier Islam was its close identification with the Arabs and that it was the Turkish management of religion which had corrupted it” (St John, 1987: 23). According to Haim, “Al-Kawakibi also provides a list of twenty-six different reasons to prove the superiority of the Arabs and why the caliphate should devolve upon them” (Haim, 1962: 27). Among al-Kawakibi’s reasons were the following, recounted by Haim:

the Arabs of the Arabian Peninsula are free of racial, religious, and sectarian divisions; the peninsula is a land of free men; it is the birthplace of Islam; the Arabs of the peninsula are the most zealous in preserving religion; they have a powerful solidarity, are able to bear hardships, and have not succumbed to luxury; they do not know political tyranny, they practice consultation in public affairs

and follow the principles of socialist living; they are, as [al-Kawakibi] concluded, “of all nations the most suitable to be an authority in religion and an example to the Muslim; the other nations have followed their guidance at the start and will not refuse to follow them now” (Haim, 1962: 27).

According to St John: “His emphasis on the Arab role in Islam led al-Kawakibi to denigrate the Ottoman-Turkish contribution and eventually to move from simply praising the Arab’s role in Islam to glorifying the virtues of all Arabs, both Muslim and Christian” (St John, 1987: 23). Rubin adds that Al-Kawakabi wrote: ‘Western man is a hard-headed materialist. He is fierce to deal with, he is by nature inclined to exploit others, and is ever ready to revenge himself on his enemies’ (Al-Kawakabi cited in Rubin, 1991: 536)

Haim argues that the “ideas of al-Kawakibi were, a few years later, taken up and given even more precision by another writer. This was Negib Azoury” (Haim, 1962: 29). Azoury, was a Christian-Arab writer. While al-Kawakibi demanded an Arab caliphate, Azoury put forward the idea of secession from the Ottoman Empire and the formation of a new Arab state (Haim, 1962: 30). He called for the establishment of an Arab empire; its ‘natural’ frontiers would, in his view, be the valley of the Euphrates and the Tigris, the Suez Canal, the Mediterranean, and the Indian Ocean.

Perhaps the common factor for all these early writers and thinkers was a desire for escape. They expressed the need to be free of outside control — whether Ottoman or western. To some the need was a gradual realisation; for others it is apparent with their every word. But in all cases, the desire to be independent of other people’s direction was apparent. This desire for separation was not, however, yet borne of a clear nationalism.

The second generation of intellectuals who influenced Arab nationalism emerged after the Ottoman Empire collapsed and during the period between the two world wars. This generation included thinkers who argued that Arabs were a nation who must, therefore, form a single state. They generally rejected religion as a defining element of Arab identity or of the proposed Arab state. Instead, they promoted other factors, such as language and history, as decisive elements in constituting Arab identity. Among this generation were Faysal ibn Abd Allah (1883-1933), Amin al-Rihani (1876-1940), Sati al-Husri (1879-1967) and Constantin Zureiq (1909-2000).

Faysal was an Arab nationalist and political leader in Damascus during the inter-war years. Faysal, according to Dawisha, “would place loyalty to ‘the Arab nation’ above all loyalties, even above allegiance to religious belief” (Dawisha, 2003: 42). Dawisha adds that, for Faysal, Arabs “were Arabs before Moses, Christ and Muham[a]d” (Faysal cited in Dawisha, 2003: 42). Faysal came to epitomise the shift in Arab nationalism that occurred as the Ottoman Empire disintegrated en route to its final defeat in 1918. The Ottoman disintegration opened the way for other empires such as the British and French, which were eager to expand their power and domain in the Arab world. And Faysal’s nationalism now became a direct reaction to Western colonialism. In response to the British occupation of Palestine in 1917, Faysal entered Damascus with Arab forces in October 1918 (Dawisha, 2003: 41). In 1920, Faysal announced the establishment of an independent Arab state in Syria (Tibi, 1997: 119,185). Following this step, Kramer argues: “An Arab nation had entered the game of nations” (Kramer, 1993). Dawisha adds: “Herein was a real opportunity for the idea of Arab nationalism to be institutionalized, for it found a compelling and

emphatic spokesman in the person of Emir Faysal” (Dawisha, 2003: 41). However, Faysal and his followers were defeated by the French who occupied Damascus on July 24 1920, and Faysal was forced into exile. Arab unity had seen its first failure in the short-lived rule of Faysal. Nevertheless, as Dawisha observes, “Faysal’s Arab national government was the first actual realization of the ideas of Arab nationalism” (Dawisha, 2003: 43).

Within two years, in 1920, Britain began, according to Kramer, to open Palestine to extensive Zionist immigration and settlement⁴, which led ultimately to the creation of the state of Israel (Kramer, 1993). Now, Arabs were not only standing against the West but had added the Zionists to their list of antagonists

Al-Rihani was among those to lead the charge against Jewish Zionism. A Christian Lebanese writer, he emerged as a theorist of Arab nationalism. Al-Rihani supported the unity of the Arab world as a whole, irrespective of whether Arabs were Christians or Muslims. According to Dawn, al-Rihani and his fellow Christian Arab nationalists accepted the special place of Islam and Muhammad in the life of the Arab nation (Dawn, 1991: 11). Yet, Haim argues that al-Rihani believed that “The Arabs existed before Islam and before Christianity. The Arabs will remain after Islam and after Christianity ... Arabism before and above everything” (al-Rihani cited in Haim, 1962: 36).

In Haim’s judgement, al Husri, a Syrian writer and educationist, was “[t]he man who did most to popularize the idea of nationalism among the literate classes of the Arab

⁴ Britain released the Balfour Declaration in 1917, which was a formal statement by the British government supporting Zionist plans for a Jewish ‘national home’ in Palestine.

Middle East” (Haim, 1962: 42-43). Al-Husri used Syria’s educational system, among other networks, to promote Arab nationalism. He joined Faysal’s government in Damascus and became Minister of Education. Later, he went to Iraq, where he became the director general of Education (Haim, 1962: 43). In his theory of what constitutes the Arab nation, al-Husri argued that the basic constituent elements of a nation were a common language and history. For al-Husri, language sat at the heart of his thinking on the nation. As Dawisha writes, in al-Husri’s view “people who spoke a unitary language have one heart and a common soul. As such, they constitute one nation, and so they have to have a unified state” (Dawisha, 2003: 2). Alongside language, al-Husri saw history as a fundamental base in nation formation (Dawisha, 2003: 7). Unity in these two respects, al-Husri says, “leads to unity of feelings and inclinations, to the sharing of sufferings and hopes, and to the unity of culture; and all this makes people aware that they are members of one nation to be distinguished from other nations” (Haim, 1962: 43-44). Al-Husri, according to St John, rejected Islamic sentiments in favour of a unified Arab nation “bound by ties of Arab culture” (St John, 1987: 24). St John argues that “al-Husri provided probably the clearest exposition of a secular Arab nationalism.” For al-Husri, according to St John,

the Arab nation consisted of all who spoke Arabic as their mother tongue. His emphasis was on the secular components of the Arab cultural heritage, and he insisted that one consequence of recognizing these components was to admit the existence of an Arab nation, including Egypt and North Africa, which was similar to the nations of Europe and, like them, should be unified politically (St John, 1987: 24).

Another pioneering theorist of this second generation of Arab nationalism was Constantin Zureiq, a Syrian Christian Arab nationalist and intellectual. Zureiq, like al-Rihani, accepted the special place of Islam and Muhammad in the life of the Arab

nation. According to Haim, Zureiq once argued that “the duty of every Arab, whatever his sect or community, is to sanctify the memory of Muhammad and to interest himself in Islam” (Haim, 1962: 57). Both these obligations were to become prominent in the nationalist ideology developed by other Arab writers. This was particularly so in the idea of there being an Arab mission, which was taken up, in a different form, by Michel Aflaq (1910-1989) and became the slogan of the Syrian Ba’ath Party in later years. For Aflaq, the Arab mission “aims to the renewal of human values, at the quickening of human progress, at increasing harmony and mutual help among the nations” (Aflaq cited in Haim, 1962: 234).

By the mid-20th century, many Arab states had gained their independence from the European powers. (Tibi, 1997: 125) But the boundaries of the newly independent Arab states, Tibi points out, “were drawn by the colonial administrations [and] they corresponded to the map on which the powers divided these territories amongst themselves”. Tibi continues: “Against this background, a decisive change of direction in the politics of Arab nationalism was to occur.” Tibi explains:

The division of the territory of Arab-speaking people into different areas, each under the control of a colonial power, out of which political independent nation states were to emerge, had the effect of bringing the Arab nationalist idea of a single unitary ‘Arab nation’ into question (Tibi, 1997: 125).

In the 1950s and 1960s Arab nationalist movements started to spread across the Middle East in Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Syria and Lebanon (Peretz, 1994: 148). Among these movements, two were of particular importance. They came to be known as Ba’athism and Nasserism and took parallel forms in promoting the idea of Arab unity. The word Ba’ath means resurrection and, in a religious context, it denotes the

resurrection of the dead at Last Judgment. Nasserism is an Arab nationalist political ideology based on thinking of the former Egyptian president Jamal Abdul Nasser.

Aflaq was a Christian from Damascus, who is considered the ideological founder of Ba'athism. He belonged to what we can usefully call the third generation of modern Arab nationalist intellectuals and activists that emerged between the 1940s and 1960s. This third generation included the former Egyptian president Jamal Abdul Nasser (1918-1970). To them, Arab identity became the basis of their political goals, such as anti-imperialism and the struggle against Israel. They came to believe that the Western powers sought to block the goals of Arab nationalism out of fear of its implications for their colonial and post-colonial interests, especially for their ability to draw national and internal borders in a way that suited their interests (Kramer, 1993).

This third generation believed, according to St John, that

the imperialist powers, motivated by greed and a hatred of Islam and the Arabs, created Zionist Israel in a deliberate conspiracy to divide the Arab people and exploit Arab resources. Conservative Arab states which aligned themselves with the West were viewed not only as reactionary and corrupt but also as collaborators with imperialism and Zionism (St John, 1987: 35).

The nationalist struggle, therefore, became essentially a struggle against the Western powers. According to Kramer, thinkers also believed that “Arab nationalism no longer meant only literary revival and anti-imperialism. It meant land reform, extensive nationalization ... all in the name of the revolution.” They usually defined this revolution as Arab socialism. According to Hourani, Arab socialism was the belief that “the whole of society was ... to rally round a government which pursued the interests of all” (Hourani, 1991: 406).

Both Aflaq and Nasser promoted Arab socialism in a nationalist context. The aims of Arab socialism to them were to free the Arab world from Western colonial rule, to establish pride and social justice within Arab societies, and to unify the Arab world. To Aflaq, Arab socialism would entail the withdrawal of colonial social and economic interests. In thwarting a colonial legacy, Arabs were seeking unity and freedom in which a socialist system would prevail.

Socialism featured in the Ba'ath party's core slogan: 'Unity, liberation, socialism'. The Arab nation was thought to be a permanent entity in history, and Arabism was defined as the feeling and consciousness of being Arab. Aflaq, as Hourani summarises his view, saw the Arab world as,

a single Arab nation, with the right to live in a single united state. It had been formed by a great historical experience, the creation by the Prophet Muhammad of the religion of Islam and the society which embodied it. This experience belonged not only to the Arab Muslims, but to all Arabs who appropriated it as their own, and regarded it as the basis of their claim to have a special mission in the world and a right to independence and unity (Hourani, 1991: 404-405).

The opening article of the Syrian Ba'ath Party's programme declares: "The Arabs form one nation. This nation has the natural right to live in a single state" (cited in Dawisha, 2003: 3). St John writes that "[i]n the 1940s, the Syrian Ba'ath Party called for comprehensive Arab unity in the form for a single Arab state stretching from the Atlantic Ocean to the Persian Gulf" (St John, 1983: 480). Ba'athism eventually produced ruling parties in Syria and Iraq. Aflaq, like Rihani and Zureiq, accepted the special place of Islam and Muhammad in the life of the Arab nation. But, Aflaq's argument, too, was that "Arab nationalism complemented Islam but was superior to it" (St John, 1987: 30).

Nasser, President of Egypt from 1956 until his death in 1970, became one of the most important political figures in 20th century Middle Eastern history. Well-known for his Arab nationalist and anti-colonial foreign policy, Nasser proclaimed freedom, socialism and unity the main objectives, and the true expression, of Arab consciousness, Nasser said, “Freedom today means that of the country and of the citizen. Socialism has become both a means and an end: sufficiency and justice. The road to unity is the popular call for the restoration of the natural order of a single nation” embracing all Arabs into a single state (cited in Hourani, 1991: 406). Nasser sought economically to direct the resources of the Arab states to the benefit of Arabs, not the West. In his speeches on Arab nationalism, Nasser condemned colonialism, and argued vociferously against Zionism. Arab nationalism for Nasser was, according to Jankowski,

‘the protective armour’ of each Arab state against both imperialism and Israel; it was their ‘weapon,’ even their ‘principal weapon,’ in the struggle against foreign domination; it was ‘strategic necessity’ or more fully ‘a defensive necessity, a strategic necessity,’ and common interests (Jankowski, 1997: 154).

Nasser's approach to Arab nationalism was secular. For him, according to Jankowski, “it was language and culture, not religion, that were the primary criteria for membership in the Arab nation” (Jankowski, 1997: 155). Nasser, who had been among a group of young military officers who rid Egypt of the corrupt government of King Farouk in 1952 and soon emerged as the country's President, was the first Egyptian leader to adopt pan-Arab ideology as state policy (Gershoni, 1997: 11). According to Hourani, he “began to think of the country as part of the Arab world,

and its natural leader” (Hourani, 1991: 406). Nasser’s idea of Arab nationalism was driven by anti-imperialism, anti-Zionism and socialism. Nasser also held that “the Arab nations enjoyed a unity of language, religion, history, and culture which they should take advantage of to create their own system of cooperation and defence,” according to St John (1983: 480). In other Arab countries, Hourani states, “Nasserism met with a vast and continuing public acceptance” (Hourani, 1991: 407). Kramer agrees that Nasser enjoyed “immense prestige” in the Arab world after he scored a diplomatic victory over Britain, France and Israel following their attack on Suez in 1956” (Kramer, 1993). The attack, as Dawisha explains, followed Egypt’s decision to nationalize the Suez canal on 26 July 1956 after the withdrawal of an offer by Britain and the United States to fund the building of the Aswan Dam,⁵ an infrastructural project seen as key to Egypt’s economic development (Dawisha, 2003: 75-80). The results of this crisis, Hourani argues, “were to increase the standing of ... Nas[se]r in the surrounding Arab countries, since he was generally thought to have emerged from the crisis as the political victor” (Hourani, 1991: 368).

In 1956 the Ba’ath party in Syria took the initiative in calling for union with Egypt. Aflaq himself played a role in securing this union which culminated in February 1958 in the two countries’ merger into the United Arab Republic (UAR). This was, according to Cleveland, intended to be the first step towards pan-Arab unity. (Cleveland, 2000: 306) But, in 1961, the UAR collapsed when Syria seceded (Dawisha, 2003: 221). As a consequence, St John comments, “Arab leaders in general

⁵ The Aswan high Dam lies in just in the border between Egypt and Sudan. It is a huge rockfill dam which captures the world’s longest river, the Nile.

and Nasir in particular were less optimistic about both the immediate prospects and the positive effects of Arab unity” (St John, 1983: 480).

Pessimism increased after the war in June 1967 in which the Arab armies were heavily defeated by Israel. The war followed an air clash between Israel and Syrian jet fighters over the Golan Heights in April 1967, Nasser’s decision to send the Egyptian army into Sinai and the closure of the Straits of Tiran to Israeli ships in May 1967 (Dawisha, 2003: 250). The war, according to Hourani, was “a turning-point in many different ways. Muslim and Christian holy places were now under Jewish control and the balance of forces in the Middle East changed” (Hourani, 1991: 413). The war also had its territorial consequences, which, according to Kramer, included “the Israeli occupation of East Jerusalem, the West Bank, and Gaza ... all densely populated by Arabs ... and of the Sinai and the Golan, two geographic buffers that had kept Israel at a distance from Cairo and Damascus” (Kramer, 1993).

The war, as Ajami observes, marked “the Waterloo of Pan Arabism” (Ajami, 1978: 365). Nasser lived for another three years. As Hourani, states, “[h]is death [in October 1970] was the end of an era of hope for an Arab world united” (Hourani, 1991: 417). Under the new leadership of Anwar Sadat, Kramer notes, Egypt set out on a new course for itself which led to an Egyptian-Israeli peace agreement and an improvement in Egypt’s relationship with the United States, which had been poor following the war of October 1973 between the Arabs and Israel for the return to Egypt of Israeli-occupied Sinai (Kramer, 1993).

In other Arab countries, Hourani writes, changes in 1969 and 1970 brought to power leaders who seemed likely to follow policies broadly similar to Nasserism or at least consistent with it. One was a 28-year-old army officer Muammar Al-Qaddafi, who came to power after the Libyan King Idris al-Sanusi was overthrown on September 1 1969 by a group of young military officers he had led. St John writes that in the “early years of the revolution, Qaddafi was the Arab nationalist par excellence ... [Qaddafi] described the Libyan revolution as a continuation of the Arab revolution best epitomized by the Egyptian revolution of 1952” (St John, 1987: 26).

Nineteenth century German views of nationalism have been particularly influential on Arab nationalist thought. Among those influenced by it was al-Husri, the man who, arguably, did more than any other to popularise nationalist politics among the literate classes of the Arab Middle East early in the 20th century (Haim, 1962: 50). The German emphasis on the importance of language and history as the primary constituent elements of the nation found their way into Arab nationalists’ thinking. For al-Husri, language was the beating heart of the nation. Al-Husri’s view was that “[p]eople who spoke a unitary language ... have one heart and a common soul. As such, they constitute one nation, and so they have to have a unified state” (cited in Dawisha, 2003: 2). If language was the nation’s heart, history was its parentage. Al-Husri wrote:

Nationalist feeling depends on historical memories more than anything else ... [H]istory-related ideas and data play an important role in the life of nations and have a great impact on the direction of historical events ... We do not exaggerate when we say that generally the movement for resurrection and the struggle for independence and unity began only by recalling the past and searching for revelation from history ... Love for independence is nourished by memories of the lost independence; the longing for power and glory begins with a lament for the lost power and diminished glory; faith in the future of the nation derives its

strength from a belief in the brilliance of the past; and longing for unification is increased by the renewal of memories of the past unity (Al-Husri cited in Dawisha, 2003: 67).

He adds: “patriotism and nationalism before and above all ... even above and before freedom” (Al-Husri cited in Dawisha, 2003: 71).

Al-Husri explicitly drew historical parallels between divided Germany before 1871 and the fragmented Arab world from the Persian Gulf to the Atlantic Ocean in the interwar years. Dawisha recalls that, before 1871, what is now Germany was broken up into almost two thousands separate territories. It was only after the French defeat at the hand of Prussia’s Otto von Bismarck that the Prussian-led North German Confederation, itself made up of many states, absorbed the other German states (Dawisha, 2003: 57, 58). According to Dawisha, “on several occasions, al-Husri compared the Arab nation in the post World War I period with the pre-1871 German lands and domains” (Dawisha, 2003: 65). For al-Husri, according to Dawisha, the Arab states were “artificial creations of the imperialist powers ... [d]riven by their imperialists interests” (Dawisha, 2003: 3). This view, that came to prevail among Arab nationalists and nationalist scholars in the early 20th Century, suggested that the boundaries of the Arab ‘state’ or ‘states’ were an issue subsidiary to the dictates of language and history. British and French colonialists had merely drawn the borders of these states in the Middle East and North Africa in a manner that suited their interests.

These British and French interests both reflected and were expressed in a set of ideas that have come to be termed ‘Orientalism’. Developed by Edward Said (1978), the term described how English, French, and American scholars had approached Arab

societies of North Africa and the Middle East. It referred to “a style of thought based upon an ontological and epistemological distinction made between ‘the Orient’ and (most of the time) ‘the Occident’” (Said, 1978: 2). This distinction, Said argued, depended upon the broader “idea of European identity as a superior one in comparison with all non-European peoples and cultures” (Said, 1978: 7). Orientalism was “a Western style for dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the Orient” (Said, 1978: 3); there were Westerners, and there were Orientals, and the former must “dominate; the latter must be dominated”. For people of the Orient, being dominated, according to Said, meant “having their land occupied, their internal affairs rigidly controlled, their blood and treasure put at the disposal of one or another Western power” (Said, 1978: 36). Said argued Arabs and Islamic culture were falsely represented in Orientalism as “isolated from the mainstream of European progress in sciences, arts and commerce”. This had led Arab people to feel humiliated (Said, 1978: 206)

Said’s work provides much more than merely an important historiographical challenge to the representation of Arabs and Islamic culture. There are two other elements to his legacy. He analyses the cultural mechanics of imperialism and its effects. And he articulates the feelings of humiliation it caused and the struggle for ontological recovery by those affected.

In his next major work, *Culture and Imperialism*, he took his analysis of imperialism further beyond the “level of economic laws and political decisions” to an examination of what he called its “cultural formations” (Said, 1993: 12). In doing so, he showed how the colonial past had produced a post-colonial present in which once colonised

peoples were now engaged in struggles that were “not only about soldiers and cannons but also about ideas, about forms, about images and imagining” (Said, 1993: 5-6). To understand how these struggles were now being fought by those who had once been colonised it was necessary to recognise that “appeals to the past are among the commonest of strategies in interpretations of the present” (Said, 1993: 1). The story of now, in other words, became the story of recovering what had been lost — a narrative of redeeming the past. As a result, conflict between some leaders of the Arab world and the Western powers once responsible for the colonial distortion of the Arab map appeared at times to be “a function of two fundamentally opposed histories” (Said, 1993: 3). In these circumstances, Said argued, it was not surprising that, for Arab nationalists and intellectuals — indeed for post-colonial people’s around the world — opposition to Western hegemony became a defining characteristic of their nationalisms (Said, 1993: 63). Qaddafi would come to personify it.

Qaddafi and Arab Nationalism

Nationalism as a general concept was one of the key issues to which Qaddafi paid attention, especially in his work *The Green Book, Part III: The Social Basis of the Third Universal Theory*, published in 1978. To Qaddafi, as St John notes

nationalism and religion ... [were] the paramount drives moving history and mankind. Nationalism in general was a product of the world’s racial and cultural diversity, and was thus viewed as both a necessary and a productive force (St John, 1987: 29).

Qaddafi makes a distinction between a state and a nation. He does so in the context of a state which may embrace several difference national groups. He argues that, sooner or later, a multi-national state will disintegrate as a result of “the national conflict until each nation obtains its independence” (Al-Qaddafi, 1980: 80). He says that a

nation consists of “a group of people” who live “in one area of land” and have a prolonged shared history, a common heritage, and a sense of belonging to a common destiny. (Al-Qaddafi, 1980: 78, 79) Qaddafi argues:

when political structure and social reality are congruent, as in the case of the nation-state, [the state] lasts and does not change. If a change is forced by external colonialism or internal collapse, it reappears under the banner of national struggle, national or national unity (Al-Qaddafi, 1980: 78).

For Qaddafi, nationalism is “the basis for the survival of nations ... Accordingly, unity is the basis for survival ... For this reason, human communities struggle for their own national unity, the basis for their survival” (Al-Qaddafi, 1980: 67).

For Qaddafi, as St John argues, Arab nationalism had “rich and deep roots in the ancient past”. The Arab nation was “the product of an age-old civilisation which was in turn based on a ‘heavenly and universal’ message, namely Islam” (St John, 1987: 29). As such, Arabs constituted one nation and, so, had to have a unified state.

Qaddafi, as St John adds,

founded his Arab nationalism on a glorification of Arab history and culture which conceived of the Arabic-speaking world as the Arab nation. ... Qaddafi blamed the backwardness of the Arab nation on four centuries of stagnation under Ottoman rule, the subjugation and exploitation of first European colonialism and then imperialism, and the corruption and repression of reactionary, monarchical rule (St John, 1987: 26-27).

At the centre of Qaddafi’s Arab nationalism, according to St John,

was the feeling that the Arab people had special qualities, values and distinctions which set them apart from outsiders and gave them the right and the duty to manage their own resources and shape their own destiny (St John, 1987: 27).

Arabs constituted one nation and, so, had to have a single, unified state. Deeb argues that “Qadhdhafi’s conception of Arab nationalism is that of a nation extending from the Atlantic Ocean to the Persian Gulf linked by linguistic, cultural, ethnic, and historical ties and eventually uniting politically and militarily to form a powerful regional bloc on the international scene” (Deeb, 1991: 16).

Accordingly, the achievement of Arab unity was a crucial objective of the Libyan revolution. The Libyan leadership demonstrated the call for Arab unity in its slogan in the first statement of the revolution on 01/09/1969. The slogan was: ‘freedom (*huriyya*), socialism (*ishtirakiyya*), and unity (*wahda*).’ (Imhammad, 2008: 44) Unity entailed Libya’s announced intent to pursue an Arab unity. In the early months of Libya’s revolution, the Revolutionary Command Council, which led the country after the revolution, stressed, according to Muscat, that

the Libyan people, as part of the Arab nation were to work towards comprehensive Arab unity. This underscored the belief of the revolution that the Arab nation could only survive the turbulent times it was passing through, especially its continued conflict against the Zionists in the Occupied Lands and the political and economic pressures which were already being felt and which were largely the consequence of the obtaining situation in the Middle East, through unity and not disunity (Muscat, 1980: 175-176).

The dispossession of the Palestinians was particularly important in Qaddafi’s advocacy of Arab nationalism. For Qaddafi, historical Palestine was an essential part of the Arab world. Qaddafi argued that the Arab nation could not be free until Palestine was free. Qaddafi saw the question of Arab unity in the Arab world as critically linked to the Palestinian issue: Qaddafi’s view was, according to St John, that “Arabs had to unite before they could hope to free Palestine” (St John, 1987: 146).

Qaddafi also defined his revolution as intent on establishing what he called Arab socialism. Like the Ba'athists and Nasser, he envisaged the achievement of this socialism within a nationalist context. The aims of Arab socialism included freeing the Arab world from Western colonial domination. It included establishing national pride and social justice within Arab societies, and unifying the Arab world. Like others before him, socialism was one element of the Libyan revolution's core slogan: 'unity, freedom, socialism' (Imhammad, 2008: 44).

Qaddafi saw "Islam as a key component of Arab nationalism" ... "[He] believed that Arab nationalism and Islam were inextricably linked." To be an Arab was to be a Muslim and, for this reason, Qaddafi advised his Arab Christian neighbours to recognise this fact and to return to the house of Islam (St John, 1987: 33). "[Qaddafi's] emphasis on Islam was based on the belief that the Arab revolution must be an Islamic one because the Arab and Islamic identities were intertwined" (St John, 1987: 146). "From this, it followed that the leader of Arab nationalism must also be the leader of Arab Islam and offer revolutionary programmes for both" (St John, 1987: 33-34). Obeidi's characterisation is that, for Qaddafi, Islam was "the fundamental basis of Arab identity, of unity within the Arab nation and between it and all Muslims. Islam, for Qaddafi, [was] also the most significant political and cultural weapon against imperialism and intellectual domination" (Obeidi, 2001: 92, 93).

Qaddafi elaborated on his ideas of Arab nationalism and the role he assigned to Islam in the 'Third Universal Theory', which he formulated in his three-part *Green Book*⁶, published in 1975, 1977 and 1978. According to St John,

Qaddafi based The Third Universal Theory on the twin pillars of nationalism and religion which he described as the paramount drives moving history and mankind. Nationalism in general was a product of the world's racial and cultural diversity, and was thus viewed as both a necessary and a productive force. Arab nationalism in particular was considered to have rich and deep roots in the ancient past. Because the Arab nation was the product of an age-old civilisation which was in turn based on a 'heavenly and universal' message, namely Islam, Qaddafi argued that the Arab nation had both the right and the duty to be the bearer of The Universal Theory to the world (St John, 1987: 29).

In line with his thinking on Arab and national unity, Qaddafi made several attempts to lead Libya into full political unity with Egypt and Sudan in December 1969, (the Tripoli Charter), with Egypt and Syria in April 1971, (Federation of Arab Republic), with Egypt in August 1973 (Benghazi Declaration), with Algeria in October 1973 (Hassi Messaoud Accords), with Tunisia in 1974 (Djerba Treaty), with Syria in September 1980, with Chad in 1981 (Tripoli Communique), with Morocco in August 1984 (Oujda Treaty), with Algeria in 1987, with Algeria, Mauritania, Morocco and Tunisia, (the Arab Maghrib Union), and, finally, with Sudan in 1990 (Imhammad, 2008: 44-48; Vandewalle, 2006: 193; Solomon and Swart 2005: 471). Qaddafi's vision in each of these attempts to revise Libyan national or geopolitical identity was in partial service of a conviction, evidently sincerely held at the time, that Libyans — in fact all Arabs — should eventually be subsumed within a broader Arab national state.

⁶ *The Green Book* outlines Qaddafi's political, economic and social philosophy.

In the service of this project, Qaddafi mobilized a range of arguments and deployed an array of symbols, none more emotive than those he drew from Libyan resistance to Italian fascist occupation of the country in the 1920s and 1930s. These included references to Umar al-Mukhtar, the Libyan who led this resistance until he was captured and hanged by the Italians in 1931 (Vandewalle, 2006: 125). Qaddafi held up al-Mukhtar as an example of Libyan, and of broader Arab, patriotism, exhorting Libyans and fellow Arabs to be wary of those who would betray their land and people to outsiders. Vandewalle quotes Qaddafi as declaring

I must tell you that the traitors are a bigger threat to our future, freedom, and independence than colonialism. It was the traitors who enabled Italy to go deep inside Libya. The Italians on their own could not have advanced into this desert or these mountains. They would not have managed to catch Umar al-Mukhtar had it not been for a traitor who gave [away] his whereabouts ... Now we should seek traitors, those who pave the way for the Americans, and kill them. The Americans today are like Italians yesterday. The traitors of today are like [those] of yesterday (Al-Qaddafi cited in Vandewalle, 2006: 125).

St John adds that Qaddafi's symbolism extended to presenting his revolution

as the continuation of the struggle for which al-Mukhtar and hundreds before him had died... [R]epresentatives of the revolutionary government continued to describe the success of the revolution as the embodiment of the Libyan people's struggle throughout the generations, often referring specifically to military battles and martyrs from Italo-Libyan wars (St John, 1987: 28).

Vandewalle argues that, "in Libya, the reaction against the West among the young revolutionaries [around Qaddafi] was in part based of Libyans' historical memory of the Italian colonial period" (Vandewalle, 2006: 130-131). But he suggests that Qaddafi deployed the legacy of Italian fascist domination of Libya as one of the principal justifications for his revolution. Vandewalle states that

The early references to the disastrous legacy of Italian colonialism, and to the ‘neo-colonial arrangements’ imposed on Libya after World War II — Qaddafi would forever refer to 1951 as a ‘false independence’ and to 1 September 1969 as the true independence day of Libya — provided a backdrop to a much larger historical tapestry into which the Libyan leader skilfully wove his vision for a new Libyan society (Vandewalle, 2006: 86).

Vandewalle argues that Qaddafi’s speeches after 1969 repeatedly asserted the notion that all Libyans shared common traditions, and that they had a common history and shared symbols within the country and within the region (Vandewalle, 2006: 86). These assertions became part and parcel of a historical narrative that the Libyan leader repeated. Vandewalle states that

The Libyan leader’s speeches contain innumerable reiterations of words that reflect conditions in Arab society before state-building began in earnest: words like *turath* (heritage), *furusiyya* (chivalry), and *diafa* (hospitality). Dignity and the indignities suffered at the hands of the West have continually been mentioned by Qaddafi to invoke a powerful sense of unity. History — and historical wrongs inflicted by the West on Libya — have been used from the beginning to create a sense of shared suffering and exploitation (Vandewalle, 2006: 125 and Vandewalle, 2008: 30).

Vandewalle adds that an early objective of the revolution, begun in 1969, was

to initiate a wholesale cleansing of perceived stains of western culture, colonialism and the monarchy (with its link to global capital) from the country’s social fabric. A number of public and highly symbolic acts in the early years of the revolution were necessary to achieve this end, including the burning of western books and musical instruments, the closing of nightclubs, the promotion of traditional Libyan dress, the conversion of churches into mosques, the adoption in principle of Islamic punishment, and the renaming of Gregorian calendar⁷ (Vandewalle, 2006: 126).

⁷ Qaddafi replaced the Gregorian calendar with a new solar calendar that begins with the migration of the Prophet Mohammed in 622, and the months renamed by him.

St John takes this point further. He recalls that, in mid-September 1969, the Revolutionary Command Council “declared that all signs, cards, and tickets in Libya should be written in the Arabic language only.” The declaration included “the mandatory translation of foreign passports into Arabic and a campaign to increase the use of Arabic as an international language officially recognised by the United Nations and the other international bodies” These acts, according to St John, “were widely popular and thus increased the legitimacy of the revolutionary government ... because they emphasised the revolutionary government’s rejection of foreign values” (St John, 1987: 27).

Vandewalle sees Qaddafi’s closure of British and United States bases and installations in Libya, the confiscation of Italian assets and the expulsion of the last Italians from Libya in 1970 as similarly symbolic — though it was, of course, also strategic (Vandewalle, 2006: 87). Muscat argues that, for Qaddafi, the foreign bases in Libya had been “a threat not only to the independence of the people of Libya and the economy of the country, they were also a Sword of Damocles hanging over the head of the whole Arab nation and the Mediterranean region.” Moreover, Muscat suggests that the presence of the foreign bases “was contradictory to the aspiration and the principles of the Revolution. How could the Revolution preach Arab unity and at the same time allow itself to be used as a military launching pad against other Arab states?” (Muscat, 1980: 177) Ronen suggests that many Libyan nationalists before the 1969 revolution “believed that the United States had helped Israel — ‘the Zionist enemy’ ... [in the 1967 war] with the US aircraft using the Wheelus airbase to attack Egypt” (Ronen, 2008:10). The evacuation of the American and British bases from Libya, he adds, “was cause of celebration, and the day has since become a central

event on Libya's calendar. Qaddafi maximised the achievement politically, portraying it as a great moment in the history of modern Libya as well as in his career" (Ronen, 2008: 11).

For Qaddafi, according to Simons, "the Third World is victimised by powerful nations, often exploiting racial differences to maintain their global hegemony, and the United States is a principal villain in this corrupt scheme" (Simons, 1993: 245-246). For the Libyan leader, Collins adds, "the West was seen to constitute the greatest threat to Arab unity, to Arab control over resources, and to political and economic independence" (Collins, 1974: 16). Qaddafi believed that "the 'present weakness and backwardness of the Arabs' [was] due to their disintegration into tribal states and regions; a process encouraged by the colonial powers to help them dominate the Arab world." For Qaddafi, according to St John, "regionalism [*iqlimiyya*, divisions between Arab countries was] both an innovation of colonialism and the reasons the Western powers were able to conquer the Middle East." Hence St John adds, Qaddafi argued that "the Arabs must unite into a single Arab state if they [were] to regain their former glory and reach their full potential." St John continues that the Libyan leader also saw "Israel's triumph over the Arabs as simply the latest consequence of Arab divisions and that the Arabs must unite if they ever expect[ed] to regain Palestine" (St John, 1983: 481).

Qaddafi's Pan Arab commitment to an Arab nation no longer divided by colonially derived states seemed to wane in the course of a series of frustrations. Libya's international isolation and, so, vulnerability seemed, simultaneously, to be increasing. The early signs of a change of mind were his oft-repeated threat to withdraw from the Arab League — the symbol of Arab solidarity. In October 2000, "Libya notified the

Arab League of its intention to withdraw from the organization although no official reason for the withdrawal was given.” Five months later, “Libya official confirmed that the threat of withdrawal was serious and official” (Europa Publication, 2004). In a speech delivered to the general People’s Congress in March 2nd 2002, Qaddafi asked the People’s Congresses [a governing institution in Libya] to decide the pullout of Libya from the Arab League. He said: “It is not an honour for me to belong to the Arabs. So, the People’s Congresses must seriously consider the withdrawal of Libya from the Arab League” (Al-Qaddafi, 02/03/2002). In May 2004, Qaddafi called for a dismantling of the Arab League organization — before himself walking out of the meeting of the Arab League in Tunis (Vandewalle, 2006: 193).

Simultaneously, the Libyan leader’s attention seemed increasingly to turn towards Africa. He began to invest time and energy into trying to build a bigger role for Libya in Africa, and he himself became one of the strongest advocates of unity between all African countries within an economic and political union. At the same time, in the late 1990s, Qaddafi began to suggest Libyans should consider themselves subsumable now not within a united Arab polity but, instead, within an eventual pan-African nation. Qaddafi saw the conversion of the Organisation of African Unity into an African Union at a meeting in the Libyan city of Sirte on September 9 1999 as an important milestone on the road to African unity. The AU was conceived of as “a regional group modelled after the European Union” (St John, 2003). The AU was intended to promote African unity and solidarity, to spur economic development and international cooperation (Takeyh, 2001), and to “enable [Africa to] play its rightful role in the global economy while addressing multifaceted social, economic, and political problems compounded as they are certain negative aspects of globalization”

(Al-Atrash, 2008). Beyond that, for Qaddafi, lay some form of agglomerated African state.

Qaddafi's diplomatic shift towards Africa reflected broader changes in Libya's foreign relations, most significantly those with the United States. In the opening years of the third millennium, Libya's relationship with the West improved dramatically. A series of public exchanges between Libya and the Western powers marked a change that had apparently been secured behind closed doors through delicate diplomacy. An important register of the change was a reduction in the extent of the threat to both Libya and to his own person that Qaddafi now felt from the Western powers.

Underlying the changes seemed to be Qaddafi's embrace of three positions. One was an apparently greater amenability on his part to colonially derived borders. A second appeared to be a view that national borders were becoming ever less relevant in international affairs. And a third seemed to be a greater willingness explicitly to seek to advance the interests of Libya itself and alone. Although on the face of it these underlying changes appeared to contradict earlier positions, in the radical review of Libyan foreign policy then evidently underway the Libyan leader seemed to have no difficulty in pragmatically reconciling them.

Four statements the Libyan leadership made about Libyan geopolitical positioning indicate the odyssey Libyans travelled over the 40 years to 2009. One, made by Qaddafi in September 1st 1980, again expressed the quest for a Pan Arab positioning for Libya: "Libyan national identity and the freedom of Libyans are not complete and are in danger as long as the Arab nation is in danger and disunited" (Al-Qaddafi,

01/09/1980). This statement expresses again Qaddafi's sincere wish for an eventual single, over-arching Arab state embracing all Arabs but it suggests the paradoxical element of his motivation: the protection of Libya and Libyans. It is as if for the Libyan people to survive, the Libyan state must make way for an over-arching single Arab state; it is as if for the Arab nation to survive, the post colonial Arab state must die. He expresses the paradox of pan-Arabism.

A second statement, made also by Qaddafi — on May 10th 1998 — proclaims a geopolitical shift towards pan Africanism: “Ethnically and historically we are Arabs, but from the political and geographical perspective, we are Africans. ...We are African in this day. ... From today, Libyan people have to realize that they are Africans. ...You are Arabic, but if we speak from the political and geographical perspectives you are African. Africa does not accept double standards from now on” (Al-Qaddafi, 05/10/1998). The third statement, made in February 2004 by the former Libyan General Secretary of the People Committee (Prime Minister), Dr. Shukri Ghanem, in an interview on the BBC Radio 4's Today programme, provides intimations of Libya as a nation for itself: “Our policy now is to concentrate on our economic development and improve the standard of living for our people” (Ghanem, 2004). The fourth statement, made by Qaddafi in 2007 in an interview with Al-Jazeera TV, suggests Libya's embrace of a new economically derived, geopolitical positioning by region, in which old markers of national identity are of very limited significance:

Now is the era of economy, consumption, markets, and investments. This is what unites people irrespective of language, religion and a nationality ... Nationalism is finished. ... Globalisation does not recognise religion, nationalism, language and colour. Rather it recognises demography and shared financial interest. It will be no place for small entities. The world in the

future will be formed into only seven or ten big spaces and Libya will be part of the African space (Al-Qaddafi, 2007).

A year later Qaddafi elaborated further:

The phase of nationalist, linguistic, religious or racial unity is over and has given way to a new phase taking demography fully into account and based on the belief that the destiny of any community living in the same space is unique, regardless of colour, race, language or religion. ... The European Union [and] the United States are a testimony to that (Al-Qaddafi, 18/05/2008).

Along this political journey, Qaddafi has, at one point or another, made use of almost every approach to constructing geopolitical discourse that we have explored here. When he assumed leadership of Libya in 1969, he saw the borders of Libya and other post-World War Two Arab states as colonial contrivances. In his calls to action and formulations of his geopolitical discourse, he repeatedly appealed to the past to interpret his present — in line with the pattern of post-colonial political discourse described by Said. He saw Arabs, in reality, as one nation spread across many states — an echo of the German romantic school so influential among many Arab nationalists. He seemed to hold a view similar to Hourani, Barghutti and Tuta that nationalist feelings among Arabs had roots that long predated the 19th and 20th centuries. Like earlier generations of 20th century Arab nationalists, Qaddafi saw nationalism as an instrument to secure escape from the control of others — whether Ottoman or European. He was an exemplar of the Arab intellectual response to centuries of orientalist thinking in the West. Unlike Faysal, Al-Rihani, Husri, Aflaq and Nasser, Qaddafi saw Islam as a defining element of Arab nationalism. His attempts to amalgamate Libya and other Arab states via deals with other Arab heads of state appeared to assume, in the Franco-British tradition, that the institution of the state can make or break nationality. His symbolic reinforcement of the form in which

he conceived of the national entity at any moment, and of changes to it, reflected the banality identified by Billig. And there are indications that he shared Anderson's understanding of the importance of imagination to national identity. And 40 years after the 1969 revolution, Qaddafi's declaration that nationalism was dead reflected views closer to the reconceptualisation of space and politics by theorists such as Ohmae and Ó Tuathail. In sum, Qaddafi provided an extraordinary example of how a nation can change its geopolitical position and discourse — an echo, perhaps, of Hobsbawm's observation that conceptions of national identity can change with circumstances. By 2009, the Libyan leader had, on the face of it, travelled a long way from where he had started out in 1969.

Various analysts and historians of Libyan affairs have sought to explain Qaddafi's reformulations of Libyan geopolitical discourse. Vandewalle claims that the Libyan leadership's use of the language of Arab nationalism was part of a quest for legitimacy (Vandewalle, 2006: 87). Deeb argues that Libyan national security interest was Qaddafi's first and principal concern in his early attempts to unite with Egypt and Sudan. She, for example, suggests that, Qaddafi joined the 'Tripoli Charter' with president Nasser of Egypt and Ja'far al-Numeiry of Sudan with national security in mind. At the same time, Deeb continues, "[t]his attempt, although viewed as a prime example of Libya's ideological fervour for Arab nationalism and Arab unity, could also be viewed from another, more pragmatic angle". She says that: "Peter K. Bechtold, a close observer of the evolution of this attempt at federation, noted shrewdly that both Qaddafi and Numeiry needed this alliance with Egypt to boost their questionable legitimacy at home by being associated with ... Nasser" (Deeb, 1986: 157). She adds, "... it is very likely that Qaddafi needed more than just

legitimacy — he may have needed protection as well from military coups within Libya and attempts at his ouster from outside the country” (Deeb, 1986: 157). In this period, she continues,

Qaddafi was aware of the need for powerful allies in the region, and the highest priority on his agenda was the development of an alliance with Egypt, primarily, as well as with Sudan, that would ensure the security of Libya’s borders and new regime (Deeb, 1986: 156).

Deeb bases her argument on Morgenthau’s notion (1958) that the primary national interest is the protection of a nation’s “physical, political, and cultural identity against encroachments by other nations” (Morgenthau cited in Deeb, 1986: 153).

Joffé takes a similar view on Libya’s primary concern for its security. He writes: “Indeed, the perceived security interests of the Libyan state have to form the background to any discussion of its detailed foreign policy, as is generally true of states in the modern world” (Joffé, 2008: 192). He says, for example, that in 1975 Libya “formed a defence pact with Algeria — the Hassi Messaoud Treaty” — with this in mind. Joffé writes of this time — five years after Nasser’s death — that Libya is not seeking an alliance with Egypt to guarantee its security. Rather,

It was Algeria that was to guarantee Libyan independence by warning Egypt not to invade two years later. It has been Algeria ever since that has acted as the guarantor and mentor of the Libyan state, even as their mutual policies diverged, as over the Polisario Front in the Western Sahara (Joffé, 2008:194).

St John also examines how Qaddafi tactically changed his political interest in different regions of the Arab world. He argues that, in the early years of the revolution (1969-73), Qaddafi’s interest on Arab unity focused on the *Mashrek* (a large area in the Middle East, bounded between the Mediterranean Sea and Iran). In this period,

according to St John, Qaddafi entered into several rounds of negotiations with Egypt, Sudan, and Syria. At the same time, St John continues “[u]nable to achieve comprehensive unity in the *al-Mashrek*, Qaddafi later turned his attention to the *al-Maghreb* [the Arab countries in North Africa] with the proposal in January 1974 for total union with Tunisia.” St John views Qaddafi’s shift from the *Mashrek* to the *Maghreb* as a tactical shift. His main argument is that Qaddafi’s attempts to enter into political unity with one geographical area of Arab or African nations occurred only when his diplomatic efforts stalled in other area (St John, 1987: 148).

When Qaddafi later appeared to turn his interest to Africa, and Libya led a meeting for the establishment of the Sahel and Saharan States (CEN-SAD) in Tripoli in February 4th 1998, the aim of this new body, Joffé argues, was among others to secure Libya’s soft Saharan underbelly and provide greater protection against “its massive neighbour Egypt” (Joffé, 2008: 194). Libya’s border security interests, he continues, “proved to be more important for Libya than satisfying its ideological ambitions linked to the principles of the replication of the *Jamahiri* model or the achievement of political integration” (Joffé, 2008: 195).

Generally, these studies lend support to the argument that Libyan security interests were Qaddafi’s first and principal concern. They provide useful insights that may help us understand why Qaddafi reconstructed — on several occasions — Libyan geopolitical discourse. But they leave us short of a satisfactory explanation — a model, if you like — of what precisely Qaddafi did and why. I suggest that a profitable way of approaching these two questions might be through a third: how Qaddafi used language. I propose an examination of *how* he reconstructed Libyan

geopolitical discourse. This requires a closer examination than other scholars appear to have undertaken of the terms in which Qaddafi constructed and recast geopolitical discourse, the strategies he employed to do so, and the resonances and meanings that underlay his practice. This examination of his discourse may lead us to a deeper understanding of his motivations, of the stimuli that prompted the changes and may enable us to periodise his different geopolitical discursive formations. Accordingly, the research question of this study is: How and why did Muammar Al-Qaddafi repeatedly reconstruct Libyan geopolitical discourse over the 40 years to 2009?

Chapter Three

Methodology

Introduction

There are more and less effective ways of answering any question. No strategy for doing so is likely to be perfect; none is likely to deliver an answer that is uncoloured or unaffected by the methods that produce it. Our best hope is to place our confidence in critical examination of the methods available to us and argument over their likely suitability to answering the question in the circumstances in which we find ourselves. This is the process with which this chapter concerned.

In the previous chapter, I reviewed elements of the scholarly literature on geopolitics, nationalism, on Arab nationalism and on Libyan geopolitical positioning and discourse over the 40 years to 2009. I showed how this literature provided several insights into the repeated reconstruction of Libyan geopolitical discourse by the country's leader, Muammar Al-Qaddafi. Among them were: the view he shared with others that the borders of Libya and other Arab states were colonial contrivances; echoes of the German school in his view of Arabs as a nation spread across many different states; similarities to Hourani and others in seeing Arab nationalism as something that predated the 19th Century; resonances with other Arab nationalists with whom he agreed that nationalism was an instrument to secure escape from foreign domination; and, in later years, similarities between his thinking and that of Ohmae and others in their reconceptualisation of space and politics. We also suggested he personified the struggle waged by the formerly colonised against the cultural and other residues of imperialism that is described by Said. But I argued that

what explanation the existing scholarly literature gave us on *how* these reconstructions were achieved and *why* they were entered upon was inadequate.

Ó Tuathail, in his discussion of geopolitics, suggests that we should analyse and examine geopolitical identity in terms of narrative; that political leaders contrive their national or geopolitical options in terms of the stories they imagine or see themselves as inhabiting (Ó Tuathail, 1998: 7). Qaddafi is both narrator and character in a nation's odyssey in which some or other combination of Libyans, Arabs or Africans set out to win restitution and recovery from the ravages of Western colonialism. Qaddafi shifts geopolitical stances imaginatively in response to developments in the region and the world. In a way, the reasons behind Qaddafi's making these shifts validate Mitchell's criticism of Anderson in which Mitchell points out that Anderson pays too little attention to how a national — or, perhaps, a geopolitical — identity is forged. Mitchell argues that the issues that urgently need to be understood about the imagined bonds of nationhood are

the practices and exercises of power through which these bonds are produced and reproduced...who defines the nation, how that definition is reproduced and contested and, crucially, how the nation has developed and changed over time... [T]he question is not what common imagination *exists*, but what common imagination is *forged* (Mitchell, 2000; cited in Hague, 2004:20, original emphasis).

Qaddafi's narrative bears this out. It is as if Libyan geopolitical discourse is forged and reforged in this battle for restitution and recovery — a contest, above all, of power.

It is important to grasp the centrality of Qaddafi to this narrative of power, struggle

and geopolitical strategy. It is a role other scholars generally accept. According to St John, in the early years following the revolution in 1969, Qaddafi and the ruling Revolutionary Command Council “controlled all aspects of the formulation and execution of Libyan foreign policy”. He adds:

The Libyan people accepted this approach, both because there were in general agreement with the redirection of Libyan foreign policy, and because no previous Libyan government had offered them a more significant role in the nation’s foreign policy process (St John, 1987:140).

Almost eight years later, when Qaddafi declared the ‘Authority of People’, (*Sultat al-Sha’b*) in which he defined Libya as a state of the masses governed by the ordinary people through the Basic People’s Congresses (BPC), Libyan political structures, in a formal sense, changed significantly (Mattes, 2008: 56). The People’s Congress system, according to St John,

offered new opportunities for Libyans to discuss and influence the government’s foreign policy. For example, Basic People’s Congresses throughout the country debate foreign and domestic policy items on the agenda of the general People’s Congresses in advance of the meetings of the latter where the debate continues (St John, 1987:140).

Yet, although Qaddafi has no formal role, public office or official title, he is the principal formulator of Libyan political discourse and policy over the forty years to 2009. He has the legitimacy to involve himself in any situation, particularly one of crisis. Mattes suggests that his revolutionary legitimacy enables him to intervene in key issues or debates (Mattes, 2008: 60). Joffé adds that “it is clear that Libyan foreign policy owes its inspiration to the Guardian of the Revolution, Muammar al-Qaddafi” (Joffé, 2008: 201). And, Qaddafi’s ideological inspiration, as Joffé argues, “is rooted in his personal, religious, and social experience”. Joffé adds that:

the ideology of the Libyan state is, officially, very much the personal creation of its leader, Qaddafi, a feature that will have profound implications for the way in which policy is formulated and articulated in Libya. Formally, this is a function of both the peculiar ideology and the nature of the Libyan state, and of the decision-making processes and structures inherent in it, whether in the foreign or domestic fields (Joffé, 2008: 196).

It is appropriate in trying to understand the repeated reconstruction of Libyan geopolitical discourse over the 40 years to 2009, therefore, to examine the positions expressed by Qaddafi — while at the same time bearing in mind that, in doing so, one is not considering the discourse of only one man. The ideas expressed by Qaddafi are likely also to include some input from Libyan people through the BPCs and other public forums. There were also, no doubt, other influences shaping his geopolitical discourse. Speculation on what they are may prove fruitful. But speculation is not the task of this study. Rather, a number of these influences are likely to be recoverable through a close examination of his language and discourse whose tone and form of expression is usually extremely candid. What is required is a close examination of his formulations of Libyan geopolitical discourse as well as any allied or non-verbal forms of communication in which he might have engaged.

Our target here is, in the first instance, Qaddafi's discursive practices. Later we will need to examine the circumstances in his narrative that influenced these practices. Accordingly, the methods relied upon are of two basic types: first, those that help throw light on his verbal and other discursive practices and, second, those political, economic, historical and other developments that might have influenced those practices significantly.

Sampling

Deacon *et al* call for a sample that embraces “a broad range of particular examples in order to identify common characteristics and general features of [a particular] discourse” (Deacon *et al.*, 1999: 312). My sample of Qaddafi’s verbal output will be broad. It will cover all of Qaddafi’s many speeches over the forty years to 2009. This time-span is appropriate in view of the fact that it is the changes in Qaddafi’s formulations of Libyan geopolitical discourse over this period, and what might have influenced these changes, that are my primary interest. I set out to detect any thematic shifts in Qaddafi’s utterances over the research period and to identify any correlations between such shifts and contemporary Libyan or international developments. I therefore cannot be content to examine only a part of his public verbal output over the forty years.

I conduct a similar examination of forms of non-verbal communication by Qaddafi and Libyan government institutions over the research period. I extend the sample of material to be examined beyond text to include visual images and symbols which might also indicate moments at which Libyan geopolitical discourse is constructed or reconstructed. Again, at any moments of apparent reconstruction of geopolitics, I investigate any correlations that might exist with contemporary Libyan or international developments bearing on the country.

In order to explore these facets, I look at and use a variety of methods and approaches. I apply multiple methods, including content analysis, visual semiotic analysis, discourse analysis and interviews. I also analyse Libyan politics and international

relations to see if and, if yes, how, they correspond to reconstructions of the country's geopolitical discourse.

Content Analysis

Content analysis is an appropriate method to help me define and manage my verbal data sample and to identify surface-level patterns and frequencies present in the language used by Qaddafi to construct Libyan geopolitical discourse and political discourse. According to Deacon *et al.*, if one wants “to establish patterns of representation in media content over a given period of time — several months, say, or even years — content analysis provides you with a methodological approach for doing this”. It establishes a procedure to find what is relatively constant and what might change over time (Deacon *et al.*, 1999: 132-133). Berelson uses the term content analysis to define a research technique “for the objective, systematic, and quantitative description of the manifest content of communication” (Berelson, 1952: 18). Weber describes content analysis as a method that “classifies textual material, reducing it to more relevant, manageable bits of data.” He adds: “Social scientists who must make sense of historical documents, newspapers, political speeches, open-ended interviews, diplomatic messages, psychological diaries, or official publications ... find the technique indispensable” (Weber, 1990: 5).

Content analysis can, thus, help this study in several important respects. First it offers an initial means to manage my large verbal sample by reducing its mass of data, at surface level, to a series of themes and features. By doing so, it can suggest changes in Libyan geopolitical discourse and narrative, particularly those bearing on the country's self-identification in the community of nations. If change is apparent, content analysis can, moreover, help us periodise it. In performing these functions,

content analysis can help identify themes and features that warrant deeper examination through discourse analysis or interviews.

The process of conducting content analysis has been approached by different scholars in different ways. Some have seen it involving as few as four or five steps, while others see it as embracing as many as ten. According to Hansen *et al.*, content analysis can be broken down into six clearly articulated steps:

- 1- Definition of the research problem.
- 2- Selection of media and sample.
- 3- Defining analytical categories.
- 4- Constructing a coding schedule.
- 5- Piloting the coding schedule and checking reliability.
- 6- Data-preparation and analysis (Hansen *et al.*, 1998: 98).

According to Deacon *et al.*, “To use quantitative content analysis effectively, you need to be clear from the beginning what it is that you are interested in investigating” (Deacon *et al.*, 1999: 117). At this level of defining what the research question is, I decided to use the content analysis to detect any manifest thematic shifts in political or geopolitical discourse, particularly any dealing with the formulation of national or regional identity, that might occur in Qaddafi’s verbal utterances over the four decades to 2008.

Hansen *et al* state that “[m]ost content analysis studies tend to confine themselves to the analysis of only one or two types of medium.” Therefore, the choice of the media or the titles to be analysed depends on the research area under discussion and more

specifically, on the geographical reach of the media, their audience, size, audience type, format, content, political stance, and the accessibility and availability of the chosen media's output. Content analysis involves, at an earlier stage the selection and narrowing down of the type of media and coverage to be analysed. Once the medium, or media, has been selected, the next step in content analysis is to choose issues and to refine the period to be analysed (Hansen *et al.*, 1998:100-101).

My choice of Qaddafi's political speeches over the past 40 years as text is consistent with Hansen *et al.*'s guidance. The speeches provide the main formulations of Libyan geopolitical discourse over the period; they indicate its tone and convey its changing character. They have been collected and archived over the past 40 years by the International Centre for Studies and Research on the Green Book in Tripoli, the Libyan capital. *The Green Book* was written by Qaddafi, was first published in 1975, and outlines his views on democracy and his political philosophy. These speeches were delivered in Arabic. Sections of particular relevance to this thesis have been translated into English by me.

The sample for the content analysis consists of Qaddafi's 188 speeches over the four decades to 2008. His books, articles, broadcasts, press conferences, press interviews, letters, and private communication are not included in the content analysis sample. I do, however, draw on these items, along with the 188 speeches, in the discourse analysis, lexical analysis and visual analysis. There are several reasons for choosing the speeches alone for the content analysis. One, they constitute a body of precise formulations of policy and perspective. Two, they are regular in their form, are comparable, and were systematically organised and collected. Three, Qaddafi's

speeches were invariably unscripted and, so, were not written for him by others. Four, gathering compilations of his other utterances in books, press conferences, interviews and the like that would have been at all comprehensive presented serious difficulties. And, five — and by no means least — a content analysis of the speeches alone presented a sufficient challenge and, I suggest, a sufficiently comprehensive sample. The 188 speeches total about 3,700 pages of A4 and more than one million words, and represent, if anything does, the views of the man.

Of these speeches, 81 were made in the period between 1969 to 1980; 46 between 1980 to 1990; 40 between 1990 to 2000; and 21 between 2000 to 2008. The corpus of Qaddafi's speeches at the International Centre for Studies and Research on the Green Book contained nothing classified as a speech in the years 1979, 2004 and 2005.⁸

Having chosen the media and sample period, there remains the task of deciding what to count. According to Hansen *et al*, "The 'task' of content analysis is to examine a selected (sampled) body of text, and to classify the content according to a number of predetermined dimensions" (Hansen *et al.*, 1998: 106). According to Deacon, *at al.*, "[w]hat you count should always be determined by your research objectives" (Deacon, *at al.*, 1999: 120-121).

My review of the secondary literature suggested that there were shifts in Qaddafi's view of what Libya's primary geopolitical concern should be at various points over the forty years. As Libya's primary geopolitical concern appeared to change so, too, did it seem — from my early reading of a few of Qaddafi's speeches — that aspects

⁸ My attempts to clarify why this should be so have been unsuccessful.

of his rhetoric and the judgements underlying it changed at around the same time. This seemed evident in the choice of words and phrases in which he expressed apparent primacy in his geopolitical concerns. These were my empirical observations of patterns that clearly emerged from the secondary literature and some of his speeches in the early days of my study.

It seemed that, at times, the frequency of once commonly used words declined; and that words that had not been used earlier, or had seldom been used earlier, came into common and sustained usage. For example, a difference that stood out clearly was that in the early days of his leadership Qaddafi made very frequent use of the phrase “Arab unity”; a few decades later, however, this usage appeared to have tailed off substantially. Conversely, although he had occasionally spoken of “African unity” in the early days of his leadership, decades later the frequency of his reference to this notion seemed to have increased sharply.

Moreover, Qaddafi seemed also to use different words or phrases almost synonymously to denote the core organising idea of his primary geopolitical concern at a particular time. These quasi-synonyms populated what I came to call a ‘core family of words and phrases’. A ‘core family of words and phrases’ appeared to dominate his geopolitical discourse for a while, and then disappeared, to be replaced by another ‘core family of words and phrases’. His core geopolitical concern in Arab unity seemed to be expressed in more words and phrases than merely the term “Arab unity”. Around “Arab unity” appeared to be grouped words and phrases such as “one Arab land”, “one nation”, and the like. Something similar seemed to occur when Qaddafi seemed to switch his primary geopolitical concern to Africa. Again, his new

primary geopolitical concern seemed to be expressed in more words and phrases than merely the term ‘African unity’; that is to say, he seemed again to use another ‘core family of words and phrases’. This African ‘core family of words and phrases’ included ‘African space’, ‘African union’, and the like. Again, these words were being used as quasi-synonyms of ‘African unity’.

Qaddafi also seemed to be using another form of word and phrase combination. It seemed that, as his primary geopolitical concern shifted, so, too, did a range of foreign policy perceptions and positions. These foreign policy perceptions and positions were expressed in another type of grouping of recurrent words and phrases. This kind of groupings did not express what seemed to be the core organising idea of a new primary geopolitical concern (as what I have termed ‘families of words’ did). Rather, this kind of grouping seemed to express a range of *associated* positions or perceptions, usually related to the identification of allies, enemies or threats. Hence, I came to classify them as ‘associated words and phrases’. For example, at the time that Qaddafi was expressing mainly a primarily Arab geopolitical concern, among the associated foreign policy positions was an excoriation of Israel, which entailed a series of associated words and phrases, some used pejoratively such as ‘Zionism’. Likewise, at the time that he seemed to be expressing a primarily African geopolitical concern, among the associated positions was a focus on the continent’s potential wealth and its exploitation by former colonial powers. Associated words and phrases that gave regular expression to this were ‘resources’ and ‘colonialism’. The significance of these associated words and phrases to our understanding of Qaddafi’s geopolitical discourse would become clearer later in the research — and is dealt with in the chapters below on discursive strategy and on discourse and power.

This was a tentative theorisation of what should be counted. And I eventually decided that it was on the changes in frequency of these two categories — families of words and phrases, and associated words and phrases — that the focus of the content analysis should fall. They are the content that was counted to denote primary geopolitical concerns, changes in primary concern those contingent issues. The other variables included characteristics of the documents under analysis: the date on which and place at which the speech was delivered, and the type of audience Qaddafi was addressing.

The coding schedule was drawn up accordingly, once the specific categories and variables had been defined, following Hansen *et al* (1998: 117). The coding schedule covered all of the variables provided in the previous stage, constructed around the questions: When was the speech delivered? Where was it delivered? To whom was the speech addressed. What was the frequency of use of particular words; of families of words; and of themes? The coding sheet of this study is provided as Appendix A.

A randomised pilot study was carried out to test the categories and reliability of questions guiding the content analysis. It was based on 13 of Qaddafi's speeches delivered between 1970 to 2004. The number of speeches for each of these years was as follows: 1970-74, two speech; 1975-1979, two speeches; 1980-84, one; 1985-89, one; 1990-94, two; 1995-99, two; 2000-04, three.

Considerable revisions were introduced into the coding sheet schedule to improve its focus on the relevant text. The pilot study, moreover, prompted a few changes in coding sheet design. The following are some of the modifications that took place:

- Some categories were adhered to a single level of classification (e.g. ‘colonialism’ and ‘colonialist’, ‘Zionism’ and ‘Zionist’, ‘imperialism’ and ‘imperialist’).
- I related some concepts or phrases to each other, such as ‘Arab unity’, ‘Pan-Arab unity’, ‘Arab nationalism’, ‘Pan-Arabism’, ‘one nation’ and ‘one land’. I concluded that these concepts could be coded as the same even if they appeared in different forms. Qaddafi, as we will see later, conflated many these terms to express Libya’s primary Arab geopolitical concern. It therefore made little sense to code them as separate categories; they were better presented under the category of a primarily Arab geopolitical concern. Similarly, expressions of primarily African concern also appeared in different forms, such as ‘African Union’, ‘United States of Africa’ and ‘African space’.
- I also eliminated some themes that were poorly represented or did not appear at all in the texts analysed. They were eliminated to avoid unnecessary clutter in coding boxes and to save time and efforts.
- I also added additional themes. These themes were added to increase my options for exploring the words and political symbols that Qaddafi used at

different times, and to indicate differences and similarities between different options at the data-analysis stage.

- I changed the order of questions in the coding schedule.
- I eliminated some questions that I felt were surplus to the needs of the study.
- I added a question about who a speech was targeted at.
- And an item ‘note’ was added in the end of the coding schedule to enable me to record if the content analysis pointed to a piece of text in that speech which might be appropriate at the discourse analysis stage of the study.

Thus, the piloting of the draft coding sheet had a significant corrective effect on the coding sheet that was finally used for the study.

Using SPSS 16.0 for Windows software, the collated data were then prepared, compared and analysed. A computerised statistical programme, according to Deacon *et al.*, “is a good idea ... to help you explore and summarise the numerical information quickly and easily” (Deacon *et al.*, 1999: 129). They add: “What computers can deliver is the capability to access and interrogate large amounts of data quickly and accurately, and in more complex and sophisticated ways than would be possible manually” (Deacon *et al.*, 1999: 336). SPSS for Windows can conduct a vast range of sophisticated tests and procedures (Deacon *et al.*, 1999: 343), but I used it

here to perform some of its more basic functions, such as generating frequency tables and graphs.

As a general rule content analysis, however, “is not well suited to studying ‘deep’ questions about textual and discursive forms. It is not able to recover aesthetic or rhetorical nuances within texts” (Deacon *et al.*, 1999: 117). According to Berelson, “content analysis proceeds in terms of what-is-said, and not in terms of why-the-content-is-like-that (e.g., ‘motives’) or how-people-react (e.g., ‘appeals’ or ‘responses’)” (Berelson, 1952: 16). In other words, Deacon *et al.* state, “[content analysis] does not offer much opportunity to explore text in order to develop ideas and insights” (Deacon *et al.*, 1999: 117).

Content analysis can describe some features of Libyan geopolitical discourse over the past 40 years, but it cannot recover the construction of meanings, or explain textual practice, or suggest reasons for any change in practice or how meanings are constructed. Therefore, content analysis was only a starting point in my array of methods. Other kinds of questions needed to be asked in different ways to move our understanding beyond ‘what is said’ to ‘why it is said’. Here, discourse analysis is the most appropriate approach.

Discourse Analysis

Discourse analysis is a key part of the mythological toolkit. It is used to understand the different acts of imagination and constructions of meaning that shaped Libya’s geopolitical choices.

It is difficult to give a single definition of discourse analysis as a research method.

Fairclough notes that “[d]iscourse analysis is a difficult concept, largely because there are so many conflicting and overlapping definitions formulated from various theoretical and disciplinary standpoints” (Fairclough, 1992: 3). Generally, however, discourse analysis examines language and language use. According to Wetherell *et al.*, “discourse analysis is probably best described as the study of talk and texts. It is a set of methods and theories for investigating language in use and language in social context” (Wetherell *et al.*, 2001: i). However, there are a number of different theoretical approaches to and forms of discourse analysis, among them conversation analysis, critical linguistics, critical discourse analysis and poststructuralist discourse analysis. It is the last three approaches that are of interest to this study.

Critical linguistics (CL), according to Fowler, one of its principal champions, examines the “relations between signs, meanings and the social and historical conditions which govern the semiotic structure of discourse, using a particular kind of linguistic analysis [e.g. lexical analysis]” (Fowler, 1991: 5). Critical discourse analysis (CDA) — developed by, among others, Norman Fairclough, Teun Van Dijk and Ruth Wodak — “analyses language within larger structures, exploring the implications of the particular words and grammatical forms which have been used in a specific context” (Taylor, 2001b: 316). In other words, CDA investigates “the ideological functions of language in producing, reproducing or changing social structures, relations, identities” (Mayr, 2004: 5 cited in Benwell and Stokoe, 2006: 105). Discourse analysis (DA), informed by the poststructuralist school and generally associated with Jacques Derrida and Michel Foucault, “pay[s] little close attention to the linguistic features of texts” (Fairclough, 2003: 2). It stresses in its modes of analysis “‘discourse’ rather than language because the concept of discourse implies a

concern with the meaning- and value-producing practices in language rather than simply the relationship between utterances and their referents” (Shapiro, 2001: 320).

Wodak and Meyer note that the “terms *Critical Linguistics* (CL) and *Critical Discourse Analysis* (CDA) are often used interchangeably”. They continue: “In fact, in recent times it seems that the term CDA is preferred and is used to denote the theory formerly identified as CL.” (original emphasis, Wodak and Meyer, 2001: 1)

Wodak and Meyer also argue that

CDA strongly relies on linguistic categories ... such as actors, mode, time, tense, argumentation, and so on. Nevertheless, a definitive list of the linguistic devices relevant for CDA cannot be given, since their selection mainly depends on the specific research questions (Wodak and Meyer, 2001: 25).

Each one of these approaches is itself broad and contains various traditions. Taylor, for example, introduces four different approaches to critical discourse analysis. The first approach, according to Taylor, focuses on “the variation and imperfection of language as a system.” He adds: “Discourse analysts study language in use to discover how it varies and relate this variation to different social situations and environments, or different users.” In contrast, “the second approach ... focuses on the *activity* of language use, rather than the language itself.” However, “[a] third approach ... is rather different. The analyst looks for patterns in language associated with a particular topic or activity, such as the family of special terms and meanings around it ...” And “a fourth possible approach ... is to look for patterns within much larger contexts, such as those referred to as ‘society’ or ‘culture’” (Taylor, 2001a: 7). The poststructuralist’s approach is similarly broad. For example, Derrida’s ‘deconstruction’ would be one; so would Michel Foucault’s concept of discourse, genealogy and the relationship between power and knowledge (Foucault, 1972 and 1980).

The main difference between CDA and poststructuralist theoretical approaches can be found in the characteristic eschewing of claims to objectivity and truth by those in the latter tradition. According to Wetherell, for poststructuralist thinkers

truth is always relative to the discourse or language game of the moment. The set of knowledge/power relations which produces the truths of one historical period will inevitably be superseded as the broad discursive framework of a society changes from religion, say, to secularism (Wetherell, 2001: 384).

He adds that, to poststructuralists, “the process of analysis is always interpretive, always contingent, always a version or a reading from some theoretical, epistemological or ethical standpoint” (Wetherell, 2001: 384).

Other major differences between CDA and poststructuralist theoretical approaches, particularly Foucauldian discourse analysis, centres on how they view power. While CDA sees power being transmitted in a top-down manner, for Foucault, according to Hall, power “circulates. It is never monopolised by one centre” (Hall, 1997: 49).

In this study, discourse analysis will be applied without restriction to any one approach. Rather, it draws on the ideas and research of different authors and scholars who have shaped this field of analysis. My interest in using discourse analysis is to develop what might be called a discursive analytic. That is a methodological plan with which I can, first, understand the language used by the Libyan leadership and examine its political choices; second, describe and examine how Libyan geopolitical discourse underwent different changes over the 40 years to 2009; and, third, move towards an understanding of why it changed in the ways it did when it did. I have, for example, found CL and CDA useful approaches in analysing Qaddafi’s language — his use of

lexical reiteration, indexicals and presuppositions — while Foucault's arguments about discourse and power can help us establish why specific political choices were dominant at particular moments of Libyan history but not at others. CDA, moreover, shows how “diverse genres and discourses are networked together” (Fairclough, 2001: 235). Similarly, Foucault’s work on what he calls ‘interdiscursivity’, examines relationships between different discursive formations or texts (Fairclough, 1992: 46). Both approaches can help us examine the relationship or the network between Qaddafi’s different choices over the 40 years to 2009.

Applied Methods of Discourse Analysis

I now discuss how each relevant approach to discourse analysis can be applied to my study.

The shape and shaping of Libyan geopolitical choices accord closely with how the Libyan leadership conducted their politics. As Schäffner argues, “any political action is prepared, accompanied, controlled and influenced by language.” He goes on: “We could easily add other verbs to this list, such as guided, explained, justified, evaluated, criticised.” He adds, “a linguistic analysis of political discourse in general, and of political speeches in particular, can be most successful when it relates the details of linguistic behaviour to political behaviour” (Schäffner, 1996: 202).

Following Schäffner, I will examine, first, the language, with its underlying assumptions, used by Libyan political leadership in each narrative constructing Libyan geopolitical discourse over the 40 years to 2009. Three approaches — all

forms of lexical analysis — can help us understand the language used by Qaddafi. They are: Qaddafi's use of lexical reiteration, indexicals and presuppositions.

Lexical Analysis

The term 'lexical', according to Richardson, includes all types of words, but particularly nouns, adjectives, verbs, and adverbs. These kinds of words, Richardson continues, "carry connoted in addition to denoted meanings" (Richardson, 2007: 47). Deacon *et al.* argue that lexical choices can suggest "certain ideological beliefs and values underpinning particular stories, and in more immediate terms can provide further evidence of the ways in which various words in ... a text support the overarching semantic⁹ structure of its narrative" (Deacon *et al.*, 1999: 178). For this reason Chilton argues that "lexical structure should not be regarded as analytically separate from discourse" (Chilton, 2004: 62). Lexical analysis is a crucial part of the mythological toolkit of this study.

My starting point is to examine how Qaddafi uses particular terms counted in the content analysis. They include the Arabic equivalents of 'religion', 'history', 'culture', 'colonialism', 'imperialism', 'Zionism', 'strength', 'freedom', and so on. These words bear on geopolitical concerns and foreign policy perceptions or policies. They are used in way that Flowerdew describes as 'lexical reiteration': that is, repetition of particular words in the course of making a point. He explains it as "the most obvious way of establishing the major themes of a corpus. [It] is also the most systematic way in which politicians ... signal the preoccupations which make up their discursive formation" (Flowerdew, 2004). The repetition of particular groups of

⁹ The term semantics refers to "the relationship of signs to what they stand for" (Chandler, 1994).

words and phrases, according to Van Dijk, “is one of the most obvious means speakers have to explicitly express or subtly signal their ideological opinions about events, people and participants” (Van Dijk, 1998: 272).

Alongside lexical reiteration, I intend also to examine how Qaddafi uses indexicals — often pronouns and possessives, such as “we”, “us”, and “our” — in his speeches. In the political context, the use of indexicals enables leaders to offer a set of values to others for their acceptance and create meanings held in common with others (Flowerdew, 2004).

Richardson defines an indexical as “an utterance whose meaning varies according to the context in which it is uttered. For example, *I* refers to (points to, or *indexes*) the person speaking; *now* indexes the time of the utterance; *here* indexes the place of utterance,” (original emphasis, Richardson, 2007: 240). Chilton points out that

one’s choice of language, or features of it, can implicitly signal political distinctions. Examples would be: choosing to speak one language rather than another, choosing a regional accent, or accent associated with a social class, choosing words associated with particular political ideologies, choosing forms of address (and in some languages, pronouns) that express distance or solidarity (Chilton, 2004: 201).

Chilton also believes that “indexical expressions”, or “deictic expressions”, are linguistic resources used to perform *deixis* – that is, “to prompt the interpreter to relate the uttered indexical expression to various situational features” (original emphasis, Chilton, 2004: 56). Deacon, *et al.*, consider *deixis* “[a] relevant linguistic concept for examining how context in place and time ... is produced by talk”. He identifies *deixis* as “the Greek word for ‘pointing’, and in linguistics and discourse analysis it is used to identify the ‘pointing’ functions of spoken or written language. It refers to the time,

place and participants involved in discourse” (Deacon, *et al*, 1999: 311). Examples of *deixis* include: ‘I’, ‘you’, ‘we’, ‘this’, ‘us’, ‘our’ ‘them’, ‘now’ and ‘here’ (Billig, 1995: 105). According to Michael Billig, *deixis* is a linguistic form which, in nationalism, is “continually pointing to the homeland” (Billig, 1995: 11). According to Deacon, *et al.*, Billig, in his book *Banal Nationalism*,

has used the concept of *deixis* very constructively to demonstrate how the devices associated with it are used rhetorically in nationalist constructions. He cites as examples John Major’s claim that: “*this*, is still the best country in the world” and Bill Clinton’s reference to “*this*, the greatest country in human history”, and in both cases “this” points to, and routinely evokes, the nation as an imagined community distinguishing “us” from “them” in other places or other times’ (original emphasis, Deacon, *et al*, 1999: 311).

Chilton believes, similarly, that,

Temporal *deixis* can have a political significance. It can require one to assume a particular historical periodisation — for example *nowadays*, *today*, or just *now* could require to be understood as “after the revolution”, “after the fall of Berlin Wall”, “after the election of New Labour”, or some such (original emphasis, Chilton, 2004: 56).

He adds: “Political actors are ... always situated with respect to a particular time, place and social group. Because of factors such as these, we shall treat spatial representation in discourse as particularly important in the study of political discourse” (Chilton, 2004: 57).

Seidel usefully refers to indexicals and *deixis* as “shifters”, which a politician can use to move an audience to a new position. He states that “pronouns belong to the category of “shifters”, that is, lexical items that change their meaning, taking their colour from the context, or from the situation or speaker, like “I”. “me”, “here”” (Seidel, 1975: 207).

I also intend to examine how Qaddafi uses presupposition. The term refers to the assumptions that a politician makes about what his audience thinks about issues. “In discourse this means that social beliefs may be *presupposed* by the speaker, and need not be asserted as new information” (Van Dijk, 1998: 30-31), as it is “taken as already known to or ‘given’ for all participants.” (Fairclough, 1989: 132) In Richardson’s words, “presupposition is a taken-for-granted, implicit claim [contained] within the explicit meaning of a text or utterance” (Richardson, 2007: 63).

There is a variety of linguistic structure common to presupposed meaning, referred to as “trigger presuppositions” (Richardson, 2007: 63). It includes: the definite article *the* (Fairclough, 1989: 132; Richardson, 2007: 63), nominal presuppositions such as the use of the adjective *new*, and certain verbs, such as *stop*, *begin*, *continue*, *forget* (Richardson, 2007: 63-64). These presuppositional triggers will be examined to look at how they might be used to refer to various elements within a narrative and, so, invest them with certain qualities.

Over all, though it has its benefits, lexical analysis has its shortcomings. Deacon *et al.*, for example, doubt the ability of lexical analysis to “adequately explain the social relations of power which language incorporates and generates” (Deacon *et al.*, 1999: 180). This shortcoming led other forms of discourse analysis to move towards “analysing the variability of language and its social determinants and effects” (Fairclough, 1995: 18). Foucault takes a similar view. It is that our attention should not be directed only

to the great model of language (*langue*) and signs, but to that of war and battle. The history which bears and determines us has the

form of a war rather than that of a language: relations of power not relations of meaning (original emphasis, Foucault, 1980: 114-115).

Foucauldian Discourse Analysis

My investigation of the political choices in Libyan geopolitical discourse questions why specific choices were dominant at particular moments of history and not others. This involves an examination of the discursive formation of Libyan politics since World War II, which includes a study of Libyan history over the same period. Here the contribution of Foucault, who argues that nothing has meaning outside the discourse, is particularly relevant. He does not argue that things in themselves do not exist, but, rather, that things have meaning only within discourse (Foucault 1972) He adds that meanings are ‘true’ only in specific historical periods and their prevailing discourses. It is, therefore, important to take history into account when applying discourse analysis (Foucault, 1972).

Doing so is particularly important for a historical project such as this, which genealogically traces the early discourses that influenced Libyan politics. Foucault’s insight is also useful to understand how Libyan geopolitical discourse has or has not shifted over the research period. The term *genealogy* is developed by Foucault to describe the history of the present; Foucault argues that “the primary intent [in studying the history] is not to understand the past in its own terms or for its own sake but to understand and evaluate the present” (Foucault in Gutting, 2005: 50).

Foucault’s insight that nothing has meaning outside of discourse will also help us clarify how Qaddafi’s role in the evolution of Libyan geopolitical discourse should be considered. He argues that discourse:

constructs the topic. It defines and produces the objects of our knowledge. It governs the way that a topic can be meaningfully talked about and reasoned about. It also influences how ideas are put into practice and used to regulate the conduct of others ... [it] never consists of one statement, one text, one action or one source (Foucault in Hall, 1997: 44).

According to this argument, discourses — and this would include the political discourse enunciated by the Libyan political leadership — may come from the mouths and hands of individuals but are ultimately socially produced in response to particular circumstances. According to this argument, Qaddafi, or any other political leader, lives his political life within a discourse constituted according to particular social, cultural, economic and political circumstances. Qaddafi may be the principal ‘animator’ of a discourse — he might use his authority as a leader of Libya to enunciate and revise the terms of this discourse in the changing circumstances of Libyan history — but he always does so from *within* this political discourse. Likewise, any symbols Qaddafi chooses or uses have their meaning within the discourse.

Foucault suggests in his work *Power and Knowledge* that, changes in thoughts are not themselves the product of thoughts; they are, rather, the products of forces (powers) (Foucault 1980). This poses the question of how the formation of Qaddafi’s different geopolitical narratives can be traced to a system of power/knowledge and values. Can the emergence of these discourses be attributed to discontinuities related to particular circumstances and specific changes in the balance of power within and outside the Arab world? Foucault, for example, argues that “discourses are tactical elements or blocks operating in the field of force relations” in such a way that “there can exist

different and even contradictory discourses within the same strategy”. This is a process he called ‘tactical polyvalence’ (Foucault, 1978: 100-102).

Though Foucault has useful insights that could well apply to the analysis of Libyan political discourse, there are at least two problems in using his approach. First, it is quite difficult to find coherent descriptions of how one might go about analysing discourse along the lines he seems to be suggesting. In the Foucauldian notion of genealogy, for example, Carabine notes that “there are no hard or fast rules which set out, step by step, what a genealogical analysis is ... Foucault did not provide us with a how-to guide to genealogy.” As a result, the method adopted by individual researchers varies (Carabine, 2001: 268). For this reason, some see Foucauldian theory as inaccessible and dangerous (O’Farrell, 2005 in Graham, 2005: 2). Fairclough states that “one cannot simply ‘apply’ Foucault’s work in discourse analysis” — though Fairclough suggests that

Foucault’s work makes an important contribution to a social theory of discourse in such areas as the relationship of discourse and power, the discursive construction of social subjects and knowledge, and the functioning of discourse in social change (Fairclough, 1992: 37-38).

A second difficulty in applying Foucault’s approach is that it does not provide definite answers; rather, it suggests insights and ideas based on continuous debate and argumentation.

My purpose in using discourse analysis is not to provide definite answers. For example, I would not argue for or against the validity or truth of certain statements of value that Qaddafi made in justifying Libya’s geopolitical choices. Rather, my reliance on Foucault should equip me to revise our historical understanding of

Qaddafi's and Libya's geopolitical changes over the 40 years to 2009 and to uncover what informed Qaddafi's formulations of Libyan geopolitical discourse. My focus will, accordingly, fall on the texts of his speeches and on locating them within historical, economic and political contexts.

Visual Analysis

Over and above using content analysis and discourse analysis to examine the verbal text of Qaddafi's speeches, I want to extend my analysis to include other types of semiotic activity he and Libyan state institutions engaged in that produced meaning, particularly in the visual field. As Barr argues, with the mass communication, "exchange between the modern politician and his citizen has developed a fundamental reliance on visual communication as means of revealing himself to the public" (Barr, 2007). Moreover, McNair argues that "In the area of personal image, modern politicians are judged not only by what they say and do, but *how* they say and do it. In short, political *style* now counts for almost as much as substance" (original emphasis, McNair, 2003: 147). Van Dijk draws attention to the need to analyse such non-verbal interactions:

[We] should not forget that discourse is often embedded in or otherwise related to such non-verbal interactions, as is the case of talk and text at home, in parliament, in school, in the newsroom, the workfloor, the office, the shop, the agency, the hospital, the police station, or in prison (Van Dijk, 1998: 192).

I examine the relationship between the verbal and visible symbols in Libya's and Qaddafi's political discourse, as well as any changes in the choice and deployment of symbols. Visible symbols, such as Qaddafi's choice of dress, images or posters on street, in shops, and in other official and public places in Libya when putting across

particular political views can be significant for the role they play in reinforcing, perhaps at times even supplanting the primacy of, the verbal message. To do this I drew on the broadest possible sample I could. I trawled for photographs through Google Image and other collections, and various news organisations' and photographers' archives, seeking any manifest symbolism. My particular interest, however, was in finding symbolism bearing on Qaddafi, Libya's place in the world and related issues.

In spite of the suggestion by Deacon *et al.* that the analysis of visual symbols remains relatively under-developed (Deacon, *et al.*, 1999: 185), there are a number of approaches that can help us identify the deployment of visual symbols and understand the relationship between the sayable and visible. These include: Barthianism visual semiotics and iconography (Van Leeuwen 2001); Goodwin's work (2001) on conversation analysis; and the ethnomethodological approach. Whereas, Barthian semiotics and iconography examine the visual contents and meanings that are carried by the image, conversation analysis and the ethnomethodological approach simultaneously explore the relationship between verbal and visual contents.

According to Van Leeuwen, Barthian visual semiotic and iconographic approaches are "useful for investigating the representational ('denotative') and symbolic ('connotative') meanings of the people, places and things (including abstract 'things') included in different kinds of images" (Van Leeuwen, 2001: 117). These approaches examine two types of questions: "the question of representation (what do images represent and how?) and the question of 'hidden meaning' of images (what ideas and

values do the people, places and things represented in images stand for?)” (Van Leeuwen, 2001: 92).

Similarly, Machin says that images “show *particular* events, *particular* people, places and things. They ‘document’. Or in semiotic terminology, they *denote*” the first layer of meaning. So “asking what an image denotes is asking: who and/or what is depicted here? Or ... how do I show who did what, where and when?” This seems to be “like perceiving reality”. However, images are not “neutral recordings of reality” (original emphasis, Machin, 2007: 23). The reason is that images frequently “depict concrete people, places, things and events to get across general or abstract *ideas*. They are used to *connote* ideas and concepts” (original emphasis, Machin, 2007: 25). The question about images projected by Qaddafi and Libyan state institutions that particularly interests us in this study concerns this second layer of meaning. It is, as Machin states it: “[W]hat ideas and values are communicated through what is represented and through the way in which it is represented?” (Machin, 2007: 25).

Barthian visual semiotics, according to Van Leeuwen, examines the image itself by treating its cultural meanings as shared by everyone who is at all acculturated to the culture being promoted. This sharing is activated by the style and content of the image. He adds: “Iconography also pays attention to the context in which the image is produced and circulated, and to how and why cultural meanings and their visual expressions come about historically” (Van Leeuwen, 2001: 92). He argues:

Both methods [visual semiotics and iconography] are premised on the idea of layered meaning, of images consisting first of all of a layer of representational or denotative meaning (the layer of who and what are depicted here) on which is then superimposed a layer of connotative or symbolic meaning (the layer of what does it all

mean) (Van Leeuwen, 2001: 2-3).

Although Barthian visual semiotics explains the meaning of the images in two layers, the first layer of denotation and the second layer of connotation, “[i]conography distinguishes three layers of pictorial meaning: representational meaning, iconographical symbolism and iconological symbolism” (Van Leeuwen, 2001: 94, 100). The layers of iconographical and iconological symbolism examine conventional symbolic meaning and interpretation that explores the ideas and concepts attached to it, while the idea of ‘*representational meaning*’ is close to that of denotative meaning (original emphasis, Van Leeuwen, 2001: 94, 100-101).

These two approaches (visual semiotics and iconography) are useful for this study. They suggest how to examine what the images chosen by Qaddafi represented and how these visual symbols conveyed meaning. How is it that a style of dress, particular people, or characters, maps or places become meaningful? These approaches can also help us explain the power these symbols came to exercise, and how it is that these symbols exercised influence and power among Libyans and others. For example, Owyong notes that

Clothing semiotics, like linguistic semiotics and all other semiotic codes, also has a general interpretation that is agreed upon by the majority of a society. This code, formulated over time, becomes a vital tool in the construction of reality, particularly in the areas of power and domination (Owyong, 2007: 202).

Van Leeuwen notes that

The formulation ‘people, places and things’ indicates that Barthian visual semiotics and iconography deal, by and large, with the individual bits and pieces within images; in other words, they concentrate on what, in the case of language, we would call ‘lexis’ or vocabulary (Van Leeuwen, 2001: 92).

Machin adds

Most accounts of visual semiotics have looked at lexis rather than grammar. In other words they have focused on individual signs rather than on the way these can be combined into meaningful statements. These accounts would look at the way that individual signs have denotative, connotative or symbolic meaning ... [In contrast a] grammar approach is interested in how these individual signs can be used in combination with other signs to create meaning (Machin, 2007: 2).

Drawing on Halliday (1985), Machin argues that lexis or simple approach treats images by individual signs with their direct fixed meaning, whereas in the complex (lexicogrammar) or grammar approach the meaning of the image is created indirectly, like languages, through the grammar (Machin, 2007: 2-5).

The lexis approach seems to be similar to verbal 'lexical analysis' which I discussed earlier. In the case of visual analysis, identifying individual bits and pieces within images might help us to understand Qaddafi's dress and other visual communications by Libyan state institutions over the four decades to 2009. Also it can identify similarities and differences between the visual symbols that Qaddafi used, and indicate whether or when change or shifts in visible symbols occurred. The grammar approach, furthermore, can be useful in examining how individual signs were used by Qaddafi, and how related Libyan visual symbols were used in combination with other signs, to create indirect meaning.

Drawing on Kandinsky's observation (1977) on the semiotics of colour, Machin states that, "[A] colour has two direct kinds of value ... the effect that the colour has on the viewer ... [and] associative value ... [The associative value] is to do with the kinds of cultural associations a colour might have" (Machin, 2007: 69). In terms of these two

values, we can analyse potential meanings conveyed by colours in Qaddafi's dress, other visual signs and symbols across Libyan political discourse.

We have explored how verbal and visual contents in Qaddafi's expression of Libyan geopolitical discourse can be examined. We now move into a discussion about how we might identify more closely the relationship between the sayable and visible symbols — in the case of this study, in the delivery and presentation of Qaddafi's speeches, policies and positions. Here, Goodwin's work on conversation analysis and the ethnomethodological approach are instructive. These two methods examine "the way in which speakers change the structure of an emerging utterance ... how speakers modify descriptions in terms of their hearer's visible assessment of what is being said" (Goodwin, 2001: 161). These two methods examine "how the visible body is used to build talk and action in moment-to-moment interaction and the way in which historically structured visual images and features of a setting participate in that process" (Goodwin, 2001: 179).

According to Goodwin, visual images

become meaningful through the way in which they help elaborate, and are elaborated by, a range of other semiotic fields — sequential organization, structure in the stream of speech, encompassing activities, etc. — that are being used by participants to both construct and make visible to each other relevant action (Goodwin, 2001: 179).

He argues that the focus of conversation analysis and the ethnomethodological approach "is not thus representations or vision *per se*, but instead the part played by visual phenomena in the production of meaningful action" (Goodwin, 2001: 157).

The combination of content analysis, discourse analysis, lexical analysis and visual analysis that we propose using in this study still has its shortcomings. The major shortcoming is that it does not reveal the motivations and reasons for particular usage of language and symbol to which the principal might lay claim. I therefore consider it important also to conduct a variety of interviews with Libyan political commentators who can throw light on the influences that bear on the discourse that is being animated at any one time.

Interviews

The interview is one way to collect data and to gain knowledge from individuals (McNabb, 2004: 365). It is a conversation between two or more people (the interviewer/s and the interviewee/s) where the interviewer “listens to what people themselves tell about their lived world, hears them express their views and opinions in their own words, learns about their views or their work situation and family life, their dreams and hopes” (Kvale, 1996: 1). Similarly, Seidman states that the purpose of comprehensive interviewing is not to get answers to questions, nor to test hypotheses, and not to “evaluate” (as the term is normally used.) Instead, the root motivation of interviewing is an interest in understanding the experience of other people and the meaning they make of the experience (Seidman, 1991: 3).

There are many types of interviews. The most relevant typology is:

- Structured interviews.
- Unstructured interviews.
- Semi-structured interviews.

A structured interview is also called a standardised interview. The aim of this kind of interviews is to ensure that exactly the same questions are asked of all interviewees in the same order. According to Corbetta, structured interviews are “interviews in which all respondents are asked the same questions *with the same wording and in the same sequence*” (original emphasis, Corbetta, 2003: 269). McNabb adds that, in structured interviews, “respondents must reply to specific open-ended questions” (McNabb, 2004: 365). Bryman states that the reason for this is to ensure that respondents’ answers can be aggregated. He adds that the questions in this type of interview are usually very specific and the answers to the questions are often fixed (closed-ended, pre-coded, or fixed choice) (Bryman, 2001: 107).

Deacon, *et al.*, believe, similarly, that, with structured interviews

the aim is to limit the influence of human factors on the data-collection process, such as the subtle ways in which the rewording, reordering or elaboration of questions may affect people’s responses. Where interviewers are involved, strict rules are set down about how questions are asked and in what order in an attempt to standardise and neutralise the questioning process and thereby increase the basis for aggregating and comparing people’s answers (Deacon, *et al.*, 1999: 63).

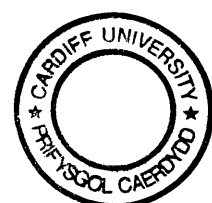
Though structured interviews can be used to find out peoples’ views on specific topics, they have formalized, limited set questions. They do not facilitate an open discussion allowing for wider views to be expressed. Nor do they allow for follow-up questions. In other words, they can not be used to explore the reasons people give for their views or feeling about the issues.

While structured interviews have limited, set questions, the unstructured interview is non-directive and flexible method. Unstructured interviews are more like conversations between friends. Respondents are left free to bring up whatever topic they wish. The research may then probe for more detailed information, but must be careful to avoid leading questions or communicating value judgments (McNabb, 2004: 108). The strength of unstructured interviews is that no restrictions are placed on questions. The researcher may “ask questions when the responses are terse or the respondent is unable to express needed information” (McNabb, 2004: 108). With unstructured interviews the order of the questions can be changed depending on the direction of the interview. An interview guide is also used, but additional questions can be asked (Kajornboon, 2004: 3). This type of interview is useful when little or no knowledge exists about a topic. It enables background data to be collected. Unstructured interviews are flexible and the researcher can investigate underlying motives (Corbetta, 2003: 270).

The drawbacks of unstructured interviews are that they can be inappropriate for inexperienced interviewers. The interviewers may be biased and ask inappropriate questions. Also, respondents may talk about irrelevant and inconsequential issues. Consequently, it may be difficult to encode and analyze the data (Kajornboon, 2004: 3).

A semi-structured interview has characteristics of both structure and flexibility. In this type of interview,

the interviewer sets up a general structure by deciding in advance what ground is to be covered and what main questions are to be asked. This leaves the detailed structure to be worked out during the interview. The person interviewed can answer at some length



in his or her own words, and the interviewer responds using prompts, probes and follow-up questions to get the interviewee to clarify or expand (Drever, 1995: 1).

Corbetta explains semi-structured interviews similarly:

The order in which the various topics are dealt with and the wording of the questions are left to the interviewer's discretion. Within each topic, the interviewer is free to conduct the conversation as he thinks fit, to ask the questions he deems appropriate in the words he considers best, to give explanation and ask for clarification if the answer is not clear, to prompt the respondent to elucidate further if necessary, and to establish his own style of conversation (Corbetta, 2003: 270).

There are many other advantages to the semi-structured approach. First, the researcher can explore "factual information about other people's circumstances". Secondly, the researcher can 'collect statements of their preferences and opinions'. Finally, in such interviews the researcher can "explore in some depth their experiences, motivations and reasoning" (Drever, 1995: 1).

On the other hand, the drawbacks include that proper exploitation of these potential advantages takes considerable time. Much skill may also be required to analyse the data obtained (Drever, 1995: 8). However, awareness of a problem is often a considerable part of the solution itself. Knowing these pitfalls, and with practice, the researcher can, to a significant extent, mitigate these problems (Drever, 1995: 8).

In using the interview as a method, the answers from interviewees may be influenced by their social history, something they draw on and interpret in various ways (Maybin, 2001: 70), as well as by their perception of what it is that they should tell the interviewer in order to advance or protect their self-interest. This makes the notion

of 'truth' an even more elusive commodity than suggested by post-structuralists like Foucault. I am mindful of this. Yet, even if this is the case in some of my interviews, they are still a representation of Libyan political discourse. For this reason, the interview remains a valid method in this case, and the semi-structured form of it gave me both the focus and flexibility I needed to probe matters.

Research Strategy

In accordance with the methods and approaches outlined above, five phases of research were undertaken. The first phase involved content analysis of all of Qaddafi's speeches over the four decades to 2008, outlining Libya's different geopolitical changes. This phase consisted of identifying quantifiable characteristics and general features of his speeches, and seeking to periodise any changes in Libyan geopolitical self-identification and political discourse.

The second phase was concerned with words, ideas and depth meanings, rather than the quantitative data delivered in the first. It examined how Libyan geopolitical discourse was constructed. This was achieved by a discourse analysis of Qaddafi's key speeches and other texts. Here, I made use also of lexical analysis, examined Qaddafi's use of indexicals, *deixis*, lexical reiteration and presupposition.

The third phase sought to identify those historical developments whose timing correlated with any changes in Libyan geopolitical discourse over the forty year period being examined. The fourth phase comprised an analysis of use of images and symbols by the principal animator of Libyan geopolitical discourse. And the fifth and final phase consisted of a series of semi-structured interviews, including some with Libyan political commentators. In conducting the interviews my concern was to

understand the experiences of the principal, Qaddafi, in his construction of Libyan geopolitical discourse and political discourse, as well as the motivations that he might have brought to doing so.

In the early stages of my research journey I set as my research question: How and why did Muammar Al-Qaddafi repeatedly reconstruct Libyan geopolitical discourse over the forty years to 2009? In the early phases, I also hypothesised — as I do now — that, in response to perceived and actual threats to Libyan sovereignty and survival, Qaddafi repeatedly shifted Libyan geopolitical discourse in a series of manoeuvres that amounted to a tactically polyvalent responsive-defensive strategy.

To justify this hypothesis, I needed to establish the following six propositions: that, over the forty years to 2009,

- Qaddafi was the principal animator of Libyan geopolitical discourse;
- Libyan geopolitical discourse shifted several times;
- these discursive shifts were reactions to perceived or actual threats;
- these discursive shifts were intended to reposition the country in ways that improved its capacity to defend itself internationally;
- these discursive shifts sometimes appeared to contradict earlier geopolitical discourse; and
- these discursive shifts, even when seemingly contradictory, sought to serve the same strategy, namely the defence of Libyan sovereignty and security.

As is evident, I combine quantitative and qualitative methods in my attempt to answer the research question and establish the elements of the hypothesis. As Deacon *et al.*,

suggest: “When quantitative and qualitative approaches are used methodologically in combination with each other; the resulting analysis is invariably stronger” (Deacon *et al.*, 1999: 134). This combination enables me to provide, I believe, an at least plausible answer to the question and an at least plausible test of the hypothesis.

Chapter Four

Content Analysis

Introduction

This chapter examines Libyan leader Muammar Al-Qaddafi's speeches from the 1969 revolution to 2008. It establishes the sample and the basic characteristics of the speeches by means of a quantitative content analysis. The content analysis makes use of SPSS software. The analysis is designed to identify Libya's regional geopolitical focus over the thirty-nine years to 2008.

The analysis covers all 188 speeches delivered by the Libyan leader over this 39-year period. If the four decades are broken down into four-year intervals, we find that 48 speeches were made in the intervals between 1969 and 1972; 23 between 1973 and 1976; 19 between 1977 and 1980; 21 between 1981 and 1984; 14 between 1985 and 1988; 14 between 1989 and 1992; 13 between 1993 and 1996; 20 between 1997 and 2000; five between 2001 and 2004; and 11 between 2005 and 2008.

As earlier, it should be noted that the 188 speeches analysed include none for the years 1979, 2004 and 2005. The reason for this is that the International Centre for Studies and Research on the Green Book (a Libyan institute which researches Qaddafi's political thought and from which the data for this chapter were obtained) has no utterances by Qaddafi for those years classified as speeches. Qaddafi expresses his political views through forms of utterance other than speeches alone. These include books, articles, broadcasts, press conferences, press interviews, letters and

private communication. These other forms have not been subjected to content analysis. They are, however, explored by other methods elsewhere in this study, as appropriate.

Qaddafi's speeches frequently suggest the primacy of a particular geopolitical concern. The two primacies that are most clearly suggested are a geopolitical concern with the Arab world and a similar concern with, the African continent. I use the term 'primacy' in order to register that an expression of geopolitical concern with one of these two overlapping regions seldom meant no concern with the other. Rather, the difference is usually one of *degree* of geopolitical concern — how different will become clear below.

My references in this chapter and elsewhere to expressions by Qaddafi of 'Arab geopolitical concern' include his use of words or phrases such as 'Arab unity' (*al-Wuhda al-Arabiya*), 'pan-Arab unity' (*al-Wuhda al-Arabiya al-shamela*), 'Arab nationalism' (*al-qawmiya al-Arabiya*), 'pan-Arabism' (*al-uruba al-shamela*), 'one land' (*Ard Wahda*), 'one nation' (*Umma Wahda*), and 'one Arab people' (*Shab Arabi Wahad*). Together, they comprise what I have come to call a 'core family of words and phrases' that Qaddafi used interchangeably, as if synonymous, to denote a primarily Arab geopolitical concern.

There is a corresponding core family of words and phrases used by Qaddafi to express a primarily African geopolitical concern. They include 'African unity' (*al-Wuhda al-Afriqiyah*), 'African union' (*al-atehad al-Afriqe*), 'United States of Africa' (*al-walayāt*

al-motaheda al- al-Afriqiyah), and ‘African space’ (*al-fadah al-Afriqe*). They, too, are used interchangeably by him as if synonymous.

There are other words and phrases which are categorised as associated words, since Qaddafi uses them usually in conjunction with one or other of the core families of words and phrases. These associated words usually reflect perspectives related to Arab or African geopolitical themes. The most common of them are: (in alphabetical order): ‘Arab regimes’ (*al-andema al-Arabiya*), ‘artificial borders’ (*al-hodud al-mostanah*), ‘betrayal’ (*kheyana*), ‘challenge’ (*tahade*), ‘colonialism’ (*estamar*), ‘community for Arab’ (*Umma*), ‘confront’ (*moujabah*), ‘crusade’ (*al-salebiyah*), ‘defence’ (*defah*), ‘dignity’ (*karama*), ‘enemy’ (*al-adow*), ‘existence’ (*al-wajoud*), ‘freedom’ (*huriyya*), ‘geography’ (*gographiyah*), ‘globalisation’ (*al-awlama*), ‘history’ (*tarekh*), ‘independence’ (*istqlal*), ‘imperialism’ (*imperialiah*), ‘Islam’, ‘Israel’, ‘Italy’ (*italia*), ‘language’ (*lugoa*), ‘liberation’ (*tahrier*), ‘Libya’, ‘Mandela’, ‘national duty’ (*wajeb watane*), ‘Nasser’, ‘occupation’ (*ihatelal*), ‘Omar al-Mukhtar’, ‘Palestine’, ‘plot’ (*moamara*), ‘racism’ (*onsorea*) ‘regionalism’ (*iqlimiyya*), ‘resistance’ (*moqawama*), ‘sanctions’ (*Hesar*), ‘security’ (*amn*), ‘slaves’ (*abeed*), ‘stability’ (*istekrar*), ‘strength’ (*kowa*), ‘UK’, ‘US’ and ‘Zionism’ (*sahyouniah*). Some of these associated words tend to be used mainly in conjunction with Arab geopolitical themes; others with mainly African political themes; and some are used in conjunction with both. They are differentiated further below.

This analysis begins by comparing the frequency of words or phrases suggesting a primarily Arab geopolitical concern against those indicating a primarily African geopolitical concern. This is followed by a brief analysis of the words and phrases

associated with these primary concerns and an examination of whether geopolitical primacy changes at any time. What this chapter does not, however, do is set out to analyse *how* each word or phrase constructs, or achieves meaning within, the expression of a particular primary concern. How meaning is achieved and the reasons for a particular usage by Qaddafi are discussed elsewhere in this study. The final part of this chapter discusses a summary of the results of the content analysis as a whole.

Frequency of References to Arab and African Geopolitical Concerns:

The results represented in Table 1 (below) show that, in all 188 speeches between 1969 and 2008, 124 (66%) suggested an Arab geopolitical concern, whereas 16 (8%) speeches suggested an African geopolitical concern, while 48 (26%) of the speeches' content suggested neither.

Of the 124 speeches that suggested an Arab geopolitical concern, 114 were delivered by Qaddafi in Libya, whereas 10 speeches were delivered in other Arab countries. Of 16 speeches that suggested an African concern, 6 were delivered in Libya and 10 elsewhere in Africa.

Table 1: Frequency of speeches suggesting an Arab geopolitical concern, an African geopolitical concern, or neither, and where the speeches were delivered.

Whole Sample	Arab Geopolitical Concern	African Geopolitical Concern	No Arab/African Concern
Speech total: 188	124 (66%)	16 (8%)	48 (26%)
Location of delivery:	Libya: 114 Arab: 10 African: 0	Libya: 6 Arab: 0 African: 10	Libya: 41 Arab: 2 African: 3 Other: 2

The frequency of references to Arab and African geopolitical concerns differs considerably across the 188 speeches and across the 10 four-year sub-periods into which Qaddafi's output has been divided. For example, suggestions of an Arab geopolitical concern show a trend decline (though uneven) between 1969 and 2008. These references to an Arab concern occur 3,166 times across the full sample. There are no references at all to an Arab geopolitical concern in speeches after 2001 (see Table 2 in Appendix B and Figure 1 below).

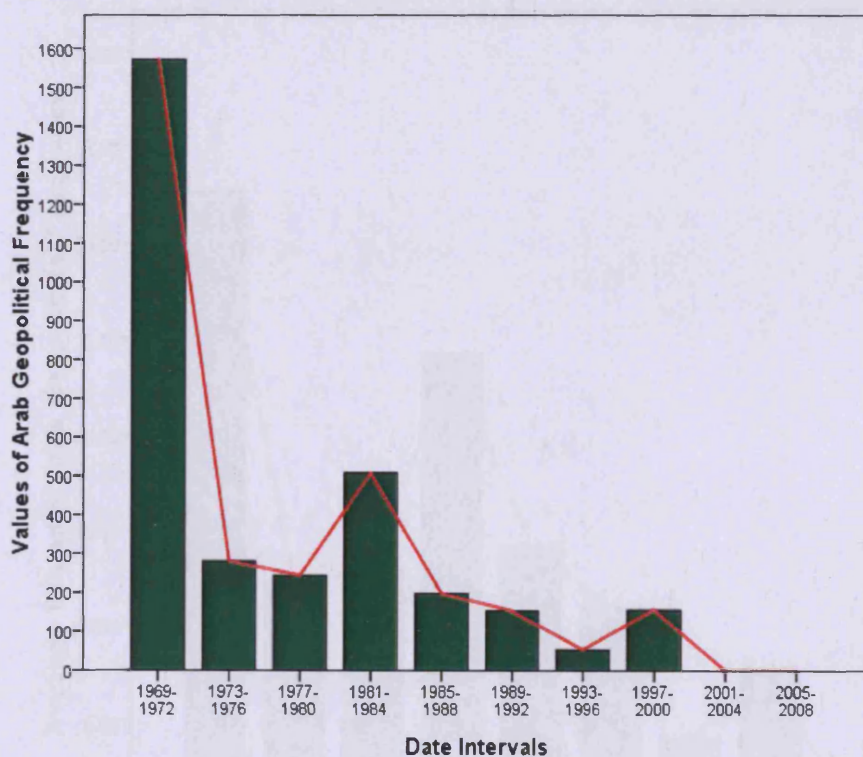


Figure 1: Frequency of references to Arab geopolitical concern in all Qaddafi's speeches delivered per four-year interval, between 1969 and 2008.

Table 2 (in Appendix B) and Figure 1 show that an Arab geopolitical concern was most frequently invoked by Qaddafi in speeches during the early years of his rule — from the 1969 revolution until 1972. Figure 2 (below) emphasises this point. It shows the average frequency of expressions of Arab geopolitical concern per speech within each sub-period. It demonstrates that, the frequency of the Arab geopolitical concern reached its highest level in speeches between 1969 and 1972 and that it flat lines at zero between 2001 and 2008.

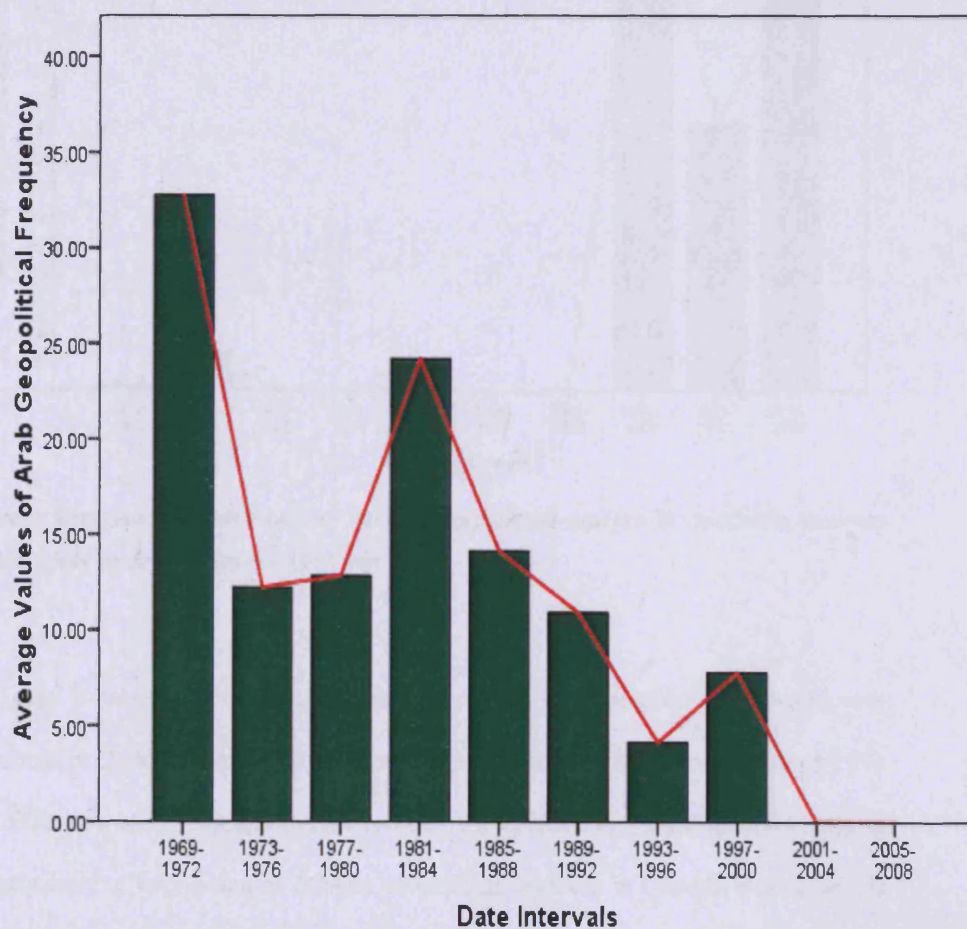


Figure 2: Average frequency per speech of references to Arab geopolitical concern in each four-year interval, between 1969 and 2008.

In contrast, Qaddafi's expressions of the African geopolitical concern occur 247 times in all 188 speeches between 1969 and 2008. Almost all of these mentions occur in speeches in the three four-year intervals between 1997 and 2008, as Table 3 (in Appendix B) and Figure 3 (below) reveal.

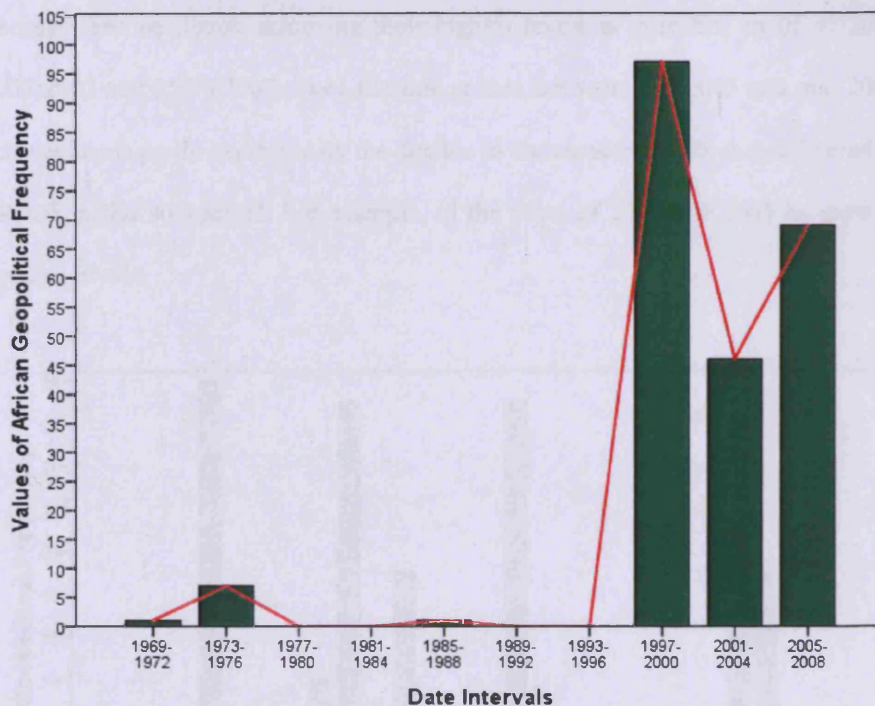


Figure 3: Frequency of references to African geopolitical concern in Qaddafi's speeches per four-year interval, between 1969 and 2008.

As figure 3 (above) illustrates, mention of an African geopolitical concern was infrequent in Qaddafi's speeches between 1969 and 1996. The interval between 1998 and 2000, however, provides a stark contrast. Here, there is a significant increase in the frequency of expression of African geopolitical concern in Qaddafi's speeches. If we break this data down to mentions of this concern per speech (see Figure 4, below), we can clearly see from Figures 3 and 4 that, from 1998 — in fact, from a particular

speech Qaddafi delivered on 05/10/1998 — his public addresses reflect a new level of geopolitical concern in Africa. The speech of 05/10/1998 also contains the highest frequency of references to an African geopolitical concern in any speech by Qaddafi. The concern is reflected in 97 instances of word or phrase-usage. Figure 4 also shows that the frequency of expressions of African geopolitical concern in Qaddafi's speeches then oscillates, achieving their highest levels in speeches on 05/07/2000, 17/07/2002 and 25/06/2007. They flat line at zero between mid 2003 and mid 2007. This decline is partly explained by the decline in the number of speeches delivered by Qaddafi in this sub-period. For example, in the years of 2004 and 2005 he gave no speeches at all.

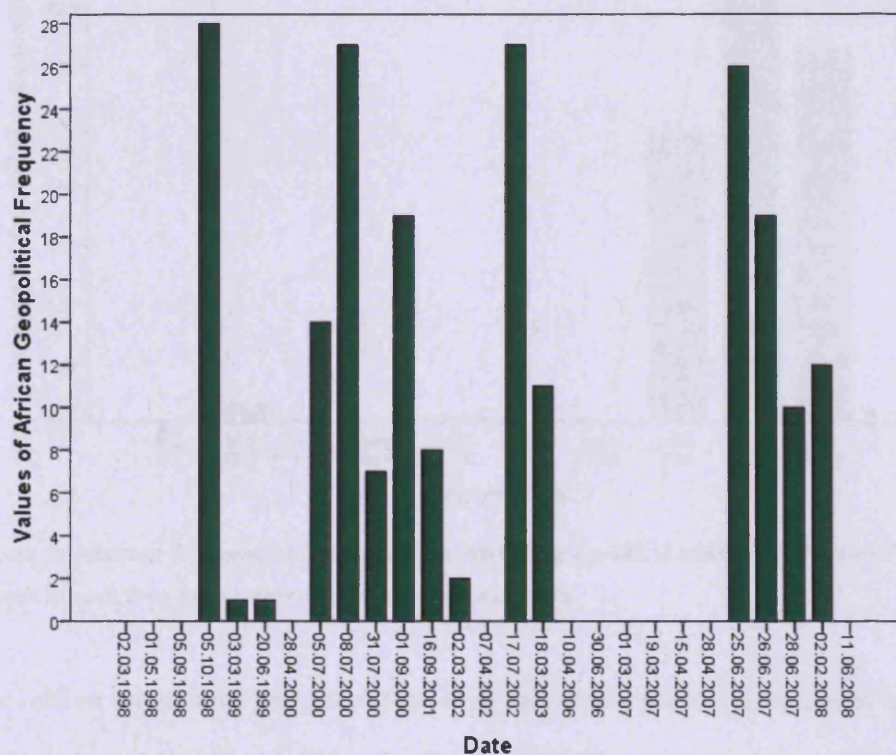


Figure 4: Average frequency per speech of references to African geopolitical concern between 02.03.1998 and 11.06.2008.

Table 3 (in Appendix B) and figure 5 (below) also show the average frequency of expressions of African geopolitical concern per speech within each sub-period. As can be seen below, throughout the interval between 1969 and 1996, the average frequency of the African geopolitical concern was very nearly zero. Between 1997 and 2000 the frequency with which Qaddafi spoke about the African geopolitical concern averaged 4.85 times per speech. Between 2001 and 2004, the average frequency nearly doubled to 9.2 and falling marginally to 6.27 between 2005 and 2008.

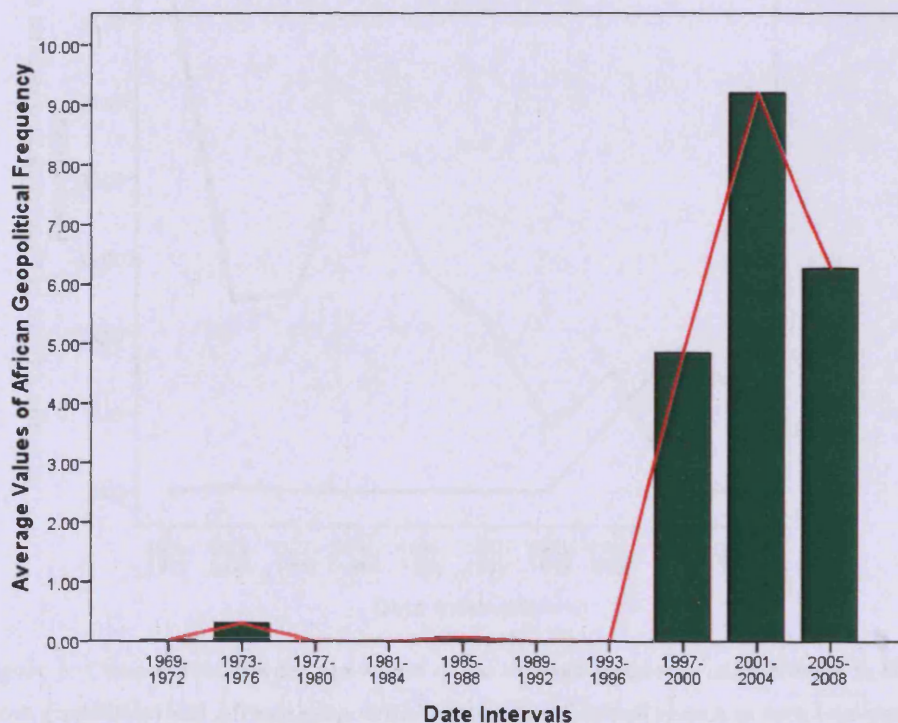


Figure 5: Average frequency of references to African geopolitical concern per Qaddafi speech in each four-year interval, between 1969 and 2008.

The contrast between the frequency of the Arab and African geopolitical concerns in Qaddafi's speeches between 1969 to the 2008 is stark. Whereas an Arab geopolitical concern is overwhelming between 1969 and 1998, when it is mentioned 3,166 times, an African geopolitical concern predominates between 2001 and 2008. This suggests

a shift in focus in Qaddafi's geopolitical concerns that is so profound that it is reasonable to suggest a period in which Arab geopolitical concern had primacy and one in which African geopolitical concern had primacy – a theme we will return to later.

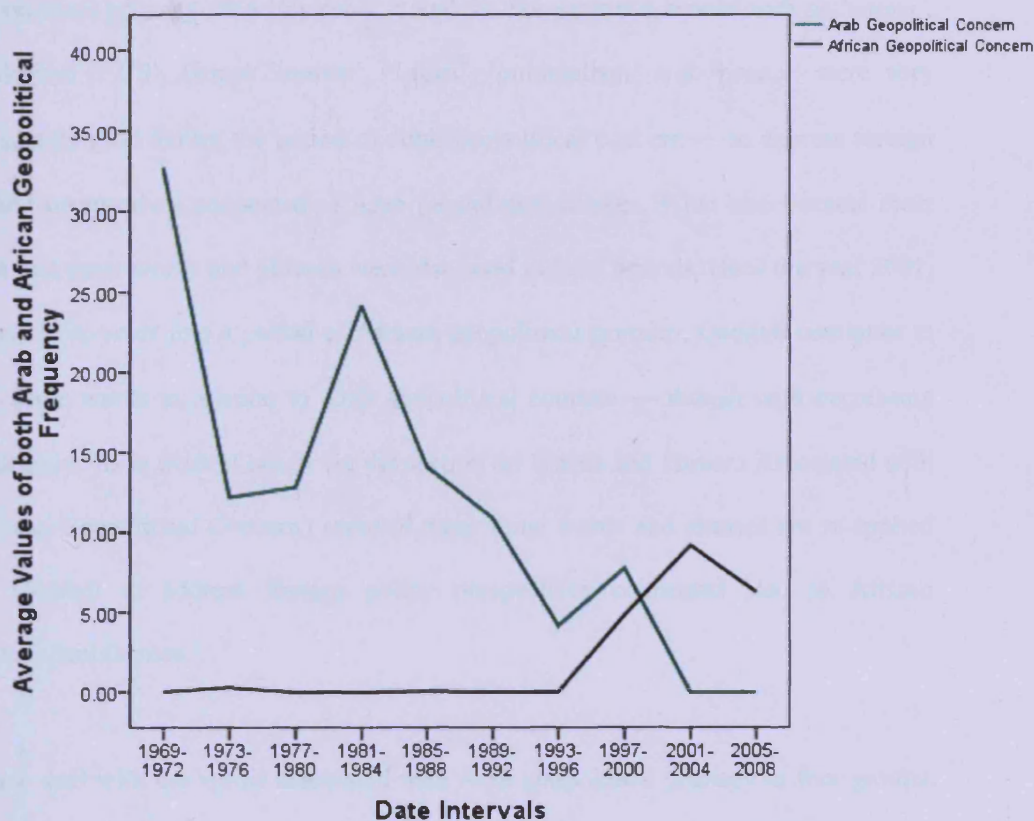


Figure 6: Comparison between the values of the average frequency of references to the Arab geopolitical and African geopolitical concern per Qaddafi speech in each four-year interval, between 1969 and 2008.

Words and Phrases Associated with Arab Geopolitical Concern:

As stated above, 48 of the 188 speeches by Qaddafi between 1969 and 2008 contained no references to Arab or African geopolitical concern. In attempting to identify the frequency with which particular words or phrases are associated with Arab or African

geopolitical concerns, therefore, I restricted my coding of the frequency of these words or phrases to the 140 speeches that express Arab and/or African geopolitical concerns. What became clear was that the frequency with which particular words and phrases were used varied according to whether the period was one of Arab or African geopolitical primacy (See Figures 7, 8 and 9). For example, words such as '*umma*', 'Palestine', 'US', 'Israel/Zionism', 'Libya', 'colonialism' and 'enemy' were very frequently used during the period of Arab geopolitical concern — to express foreign policy perspectives connected to Arab geopolitical themes. What also became clear was that these words and phrases were also used in later periods. Until the year 2001, about three years into a period of African geopolitical primacy, Qaddafi continues to use these words in relation to Arab geopolitical concern — though with decreasing frequency. As is evident below (in the section on Words and Phrases Associated with African Geopolitical Concern) some of these same words and phrases are re-applied by Qaddafi to address foreign policy perspectives connected also to African geopolitical themes.

I now deal with the words associated with Arab geopolitical primacy in four groups, from those with the highest frequency in the various intervals between 1969 and 2008 to those words with the lowest frequency. Table 4 in Appendix B represents the frequency of those words most commonly associated with Arab geopolitical concern. These include '*umma*' (1469), 'Palestine' (1379), 'Israel/Zionism' (1353), 'US' (1339), 'Libya' (953), 'colonialism' (623), and 'enemy' (555). Figure 7 (below) traces the trajectory of the use of the four words in this first group (i.e. those most frequently associated with Arab geopolitical concern).

The first point we should note is that the frequency with which this first set of words is associated with an Arab geopolitical concern in Qaddafi's speeches tends to be higher in the years leading up to 1984 than subsequently. As a general trend, Qaddafi's use of this set of words in relation to Arab geopolitical themes gradually declined until 1992 when their frequencies in this usage increased slightly but briefly. In 1996, the frequency of their use in relation to Arab geopolitical themes decreased again and continued to do so into the late 1990s, when an Arab geopolitical concern in Qaddafi's speeches reached a low level.

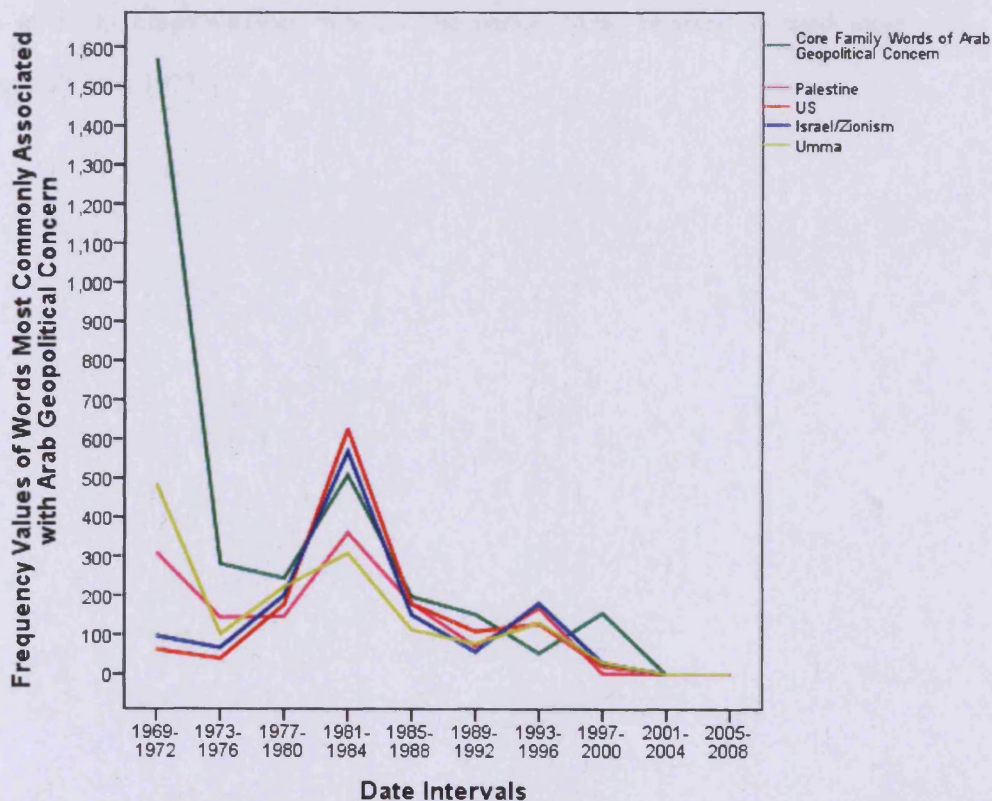


Figure 7: Line chart representing the relationship between the core family of words denoting Arab geopolitical concern and the four words most frequently associated with this concern in Qaddafi's speeches per four-year interval, between 1969 until 2008.

We now turn to the second group of words associated with the period of Arab geopolitical primacy that had slightly lower frequencies. They include: 'Arab regime' (499), 'freedom' (407), 'liberation' (329), 'occupation' (308), 'confront' (304), 'betrayal' (258), and 'Nasser' (238) (Table 5 in Appendix B). The frequencies of these words tend to show greater variation between sub-periods than do the first set of associated words. For example, figure 8 shows that the words 'freedom', 'liberation' and 'occupation' are mentioned often in the sub-period between 1969 and 1972 (238, 115 and 105 respectively). These words, however, were mentioned much less often or not at all in other intervals, whereas the phrase 'Arab regimes' is used more frequently after 1972.

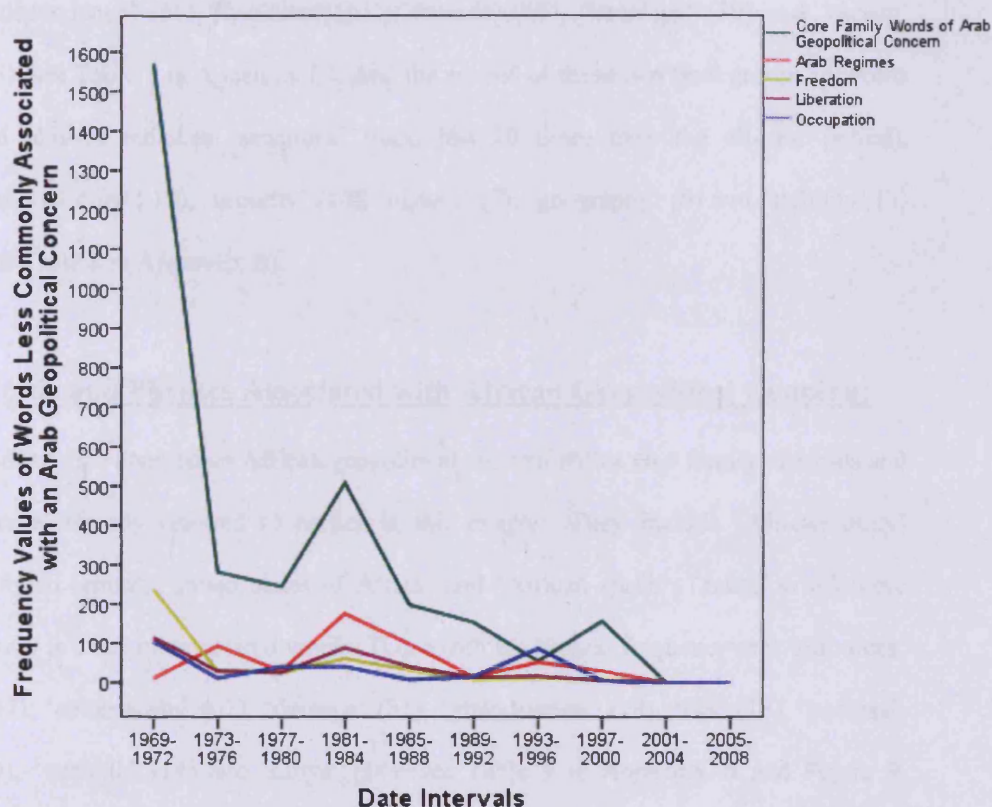


Figure 8: Line chart representing the relationship between the core family of words denoting Arab geopolitical concern and the four words less frequently associated with this concern in Qaddafi's speeches per four-year interval between 1969 until 2008.

We now turn to a third set of words and phrases which Qaddafi associated still less frequently with Arab geopolitical concern. These words and phrases are 'resistance' (207), 'defence' (205), 'challenge' (199), 'artificial borders' (187), 'regionalism' (170), 'Italy' (167), 'strength' (153) and 'UK' (141) (See Table 6 in Appendix B).

Finally in this section, we record the occurrence of two more groups of words and phrases, also associated with an Arab geopolitical concern whose frequencies are significantly lower than the words in the previous sets. The first of these two groups includes 'imperialism' (127), 'dignity' (123), 'plot' (109), 'resources' (101),

‘independence’ (66), ‘Mukhtar’ (63), ‘crusade’ (63), ‘language’ (39) and ‘racism’ (25) (see Table 7 in Appendix B). And the second of these two final groups of words and phrases includes ‘sanctions’ (used just 10 times over the 40-year period), ‘national duty’ (10), ‘security’ (10), ‘history’ (7), ‘geography’ (6) and ‘stability’ (3) (see Table 8 in Appendix B).

Words and Phrases Associated with African Geopolitical Concern:

Qaddafi also denoted an African geopolitical concern with a core family of words and phrases already referred to earlier in this chapter. They include ‘African unity’ ‘African union’, ‘united states of Africa’ and ‘African space’. Linked to this core family is a tier of associated words. Those with the highest frequency are: ‘resources’ (147), ‘colonialism’ (67), ‘defence’ (31), ‘globalisation’ (18), ‘US’ (18), ‘borders’, (15), ‘strength’ (14) and ‘Libya’ (14) (see Table 9 in Appendix B and Figure 9, below). Of these words, ‘resources’ and ‘colonialism’ appear most often. Other associated words, such as ‘US’, ‘globalisation’, ‘Libya’, artificial borders’ and ‘strength’ shared similar frequencies.

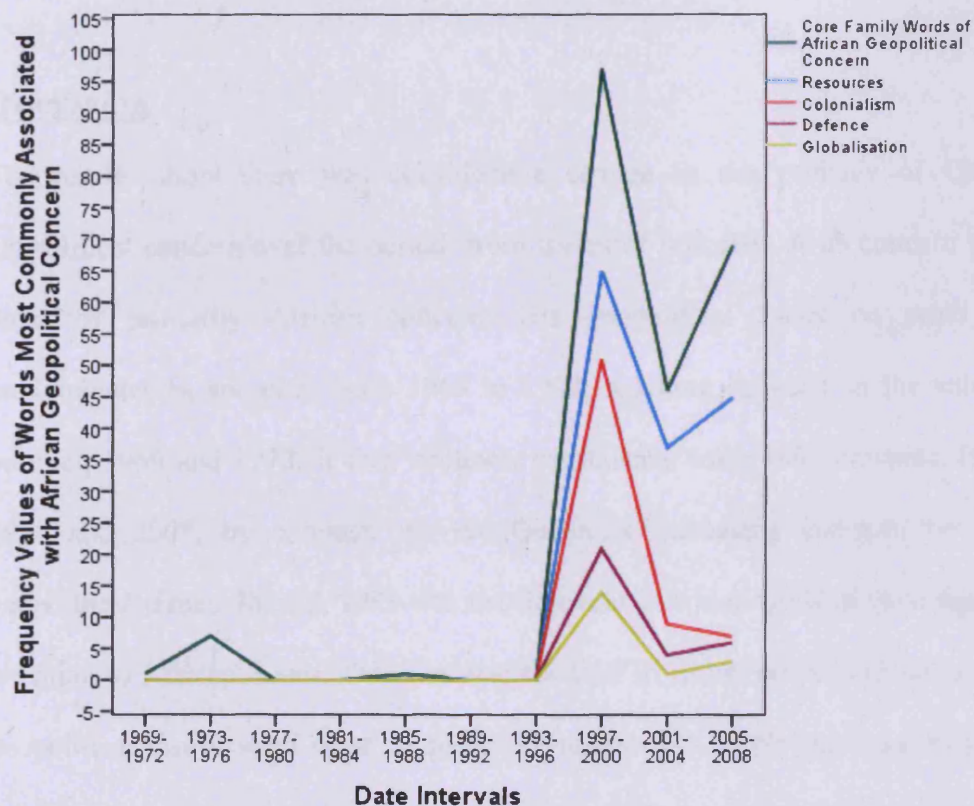


Figure 9: Line chart representing the relationship between the core family of words denoting African geopolitical concern and the four words most frequently associated with this concern in Qaddafi's speeches per four-year interval, between 1969 and 2008.

There is a second set of words less frequently associated with Qaddafi's expressions of an African geopolitical concern. As Table 10 in Appendix B indicates, they are 'Islam' (13) 'freedom' (12), 'challenge' (12), 'imperialism' (11), 'occupation' (10), 'slaves' (10), and 'Israel/ Zionism'(10). And, finally, there is a third group of words still less frequently associated with an African geopolitical concern. They were 'sanctions' (8), 'liberation' (7), 'racism' (6), 'security' (5), 'stability' (5), 'enemy' (4), 'independence' (4) 'resistance' (3), 'betrayal' (3), 'Mandela' (3), 'Mukhtar' (1), 'Nasser' (1) and 'geography' (1).

Discussion

The results show there was considerable change in the primacy of Qaddafi's geopolitical concern over the period: from issues of primarily Arab concern towards those of primarily African concern. His geopolitical focus on Arab issues predominates in speeches from 1969 to 1998, reaching its peak in the sub-period between 1969 and 1972. It then declines, particularly from 1998 onwards. Between 1998 and 2008, by contrast, we see Qaddafi's increasing concern for African geopolitical issues. Indeed, 1998 was the first year in which Qaddafi gave significant attention to African issues. This was also the year in which his references to African geopolitical issues were most frequent (97 references), while the frequency of his references to Arab issues declined sharply — to its lowest since he became leader of Libya in 1969.

The data also reveal that, in his speeches, Qaddafi used a variety of words and phrases that reflected issues associated with Arab and/or African geopolitical concerns. The frequency of individual associated words and phrases varied in relation to whether Qaddafi was giving primacy to Arab or African geopolitical concerns. When invoking Arab themes, for example, he seemed to place greater stress on the words such as '*umma*', 'Palestine', 'US', 'Israel', 'Libya', 'colonialism', and 'enemy'. When Qaddafi spoke about African issues, he most commonly used words such as 'resources' and 'colonialism'.

The content analysis shows that Qaddafi used some of the same words or phrases across both geopolitical primacies. The words that he used most frequently in

association with both Arab and African geopolitical primacies included 'US', 'colonialism' and 'Libya'. Conversely, the analysis shows that Qaddafi reserved some words and phrases for association with only one or other geopolitical primacy. Examples include his restriction of the use of the words 'globalisation', 'Mandela' and 'slaves' to the period of African geopolitical primacy.

The data indicate that a shift occurred in the focus and content of Qaddafi's speeches in their dealings with geopolitical issues. Qaddafi's public attention and focus moved decisively from Arab to African geopolitical concerns. Although this chapter has identified the frequency of Qaddafi's references to Arab and African geopolitical concerns, it has not established *how* these references were used by Qaddafi to construct a view of the Arab world and African world, of the concerns or unity of either, and of Libya's place in the community of nations – or what meanings might underlie his construction. As Billig, Potter & Wetherell, Reicher, and Hopkins, Wetherell & Potter emphasise, "the use of categories and group representations needs to be considered in the argumentative context in which they are expressed." (cited in Klein and Licata, 2005: 586). To meet this requirement entails more detailed analysis of Qaddafi's speeches than a quantitative content analysis allows and attention to what might have influenced any changes in the focus and content of these speeches. A discourse analysis of a sample of speeches and other utterances by Qaddafi, together with related scholarly literature, should enable us to investigate the meanings that Qaddafi constructed around his Arab and African geopolitical concerns. A discourse analysis should also enable us to move towards identifying the influences on Qaddafi in this construction of meaning.

Chapter Five

Discursive Strategy: Verbal

Introduction

In the previous chapter, I analysed quantitatively the content of Muammar al-Qaddafi's speeches over the forty years to 2008. I explained the significance of the findings and identified the frequency of Qaddafi's references to Arab and African geopolitical concerns. The analysis demonstrated that a significant shift occurred in Qaddafi's geopolitical concerns: from issues of primarily Arab concern towards those of mainly African concern. The point of intersection came in about 1998, as Figure 6 in the previous chapter shows. This finding was quite reasonably premised on Qaddafi's having used particular words and phrases to refer to his Arab geopolitical concerns on the one hand, and to African geopolitical concerns, on the other, with some words and phrases sometimes being used more frequently than others. The previous chapter did not, however, throw any light upon how Qaddafi constructed his geopolitical concerns. That is to say: why was Qaddafi at one point concerned with one set of countries and their concerns and, at another, with another set of countries and their concerns. What system of meanings underlay Qaddafi's shift towards or involvement with this or that set of countries or peoples and their concerns?

This chapter suggests only part of the answer. It does so by shedding light on Qaddafi's discursive strategy — that is to say, on those verbal devices he used in projecting discourse — in this case in his attempts to structure and convey his geopolitical concerns. As will become evident in this chapter, what Qaddafi's discursive strategy suggests is that, for the Libyan leader, the expression of a

particular set of geopolitical concerns entailed the assumption of a particular geopolitical discourse. Later chapters will show what uses Qaddafi had for geopolitics and geopolitical positional change within his broad political discourse, and how these uses were reasoned.

We stay, now, with the relationship, in Qaddafi's discourse, between the assumption of a particular set of geopolitical concerns and the assumption of a geopolitical identity. In order to explore it, we analyse Qaddafi's discursive strategy. And, in order to do so, we re-explore data in his 188 speeches between 1969 to 2008, and examine the text of a selection of them. This selection is based on a judgement of which of the speeches most clearly reflect his expression of Libyan geopolitical concerns. Other sources used in this analysis of Qaddafi's discursive strategy include materials from the existing scholarly literature on him and Libyan history, and by Qaddafi himself in the form of the texts of interviews he granted to others as well as books and documents by him.

This chapter is organised into three main parts. First I examine the discursive strategy that constructed Libya's Pan-Arab geopolitical concerns, which ran from about 1969 to 1998. Here I focus on the language Qaddafi used to articulate them. His strategy included the use of lexical reiteration, presuppositions and indexicals. Second, I then examine how Qaddafi expressed Libya's Pan-African geopolitical concern, a primacy evident in his speeches from about 1998 until about 2009. In this part I again focus on Qaddafi's lexical choices. Third, I introduce another geopolitical concern, namely Libya's rapprochement with the West. This final part, which overlaps with his Pan

African period, sheds light on the significant improvement in relations between Libya and the West, particularly after 2003.

Qaddafi's Pan-Arab Period

As is clear in the previous chapter's content analysis, in his speeches Qaddafi brings forward particular groups of words and phrases when expressing Libya's Arab geopolitical concern. He repeats expressions which came to form significant building blocks of what I call his 'pan-Arab geopolitical discourse'. These expressions included 'Palestine' (1379), 'Zionism/Israel' (1353), 'US' (1339), 'Libya' (953), 'colonialism' (623), and 'enemy' (555).

Results from the content analysis show that 'Palestine' is central to Qaddafi's formulation of Libya's pan-Arabism. The Libyan leader saw the question of Arab unity as intrinsically linked to the Palestinian issue. It provided the main totem around which Qaddafi sought to strengthen Arab national consciousness. "The road to Palestine is through the unity of all Arab nations," he said in 1969, shortly after the revolution. (Al-Qaddafi, 16/09/1969) Qaddafi declared that "the freedom of Libyan land can not be separated from the freedom of Palestinian land" (Al-Qaddafi, 28/03/1971), and "the fighting in Palestine is self-defence" (Al-Qaddafi, 07/10/1975). He saw *jihad*, or holy war, as the only path to Palestinian liberation.¹⁰

Palestine was, in many respects, the obvious issue around which to try to generate pan-Arab fervour. Appeals about it had long functioned as a significant symbol

¹⁰ *Jihad* is a term used to describe Holy War. Libyans have been familiar with the word *Jihad* since Libyan anti-colonial resistance in the period before the end of the Second World War in 1943 when Libya was occupied by Italy.

justifying calls for Arab unity (Al-Bittar in Imhammad, 2008: 41). According to St John, Palestine had become “the principal catalyst for the rise of the [Arab nationalist] movement after World War I when the growth of the Zionist movement culminated in the creation of the state of Israel” (St John, 1987: 35).

For Muslims in general, Palestine is a blessed and holy land. The importance of Palestine in the Islamic faith is evident in the frequent references and events in Islamic religious scriptures, as well as the history of the land itself, which attest to its special status (Hadi, 2000).

The greatest significance of Palestine for Muslims is that it contains *Baitul-Maqdis* (Arabic for the Holy, Noble One, Jerusalem), where both *Al-Masjid Al-Aqsa* and the Dome of the *Al-Sakhra* (Rock) are built and form part of the *Haram ash-Sharif* compound (Hadi, 2000; Nusseibeh, 2000). *Baitul-Maqdis* is one of the three holiest cities of Islam. After Mecca and Medina, *Al-Masjid Al-Aqsa* in Jerusalem is the third holiest mosque in Islam (Nusseibeh, 2000). *Al-Sakhra*, furthermore, has special significance as the site of the Prophet Mohammed's Night Journey, *Isra' and Mi'raj* (the journey from Medina to Jerusalem and his ascension to heaven) (Hadi, 2000). *Baitul-Maqdis* was also the first *Qibla* — or direction towards which Muslims should face when praying — for the first sixteen months of Muhammad's message, before Allah ordered the *Qibla* to be changed towards the *Kaabah* in *Makkah* (Mecca) (Nusseibeh, 2000).

Collins (1972) points out that the situation in Palestine also had particular resonance for Libyans. There were clear parallels between the Jewish settlement of Palestine and Italian settler colonial occupation of Libya after 1939. Collins argues that

In South Africa and Palestine, the work laws were very similar to those which the Italians applied in Libya.¹¹ Integral to consolidating a settler colonial presence is control of the land, one of the prime motivations behind Italy's adopting a policy of military conquest when it had failed to persuade Libyans to sell their land peacefully to Italian businessmen or the Italian government (Collins, 1974: 9).

The similarities between the histories of Libya and Palestine, he adds, “are striking and help explain ... [the Libyan leadership's] position regarding restoration of *all* the rights of the Palestinian people, and not just return of lands occupied by Israel in 1967 war” (original emphasis, Collins, 1974: 7). Palestine becomes, in Qaddafi's pan-Arab discourse, a contemporary symbol of Arabs' common experience of humiliation and dispossession as a result of Western imperialism — and, in his expression of that concern, a source of common geopolitical identity.

Results obtained from the content analysis also point to the importance that the family of words referring to ‘Zionism/Israel’ had in Qaddafi's pan-Arab discourse. On many occasions, the Libyan leader saw of the existence of what he called the ‘Zionist entity’ as incompatible with the existence of an Arab world. For example, in a speech made in June 1986 on the 16th anniversary of the closure of the American bases in Libya, Qaddafi said: “We do not accept the Israeli state on Arab land, and we will resist it until we destroy it, because its presence is incompatible with our existence” (Al-Qaddafi, 11/06/1986). In common with other Arab nationalists, the Libyan leader saw Israel “as a *national entity*, with a nationalist ideology — Zionism — which directly

¹¹ In Fascist propaganda, Libya was referred to as Italy's ‘Fourth Shore,’ (Collins, 1974: 9)

confronted the Arab world's own assumptions about [Arab nationalism and Arab unity]" (original emphasis, Joffé, 1983: 158). Qaddafi, moreover, saw Israel as "closely linked to the United States" (Ronen, 2008: 4), and saw its existence as a continuation of the colonial occupation that large parts of the Arab and Islamic worlds had experienced for almost two centuries. As noted by St John, "the Zionist presence in Palestine was [viewed by Qaddafi] as nothing more than the latest bridgehead or military base to protect the concerns of imperialism and neo-colonialism in the Middle East" — and Arab unity was the only solution to this problem (St John, 1987: 36).

The US was scarcely a lesser threat in Qaddafi's demonology. Qaddafi's use of words and phrases referring to the "United States" in his pan-Arab discourse was similarly negative. Libyans and Americans were not strangers to confrontation. The first clash between them had occurred off the coast of Tripoli when the US frigate, Philadelphia, ran aground and was captured by Tripolian gunboats in 1804. The official hymn of the US Marine Corps still refers to the incident in its first verse¹² (The Arab online, 18/07/2009). After 1969, Libya's relationship with the US was often fraught and his references to it were overwhelmingly negative (Neumann, 2000: 42). In June 1970, Libya closed down US facilities at Wheelus Air force base near Tripoli (Ronen, 2008: 11), which had been established in 1955 (Martinez, 2007: 85). Qaddafi accused the

¹² *From the halls of Montezuma
To the shores of Tripoli;
We fight our country's battles
In the air, on the land and sea;
First to fight for our right and freedom
And to keep our honour clean;
We are proud to claim the title
Of United States marine.*

US of “exploiting the oil resources of Libya and other Arab states, and of supporting Israel in its conflict with the Arab world” (Ronen, 2008: 11). Libya nationalised British and American oil companies in 1973, (Vandewalle, 2008: 34), called for Arab unity, supported the Palestinians liberation movements, and developed relations with the US’s Cold War rival in Moscow (Schumacher, 1987: 246). The Libyan leadership declared that Western powers were intent on damaging the interests of Arab states and singled out the US as a country which, it said, wanted world domination.

The relationship between Libya and the US deteriorated dramatically in the 1980s when Ronald Reagan came to power. This was a period in which, as the content analysis suggests, Qaddafi most frequently referred to the US in his speeches. Tensions heightened when the US prevented Libyan students from studying certain subjects in US universities, and after the closure of the US embassy in Tripoli and the Libyan People’s Bureau (embassy) in Washington. The US accused some Libyans of planning to assassinate Reagan, of supporting terrorism, of opposing the Middle East peace process and, eventually, of attempting to produce weapons of mass destruction. Following a bombing at a discotheque in West Berlin in 1986, which killed two American soldiers and for which the US blamed Libyan agents, President Reagan ordered an air strike against Tripoli and Benghazi. (Othman, 1994: 237)

It occurred on the night of April 15 1986 (Zoubir, 2002: 33), killed more than 70 Libyans, among them Qaddafi’s infant foster daughter (Bianci, 2003: 9).

In December 21st 1988, Pan Am flight 103, bound for the US, was blown up over the Scottish town of Lockerbie. Two hundred and fifty-nine crew members and

passengers, as well as eleven of the town's residents, lost their lives. (Matar and Thabit, 2004: 7) In November 1991, the United States and Britain implicated two Libyan citizens, Abd al-Basit al-Magrahi and al-Amin Fahimah, in the bombing of the aircraft (Hurd, 2005: 504). Following this accusation, in 1992, the UN imposed sanctions, which lasted until 1999, on Libya in an effort to force it to hand over the two for trial (St John, 2006).

These various events stoked Qaddafi's portrayal of the US in his political discourse as the predatory and serial enemy of all things Arab, whose malignancy and greed could be challenged, frustrated or defeated only by pan-Arab unity; no lesser combination of Arab states could do so. The US had long been presented by Qaddafi as, in short, the source of all crises and setbacks experienced by Libya and the Arab world. (Hinnebusch and Ehteshami, 2002: 213-233). The US was "leading the struggle against the Palestinian people ... [by supporting] the Zionists" (Al-Qaddafi, 11/06/1980). The US was, in Qaddafi's view, "for its own security reasons [seeking] to control directly or indirectly those countries in the Middle East which had major [oil] reserves" (Deeb, 1986: 158). It was an ambitious hegemony. "The battle", Qaddafi had declared on the 12th anniversary of the Libyan revolution, was

between ... the Arab nation and the US, between America and Arab dignity, between America and our existence over the Arab land. These are not our choices. These are the choices of Americans and US strategy that is dictated by the madness of power and by the policy of imperialism (Al-Qaddafi, 01/09/1981).

According to Qaddafi, Libya's war against the US was one of "self-defence, defence of Arab existence, defence of Arab dignity, and defence of Arab land" (Al-Qaddafi, 02/03/1982). He considered imperialism a prime target for *jihad*. For example, he

said: “any contribution to liberating the world from imperialism should be considered as an integral part of *jihad*” (Al-Qaddafi cited in St John, 1987: 36). In sum, if Palestine was the archetypal victim in pan-Arab concerns, the US was the primary perpetrator — one whose rapaciousness and scale required, in the logic of Qaddafi’s narrative, the assumption of a common geopolitical identity by Libya and other Arab states if they were to have a chance of survival.

But, to Qaddafi’s disappointment, against this malignant enemies was pitted a divided Arab nation. To remedy this situation, Qaddafi held up Libya as an agent of a common Arab identity; as an exemplar of the required political outlook. He presented Libya’s future as inextricably linked with the future of Arab nation and the unity on which, he said, Libya’s survival depended. Speaking to a Libyan audience in March 1971 on the first anniversary of the closure of British bases in Libya, Qaddafi said: “The defence of Palestine is a defence of Libya; the defence of Egypt is a defence of Libya; the defence of Syria, of Jordan and of all Arab land is defence of the land that you are standing on now” (Al-Qaddafi, 28/03/1971). Speaking to an audience in Tripoli nine years later, he stressed that “Libyan national identity and the freedom of Libyans are not complete and are in danger as long as the Arab nation is in danger and disunited” (Al-Qaddafi, 01/09/1980). Arab unity was the essential element if Arabs were to defeat the enemies ranged against them. “Arab unity is imperative to protect the Arab people from the enemy ... Unity is the historical response to the challenges of colonization and Zionism,” he said (Al-Qaddafi, 04/12/1972). This was a period in which Libyans’ linguistic and ethnic identity and Libya’s geopolitical concerns coincided fully.

Among the ideas that Qaddafi condemned, ‘colonialism’ was second only to ‘Zionism’. Almost all parts of the Arab world had shared the experience of colonialism whose divide-and-rule tactics had undermined the Arab capacity to resist it, Qaddafi said:

When colonialism first came to the Arab world, ... European nations agreed that France was to occupy Algeria, Tunisia and Marrakech, and Italy agreed to take Libya and Somalia ... This means that these people agreed with each other to divide the Arab territories ... so, the Arab nation could not stand together against Western colonialism (Al-Qaddafi, 04/12/1972).

Qaddafi believed that the Arab nation had not freed itself from the heritage of colonialism. He blamed colonialism for the creation of ‘artificial Arab borders’, which he rejected as ‘imported’ and unacceptable constructions — remnants of former colonial rule. In a speech delivered in September 1985, he said: “We do not recognise any borders created by colonial powers that divide the Arab people ... From now we must not recognise artificial boundaries within the Arab world” (Al-Qaddafi, 01/09/1985).

The Libyan leader feared that colonialism was mutating in the latter half of the 20th Century and might soon take a new form:

History is repeating itself, and colonialism can be repeated ... Now there is another force that has replaced the Italian colonial power in 1911. Such a force could be the US or maybe Italy itself ... and it may be Zionism. These forces may be playing the same role that the colonial powers played [in the past] (Al-Qaddafi, 19/10/1991).

Taken together, the word ‘colonialism’, alongside ‘US’ and ‘Israel/Zionism’ described the character of the enemy in Qaddafi’s pan-Arab discourse. The Libyan leader used ‘enemy’ as a category synonym for these keywords.

Qaddafi, however, did not have only a non-Arab enemy; he also had a regional one. This enemy comprised what he referred to in the collective as 'Arab regimes'. Some of the words collocated with this key phrase included 'betrayal', 'regionalism' and 'plot'. Before 1973, Libya had warm relations with most other Arab governments. But these relations deteriorated at the same time as Qaddafi blamed these Arab leaders for the disunity of broader Arab nation, viewing them as narrow regionalists hostile to Arab unity. He also said of many Arab states that "he could not longer tolerate their leaders' lacklustre responses to the Arab-Israeli conflict, or their passivity and their acquiescence in a political status quo throughout the region dominated by the US presence and its policies" (Vandewalle, 2006: 139). Qaddafi believed these 'Arab regimes' were afraid of the US and Israel. In a speech delivered in March 1998, he stated that: "Arab rulers are afraid; they say America possibly will put us down." But, Qaddafi added, "It is best for you to die with honour rather than to die from fear of America and Israel" (Al-Qaddafi, 02/03/1998). Qaddafi focused his attacks particularly on former Egyptian president Anwar Sadat, under whose rule Egypt set out on a new course that led to peace with Israel and a better relationship with the United States (Kramer, 1993). Moreover, Qaddafi saw Egypt's friendly relations with the US, according to Deeb, "as changing the balance of power in the region and threatening to Libyan security" (Deeb: 1986:158).

The behaviour by Sadat that most irritated Qaddafi included the four-day Egyptian-Libyan War in July 1977 and its origins¹³, Sadat's visit to Jerusalem in November 1977, Sadat's compromise in the Camp David accords of September 1978, which

¹³ This war, according to St John occurred after "Egypt attacked Libya after Israeli intelligence reportedly provided Egypt with limited information suggesting that Qaddafi planned to assassinate Sadat". (St John, 1987: 60)

Qaddafi renamed ‘David Stable’¹⁴ (Ronen, 2008, 111), and the Egypt-Israel peace agreement in 1980. The Libyan leader, according to Ronen “rejected the ‘treasonous’ Egyptian policy, repeatedly depicting it as ‘a crime against the Arab nation’” (Ronen, 2008: 110). Qaddafi, as Deeb, points out,

saw the peace process as one that enhance[d] Israeli’s power in the region, brought Egypt under U.S. influence, and rendered Libya much more vulnerable to external intervention and domination. Instead of being the protector, as in early 1970s Egypt had become an ally to those forces, the United States and Israel, whose aim was to dominate the region as a means to control its oil resources (Deeb, 1986: 158).

The Libyan leader also attacked the monarchical governments of Morocco and Jordan. He described them as real obstacles to Arab unity, as they maintained relatively close relations with the US. Qaddafi, moreover, attacked the Sudanese president Jaafar Nimeiri, who in 1971 opposed a union between Egypt, Libya and Sudan (St John, 1987: 41, 50, 53), and who supported Egypt after the Camp David accords. There were, in other words, in Qaddafi’s pan-Arab discourse, not many leaders who shared passionate concern about Arabs’ vulnerability as a consequence of their disunity, or who had the will or ability to construct the necessary unity of purpose.

There are other key words related to the pan-Arabism that appeared to characterise his thinking until 1998. They included ‘defence’ and ‘protect’. As the following extract shows, these words were usually associated with a theme of Arab unity, in view of his belief that Arab unity was perhaps *the* essential element to protect or defend the broad Arab nation from the enemy:

¹⁴ A place in which horses are kept.

Arab unity is the protection of freedom. Arab unity is a powerful shield that protects the independence of the homeland. Arab unity is a fortress that protects the Arab nation. Arab unity is a safe refuge against colonialism and imperialism” (Al-Qaddafi, 04/12/1972).

His and the Revolutionary Command Council’s call shortly after the 1969 revolution for the withdrawal of all foreign military installations from Libya was an attempt to remove an obstacle to Libya’s and the Arab world’s ability to defend themselves (St John, 1987: 27). Qaddafi saw the existence of the bases as a “threat not only to the independence of the people of Libya and the economy of the country”. They were also “a Sword of Damocles hanging over the head of the whole Arab nation and the Mediterranean region” (Muscat, 1980: 177).

Likewise, the words ‘language’ and ‘history’ were given prominence in Qaddafi’s pan-Arabism. On several occasions, Qaddafi stressed the importance of language and history in constituting the Arab nation. He believed that Arabs were people linked by special bonds of language and history. His assertion of the importance of the Arabic language found eloquent expression just after the revolution of 1969, when he and other members of the Revolutionary Command Council “declared that all signs, cards, and tickets in Libya should be written in the Arabic language only”. They also ordered “the mandatory translation of foreign passports into Arabic and a campaign to increase the use of Arabic as an international language officially recognised by the United Nations and the other international bodies” (St John, 1987: 27).

‘Islam’ was another element binding Arabs together. Qaddafi believed that Arab nationalism and Islam were intertwined, and not in contradiction to one other. On many occasions, he stressed that what was good for the Arab nation was good for

Islam, and vice versa. One year after the revolution, he declared: “There is no contradiction between the call to Arab nationalism and the Islamic call ... The call for Arab nationalism is a call to the Arabs who are the soldiers of Islam” (Al-Qaddafi, 12/12/70). In 1971, he returned to the theme: “The weakness of the Arabs is the weakness of Islam ... Therefore, servicing the Arab nation is a service to Islam ... and the achievement of Arab unity is the unity of Muslims because Arab land is the heart of Islam” (Al-Qaddafi, 12/02/71). These were sentiments he continued to voice: “Arab nationalism and Islam are two sides of one coin, and the spirit of the Arab nation is Islam and Arab nationalism is its body” (Al-Qaddafi, 07/04/1990).

Qaddafi also frequently referred to “resources” within the same pan-Arab project, when he spoke of his willingness to commit his country’s assets, especially its oil reserves, to the benefit of Arabs, not of the West, and to achieve unity with other Arab countries. In one of his early speeches Qaddafi declared:

Tell President Nasser [of Egypt] we made this revolution for him. He can take everything of ours and add it to the rest of the Arab world’s resources to be used for the battle [against Israel, and for Arab unity] (cited in Vandewalle, 2006: 80).

Qaddafi’s invocation of pan Arabism included references to a number of individuals, such as Nasser and Umar al-Mukhtar, the Libyan patriot who had resisted Italian colonial domination. The Libyan leader, Vandewalle suggests, “like other young Arab nationalists who had followed the ideological debates and struggles within Arab nationalism, viewed Nasser as a dedicated Arab revolutionary who could return to the Arab world much of the grandeur and the power it had once possessed” (Vandewalle, 2006: 80 and Vandewalle 2008a: 10). Qaddafi himself repeatedly told the story of Al-Mukhtar, the Cyrenaican *Shaykh* who led resistance against the Italian occupation of

Libya in the 1920s and 1930s until he was captured and hanged by the Italian fascists in 1931 (Vandewalle, 2006: 125). On several occasions, the Libyan leader held up Al-Mukhtar as an example to exhort Libyans and Arabs to be wary of Arab regimes who, he said, would betray the Arab nation to outsiders. In a speech in September 1980 on the 49th anniversary of the hanging of Al-Mukhtar, Qaddafi said: “Sadat is trying to erase a symbol of Arab pride and Arab nationalism. He is trying to obscure the glory and history of Jamal Abdul-Nasser, just as al-Sunisia [a reformist religious order in Libya] tried to obscure the glory of Omar al-Mukhtar and tried to erase his history” (Al-Qaddafi, 16/09/1980).

Al-Mukhtar, according to the scholars Nasser and Boggero, “became a popular translational icon in Africa, Asia and the Arab world ... Al-Mukhtar became part of Arab culture during the struggle against colonialism and is now part of a suggested Arab ‘imagined community’.” The interwar Libyan resistance leader was also “attractive to those segments of the population, particularly the youth, which may be seduced by pan-Arab ideals” (Nasser and Boggero, 2008: 201, 204).

Another national hero whom Qaddafi used in his speeches to express the pan-Arab project was Salah Eddine al-Ayyubi. He was the Muslim leader who had united and led the Muslim world and who, in 1187, recaptured Jerusalem for Muslims after defeating the King of Jerusalem at the Battle of Hattin near Lake Galilee. Among Qaddafi’s references to Ayyubi was one in February 1994, in which he said:

The Arab nation today faces a historic march, which is no less dangerous than the advance of Mongols and the Tatars towards the Arab nation. But in the face of the Crusaders, the Arab nation was able to save itself from extinction by the actions of the United Front led by the historical command under the leadership of Salah Al-din, who destroyed the Crusaders (Al-Qaddafi, 01/02/1994).

Qaddafi's appeal to Arab history also extended, as Vandewalle notes, to presenting

innumerable reiterations of words that reflect conditions in Arab society before state-building began in earnest: words like *turath* (heritage), *furusiiyya* (chivalry), and *diqfa* (hospitality). Dignity and the indignities suffered at the hands of the West have continually been mentioned by Qaddafi to invoke a powerful sense of unity. History — and historical wrongs inflicted by the West on Libya — have been used from the beginning to create a sense of shared suffering and exploitation (Vandewalle, 2006:125 and 2008a: 30).

These references asserted the notion that all Libyans, indeed all Arabs, shared common traditions, a common history and common symbols — a view that Hobsbawm and Ranger (1983) might challenge.

Qaddafi compared the state of disunity in the Arab world unfavorably with the experiences elsewhere in the world, where peoples usually of the same ethnic groups had united into larger state or quasi-federal units. The broad Arab nation should unite as these other peoples had, Qaddafi argued. He was arguing by analogy that, because others had united and benefited by it; so, too, could and should Arabs. He most frequently referred to the Italian Risorgimento, German unification, Chinese consolidation and the formation of the United States of America as examples of what the Arab world could and should do. In a speech in 1994 he stated that:

Any war ... for Arab unity is just like the war ... for the unification of Italy, that was led by Garibaldi and Mazzini ... And it is just like the war that Germany fought under Bismarck for the unification of the states of Germany. It is also just like the war led by Mao Zedong for the unification of China, and the same as the wars that were led by George Washington and Abraham Lincoln for the Unification of United States of America (Al-Qaddafi, 01/02/1994).

Presupposition and Indexicals of a Pan-Arab Kind

As outlined, presupposition refers, in this case, to the assumptions that a politician makes about his audience and its attitudes when he makes an utterance. Drawing upon lexical analysis, there are three ‘trigger presuppositions’ of particular concern in this thesis. These include: the definite article *the*, ‘nominal presuppositions’ such as the use of adjectives like *new* and *first*, and certain verbs, such as *repeat*, *lead* and *continue*. These presuppositional triggers are sometimes used by Qaddafi to refer to elements within his narrative and to invest them with certain qualities.

Qaddafi felt able to assume that his Arab audiences accepted his presuppositions. When Qaddafi referred to “*the* imperialist”, “*the* enemy” and “*the* Zionist entity” (Al-Qaddafi, 11/09/1989), the definite article presupposed the existence of an imperialist, an enemy or a Zionist entity. A similar pattern of presupposition was evident in Qaddafi’s use of terms that referred to time. For example, when he said, “America is *leading* the war against Arab nationalism” (Al-Qaddafi, 11/06/1980), the present continuous of the verb, *leading*, used here presupposed that there was a war already underway against Arab nationalism that was there to be led. Likewise, when he stated that: “colonialism can be *repeated*” (Al-Qaddafi, 19/10/1991), the formulation presupposed that colonialism had existed. Likewise, Qaddafi’s expression “when *the first* colonization came to Arab world” (Al-Qaddafi, 04/12/1972) implied that colonization had taken a second, subsequent form or that it was ongoing. The word *new* had the same effect in Qaddafi’s statement “the *new* colonialism and imperialistic plot against the Arab nation” (Al-Qaddafi, 01/02/1994). The use of ‘*new*’ presupposed that the Arab nation had experienced old or past colonialism which was now present in subsequent form. The agreement implied by suppositions has the effect, in this

case, of both asserting and reconfirming a common political identity between speaker and those addressed, whether Libyan or other.

Qaddafi's use of indexicals, such as *our*, *we*, *they*, *them* and *all* is a further element in the discursive strategy in Qaddafi's speeches. They are particularly notable in speeches expressing a pan-Arab narrative. Qaddafi used numerous indexicals to a variety of effects:

1. "*We* must be ready to assume the responsibility of Arab nationalism in partnership with *the* Arab nation in good and bad times" (my emphasis, Al-Qaddafi, 28/03/1971).
2. "*We* will be stronger through the search for Arab strength" (my emphasis, Al-Qaddafi, 28/03/1971).
3. "*We* represent the pride of *the* Arab nation. *We* represent the dignity of *the* Arab nation. *We* are the heart of *the* Arab nation. *We* are the Vanguard of *the* Arab nation. *We* are the hope of *the* Arab nation. *We* are the revolution of *the* Arab nation. *We* are the custodians of Arab nationalism and we are the custodians of Arab unity, brothers" (my emphasis, cited in St John, 2008: 93).
4. "*We* call for the resistance and mobilisation of *the* masses of *the* Arab nation" (my emphasis, Al-Qaddafi, 01/09/1983).
5. "*We* defend *our* nation and *our* right to fight for *the* unity of *the* Arab nation and *our* Arab people" (my emphasis, Al-Qaddafi, 01/09/1983).
6. "The Zionist entity... stands in contradiction to *our* hope and with *our* existence" (my emphasis, Al-Qaddafi, 11/06/1986).

The above examples show that the Libyan leader used the indexicals/deixis ‘*we*’ to refer to different things. In 1, 2, 3 and 4 for example, ‘*we*’ refers both to the people of Libya and to Qaddafi’s speaking on behalf of Libyan people as their leader. However, ‘*we*’ in 4 and 5 and ‘*our*’ in 5 and 6 integrates the people of Libya with people in all other Arab states. Across these references, Qaddafi’s use of indexicals is the discursive form that most clearly suggests that his pan-Arab discursive formation, and the geopolitical concerns voiced within it, constituted an attempt to construct a common identity with others whom he hoped could protect Libya from those he identified as its enemies.

The Turn to Africa

But the discourse in which he employed indexicals, and much more beside, would change in 1998. In September of that year, Libya abolished the ministry of Arab unity and replaced it with a ministry of African unity. The daily television news programme replaced the map of the Arab world, which had long been shown as the backdrop to the presenter, with the map of Africa (Huliaras, 2001: 10; Solomon and Swart, 2005: 479; Ronen, 2002: 68). In October of the same year, the name of the country’s ‘Voice of the Greater Arab Homeland’ radio station in Tripoli was symbolically renamed the ‘Voice of Africa’ (Huliaras, 2001: 10; Solomon and Swart, 2005: 479; Vandewalle, 2006: 194; Ronen, 2002: 68).

Libya’s political concern in African affairs as such can be traced back to the early 1970s. But the affairs of the continent did not, at that time, represent a significant geopolitical concern for Qaddafi, as the content analysis’s findings show. Rather, Qaddafi’s primary commitment was then to Arab nationalism although, in the early

years of the revolution, he did recognise “Libya as a part of Africa” and “an important aspect of his African policy [had] been consistent support for African solidarity and unity” (St John, 1983: 481). But Libyan involvement in distinctly African affairs in the 1970s and 1980s had been largely restricted towards helping African liberation movements rid their countries of colonial and settler regimes, and undermining Israeli influence on the continent (St John, 2003: 468; Salah, 1988 in Imhammad, 2008: 24; Joffé, 2008: 197). For instance, following a 1971 meeting between Qaddafi and Ugandan President Idi Amin, Uganda “expelled the Israeli community of Uganda and implemented an Islamicization campaign in a predominantly Christian country” (Huliaras, 2001). Moreover, “In September 1972, during Amin’s first confrontation with Tanzania, Libya successfully intervened with an airlift of troops, justifying its action as support for the Ugandan struggle against colonialism and Zionism” (St John, 1987: 97).

From late 1990s that all changed. The pan-Arab discourse of the previous 28 or so years was replaced by an account of Libya’s reality that placed it in Africa, arguing for African unity in the form of an African super state subsuming all countries on the continent. A flurry of developments marked Libya’s fuller engagement in African affairs and its adoption of what became, now, a primarily pan-African stance. On August 16th 1997, an economic union was announced within the Organization of African Union between Chad, Niger, Burkina Faso, Mali, and Libya. In October 1997, President Nelson Mandela of South Africa paid a state visit to Libya to express his support for the Libyan position that the two Lockerbie bombing suspects should be tried in a neutral country (Huliaras, 2001: 12-13). In February 4th 1998, the Libyan leader led a meeting for the establishment of the Sahel and Saharan States (CEN-

SAD) in Tripoli. Its early members included Libya, Sudan, Niger, Mali, Burkina Faso, and Chad (St John, 2003: 469-470; Solomon and Swart, 2005: 476 and Martinez, 2007: 108). In May 1999, the Central African Republic also joined the CEN-SAD Community (Huliaras, 2001: 16). And, by 2008, its membership had grown to 25 (Al-Atrash, 2008: 10). The aim of the new body, according to Al-Atrash and Sturman, was to strengthen regional security and stability, and to achieve regional economic and social development (Al-Atrash, 2008: 10, and Sturman, 2003: 110). It reflected, among other things, Qaddafi's view that bigger state entities would be necessary to face the challenges of the next century. The Libyan media, according to Ronen, depicted the establishment of CEN-SAD as a victory for the unity of the African continent and a clear confirmation that Africa had the will to face up to neo-colonial attempts to control the continent and its oil and other mineral resources (Ronen, 2002: 64-65).

In early 1998, a number of African head of states visited Libya and declared support for Libya's demand that UN sanctions against it be lifted. They included the leaders of Eritrea, Malawi and the Gambia (Ronen, 2002: 65). In June 1998, the Organization of African Unity's 34th annual summit in Ouagadougou in Burkina Faso announced that all member states would immediately suspend compliance with the UN sanctions against Libya. The OAU also called on members to ignore the UN sanctions after September 1998 unless the US and Britain both agreed to hold the Lockerbie trial in a neutral, third country (Ronen, 2008: 53). In July 1998, the president of Burkina Faso flouted the UN embargo on air flights to Libya by flying to Tripoli. In the autumn of 1998, several other African leaders — including the heads of state of Chad, Niger, Cambodia, Eritrea, Mali, Sierra Leone, Zimbabwe, the Central African Republic, and

Sudan — as well as Louis Farrakhan, leader of the US-based Nation of Islam, also violated the UN sanctions by arriving in Tripoli by air to attend the celebration of the birth of the Prophet Mohammed (Huliaras, 2001: 13; Ronen, 2002: 65). No Arab leaders, however, broke the UN sanctions (Huliaras, 2001: 13).

In August 1998, Qaddafi proposed a borderless United States of Africa that would transform the continent into a single entity in order to meet the challenges of globalisation of the new century. He envisaged it being ruled by a single government and a single president, having a single African military force, a single currency, a single passport for Africans to move within the continent, and one foreign and trade policy (Takeyh, 2001: 65; Al-Trash, 2008: 12). During his visit to South Africa in June 1999, he declared that “the future [belonged to] ... ‘big spaces’, and Libya is part of the African space” (St John, 2003: 469; St John, 2008: 99). In July 1999, the Libyan leader urged African leaders to be prepared to move fast to review the 1963 OAU Charter, in order to confront “the challenge posed by the new millennium” (St John, 2003: 469). On September 9th 1999, during the celebrations of the 30th anniversary of his leadership of Libya, Qaddafi hosted the annual OAU summit in the Libyan city of Sirte. Qaddafi and other African leaders issued the Sirte Declaration which called for the establishment of an African Union (Al-Atrash, 2008: 8). The AU was conceived of as “a regional group modelled after the European Union” (St John, 2003: 470; St John, 2008: 99). It intended to promote African unity and solidarity, to spur economic development and international cooperation (Takeyh, 2001: 65), and to “enable [Africa to] play its rightful role in the global economy while addressing multifaceted social, economic, and political problems compounded as they are certain negative aspects of globalization” (Al-Atrash, 2008: 8). The AU was, eventually,

formally established in July 9th 2002, in Durban, South Africa (Al-Atrash, 2008: 8) to replace the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) (Solomon and Swart, 2005: 480), which had been founded in 1963. The AU got the support of all fifty-three African states (Al-Atrash, 2008: 8).

Libya's engagement with Africa continued. In June 2005, the country joined the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), an economic grouping established in 1994 to promote regional integration through trade development (St John, 2008: 100). In February 2009, Qaddafi was elected chairman of the 53-nation African Union. He said in his inaugural address that he would pursue his vision of a United States of Africa. But he admitted that African leaders were "not near to a settlement on the issue" (BBC News online, 25/03/2009). Five months later, Libya hosted the 13th ordinary session of the AU Assembly. The Assembly called for resolute collective action to address Africa's economic and political problems. African leaders agreed to a Libyan-driven push to transform the African Union's executive body, the commission, into an 'African Authority'. Libya argued "that the new Authority would simplify the AU's structure and boost ... [the AU's] power over defence, diplomatic and international trade matters" (*Taipei Times*, 05/07/2009). The transformation of the African Union's executive body into an African Authority "was viewed as a milestone for a build-up to what the Libyan leader Qaddafi has long envisioned as a federal government overseeing a United States of Africa" (*Taipei Times*, 05/07/2009).

In addition to regional initiatives, Qaddafi also focused on mediating crises within and between African countries. His efforts contributed to the mitigation of conflicts in

Sierra Leone in 1999 (Solomon and Swart, 2005: 476), the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Horn of Africa (Ray, 2001: 4). Qaddafi also helped negotiate ceasefires between Ethiopia and Eritrea (Solomon and Swart, 2005: 476), and between Congo and Uganda in April 1999 (St John, 2003: 10).

Libyan engagement with Africa also extended to financial assistance to several African states, including Ethiopia, the Ivory Coast, Mali, Tanzania, Uganda, and Zimbabwe. And Libya signed bilateral trade agreements with Niger, Senegal and South Africa (Takeyh, 2001: 66; St John, 2003: 472). And “joint ... investment projects in Chad, Ethiopia, Mali and Tanzania in 2002” (St John, 2003: 472).

Discursive Strategy Promoting African Engagement

In expressing this new African position for Libya, Qaddafi used the same forms in his discursive strategy — mainly a combination of lexical reiteration, presupposition and indexicals — as he had used earlier to express Libya’s pan-Arabism. Qaddafi’s new pan-African discursive formation would, however, also present some differences from its pan-Arab predecessor.

Qaddafi was now radically revising his approach to the issue that had dominated Libyan foreign policy for the three previous decades. When Qaddafi did refer to the Israeli-Palestinian question, he repeated his commitment to Palestinians but he now no longer called for Israel’s destruction; his focus fell instead on a suggestion he thought would resolve the conflict. He called on Israelis and the Palestinians to form a single state called *Israteen*, to which all Palestinian refugees would be allowed to return. The Libyan leader presented this initiative in his work *The White Book* in 2003 (St John, 2008: 92). On the broader canvas of world affairs, he softened slightly his

portrayal of the West, particularly the US, as existential threats to the Arab nation. His attention was, simultaneously, also being somewhat refocused on ‘globalisation’ and its implications for nationalism.

This involved Qaddafi in frequently urging Arabs to form a single bloc with Africans — or what he referred to as Arab-African space. He saw such a bloc as enabling otherwise weak states to benefit from globalisation. According to Solomon and Swart, the Libyan leader “expressed his fervent hope that the Afro-Arab bloc will be able to use its collective advantage to emerge as an important player on the international scene” (Solomon and Swart, 2005: 489).

But Qaddafi’s pan African discourse also referred often to words such as ‘resources’, ‘colonialism’, ‘defence’, ‘US’ and ‘Libya’ — as he had during the period of his Arab geopolitical discourse. When he spoke about ‘resources’ within African geopolitical discourse, he acknowledged Africa’s economic potential and natural resource wealth as well as describing the advantages they implied for Libya. He also urged Africa to use these resources to benefit Africans, not the West (Al-Qaddafi, 05/10/1998).

Speaking at an AU summit, Qaddafi said:

As I see it, Africa is absolutely not a poor continent. Perhaps cash is lacking, but it has resources and raw materials. I regard Africa as a rich continent. However, the capitalist countries have put a veto on Africa. They do not want our continent to develop (Al-Qaddafi cited in Martinez, 2007:108).

Qaddafi also continued to use the word ‘colonialism’ frequently, though now the main point of its usage was to point out that Africans had not yet freed themselves from the heritage of colonialism. In many of his speeches, he again blamed colonialism for the

creation of contrived borders on the continent. Speaking to an audience in Ghana in

July 2000, for example, the Libyan leader said:

The borders between Libya and Niger, Niger and Burkina Faso, Burkina Faso and Ghana are fake borders. The colonial armies created these borders. The African people are one people, and African culture is one culture, and the desperate situation that was left by colonialism is the same for all Africa (Al-Qaddafi, 08/07/2000).

Qaddafi also argued — in favour of a United States of Africa — that

If we took the decision that Africans should be free to travel and live in any country on the continent, we could get over the problem of frontiers. Africa is not like Europe. Europe is made up of nations. Africa is made up of tribes. The tribes were torn apart by the colonial countries. The ‘state’ in Africa cannot survive, since it is artificial (Al-Qaddafi cited in Martinez, 2007:108).

Qaddafi used the terms ‘defence’ and ‘protect’ in much the same way as he had earlier in calling for the creation of broader Arab state. He saw Africa as an essential element in the protection and defence of the Libyan and African people from their enemies. In a speech in 1998, he stressed that the “Libyan people have to rely completely on the ability of the black African continent to provide great protection and defence ... [from] the imperialist armies, and foreigner enemy” (Al-Qaddafi, 05/10/1998). In May 2008, the Libyan leader also said: “It is time for Africans to unite and build African unity in order to re-dynamise and defend the African continent, which should be as strong as Europe or America” (Al-Qaddafi, 18/05/2008).

Qaddafi’s references to the US remained overwhelmingly negative. In the course of his new engagement with Africa, he frequently attacked the US, holding it largely responsible for the crises and strife on the African continent. In February 1997, for

example, he warned African foreign ministers gathered in Tripoli for their annual OAU pre-summit meeting not to let the US intervene in African affairs. He said: “We must close the door to any American intervention in Africa” (Al-Qaddafi, 26/02/1997). In May 1997, he attacked the US and European countries for forcing millions of young Africans into slavery (Al-Qaddafi, 09/05/1997). In April 1998, while addressing the Chadian parliament, the Libyan leader attacked the US as “the root of all evil in Africa” (Solomon and Swart, 2005: 476). Then, in September 1999, Qaddafi stated that “the imperialist West is responsible for Africa’s backwardness” (Al-Qaddafi, 09/09/1999).

Qaddafi frequently praised those African leaders who had stood by Libya against the sanctions that were imposed by the UN between 1990 and 1998. In a speech to a Libyan audience in September 1998 he urged Libyans to appreciate the leaders of the Africa who had announced that “they were with the Libyan people in good and bad times, and who trampled with their black feet on American-inspired resolutions.” He added that,

Libyans must realise the benefit of Africa and what Africa means for them. They should compare the conference [of the OAU in] Ouagadougou [in June 1998] to other conferences, and they should compare the leaders of Africa to other Arab leaders (Al-Qaddafi, 05/09/1998).

‘Islam’ was another common theme in Qaddafi’s formulation of Libya’s pan-African discursive formation. In May 1997, for example, he addressed a mass congregation for the Muslim New Year at midday prayers in the central mosque in Niger’s capital. There, he urged the audience to adopt the Islamic lunar calendar and to speak Arabic. He also advised Muslims to obey God’s word rather than that of the UN Security Council, a body which he accused of being under the control of “anti-Islamic

Christian colonialism” (Al-Qaddafi, 08/05/1997). A day later, he addressed a Muslim audience in Kano, the centre of Muslim northern Nigeria. He declared that

America and America’s allies are enemies of black people, enemies of Africa. America and Europe are leading the campaign of insult and humiliation against the Muslim people ... We therefore want to mobilise millions of Muslims to demonstrate our power ... the power of Islam and its ability to defy and counter these campaigns of humiliation (Al-Qaddafi, 09/05/1997).

This emphasis on pan-Islamism in Africa, according to Ronen, “did not necessary contradict Tripoli’s pan-African policy since a significant number of African countries ... have an important, sometimes even dominant, Islamic component” (Ronen, 2002: 63).

Qaddafi also lionised in his speeches a number of African political heroes. These included the late Ghanaian president Kwame Nkrumah, an early champion of pan-Africanism and the establishment of a single African government; the former Congolese leader and nationalist Patrice Lumumba who was inspired by Nkrumah; the former Egyptian president Nasser, whom Qaddafi cast also as a leader of the struggle for African liberation; and Mandela, president of newly liberated South Africa.

In his construction of a pan-African discursive formation and its lexical choices, Qaddafi again — as in his pan-Arab discourse — sought security for Libya. By adopting a new set of geopolitical concerns he grasped at a new, African geopolitical discourse for Libya from which he hoped would flow protection for Libya against its enemies. This pattern is, as we will see below, further evinced by his use of presupposition and indexicals.

Presupposition and Indexicals of a Pan-African kind

In expressing his new engagement with Africa, Qaddafi again felt able to assume his audience shared his thoughts.

Examples of Qaddafi's use of 'trigger presuppositions' in this period of African engagement included references to "*the* colonial armies" (Al-Qaddafi, 08/07/2000), "*the* imperialist West" (Al-Qaddafi, 09/09/1999), "*the* desperate situation that was left by colonialism" (Al-Qaddafi, 08/07/2000), "*the* era of globalisation" and "*the* African space" (Al-Qaddafi, 01/ 09/2000). The definite article '*the*' in front of a set of words which described familiar themes that Qaddafi had now transposed to African geopolitical concerns helped to confirm that he was now speaking from the script required by his assumption of a common geopolitical kinship with his new African partners.

In his new engagement with Africa, Qaddafi also used indexicals — 'our', 'we', 'they', 'them' and 'all' — in a way designed to declare Libya's change in geopolitical kinship. That is to say he used them as 'shifters', in the first instance, to declare his alignment with his audience and, in the second, to take them with him in the direction he was recommending (Seidel, 1975: 207). In a speech in October 1998, Qaddafi made a clear attempt to get Libyans to identify themselves *geopolitically* as Africans, not Arabs — as the following three extracts (my emphasis) show:

1. "Ethnically and historically *we* are Arabs, but from the political and geographical terms, *we* are Africans (Al-Qaddafi, 05/10/1998).

2. *We* are African in this day. ... From *today*, Libyan people have to realise that *they* are Africans” (Al-Qaddafi, 05/10/1998).
3. “*You* are Arabic, but if *we* speak from the political and geographical perspectives *you* are African. Africa does not accept double standards from *now* on” (Al-Qaddafi, 05/10/1998).
4. And Ronen cites Qaddafi in the same year as saying: “*We* Libyans are Africans. Africa is *our* continent [and] *we* are proud of belonging to it” (Al-Qaddafi cited in Ronen, 2008: 188, my emphasis).

In his discussion of indexicals, Seidel draws attention to their potential to be used as ‘shifters’. By ‘shifters’ he means “lexical items that change their meaning, *taking their colour from the context*, or from the situation or speaker, like ‘I’, ‘me’, ‘here’” (Seidel, 1975: 207, my emphasis). In the quotes noted above Qaddafi used first person plural indexicals ‘we’ and ‘our’ to refer to the people of Libya. But he was also speaking on behalf of Libyan people as their leader. And the words ‘*today*’ in 2. and ‘*now*’ in 3., index the timing of the new reality he was announcing. (Billig, 1995: 49 and Richardson, 2007: 240) Such indexicals, or *deixis*, according to Chilton,

can have a political significance. It can require one to assume a particular historical periodisation – for example *nowadays*, *today*, or just *now* could require to be understood as “after the revolution”, “after the fall of Berlin Wall”, “after the election of New Labour”, or some such (original emphasis, Chilton, 2004: 56).

‘*Now*’ according to Billig is understood as the currently up-to-date news (Billig, 1995: 114). Qaddafi’s use of such words suggests that his engagement with the Arab world had become something of the past and that an African geopolitical identity was the current and future reality for Libyans.

This new African geopolitical identity went hand in hand with a recasting of Libya's geopolitical concerns and foreign policy. He said: "In future Libya will merge its foreign policy with the African Union and will follow an African line on relations with the United States and Israel. There is no Libyan policy; this is an African policy, which represents Libya and Lesotho alike" (Al-Qaddafi cited in Solomon and Swart, 2005: 489). The old pan-Arab discursive formation, which had dominated Libyan foreign policy for the three previous decades, was by the end of the 1990s a thing of the past. In summer 2006, Qaddafi himself confirmed the change that had occurred:

[T]here were hopes and aspirations to have a strong Arab nationalist entity of which we would be a part. Unfortunately, this has failed, that era has ended, and a new era has begun" (Al-Qaddafi cited in Ronen, 2008: 142).

But Qaddafi's political shift developed into a broader set of changes in Libya's foreign relations, most significantly those with the US.

Rapprochement between Libya and the West

Following the 1969 revolution that brought Colonel Qaddafi to the leadership of Libya, the relationship between Libya and the West was one of confrontation and conflict. This was particularly true of relations with the US. From 2003, however, its relationship with the West began to improve dramatically. A series of public exchanges between Libya and the Western powers were brokered in the course of delicate diplomacy.

The public manifestations of the new relationship were bewildering for both the profound change they represented and the pace at which they occurred. In August

2003, Libya accepted responsibility for the Lockerbie incident and agreed to pay US\$ 2.7 billion in compensation to the families of Lockerbie's victims (Mark 2003: 2; St John, 2008: 101). The next month, the United Nations Security Council voted to lift the sanctions on Libya (Martinez, 2007: 11). In December 2003, Libya agreed to dismantle its programme to develop weapons of mass destruction (WMD) (Solomon and Swart, 2005: 486). Later that month, the US released \$1 billion worth of Libyan funds that had been frozen in the United States since 1986 (McCrum, and Partrick, 2005: 3). In January 2004, Libya agreed to compensate families of victims of the 1989 bombing of French passenger aircraft over North Africa. The same month, the European Commission (EC) President Romano Prodi invited Libya to develop a closer relationship with the EU (BBC News Online, 29/07/2005). In February, the Libyan Secretary of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation (Foreign Minister), Abdel-Rahman Shalqam, visited Britain, the first Libyan foreign minister to travel to London since 1969. Shortly thereafter, Qaddafi received visits from Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi, then French President Jacques Chirac, then German Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder, then Spanish Prime Minister Jose Maria Aznar, and Chirac's successor to the French presidency, Nicolas Sarkozy. Other visitors included high-ranking officials from the US State Department who were working to re-establish full diplomatic relations and then UK Prime Minister Tony Blair. In April 2004, Qaddafi visited the European Union's Headquarters in Brussels. In June that year, the US resumed diplomatic relations with Libya and opened a US Liaison Office in Tripoli — a sign that Libya was being welcomed back into the fold, according to Solomon and Swart (2005: 488). In early 2005, Libya's first auction of oil and gas exploration licenses brought the return to Libya of US energy companies for the first time in more than 20 years. In June 2006, the US rescinded its designation of Libya as

a state sponsor of 'terrorism' (Alterman, 2008: 240). In August 2008, Libya received Italy's first apology for the wrongs Italian colonialism had inflicted on its nationals, and Berlusconi agreed a US\$5 billion investment deal by way of compensation (France 24 Online, 30/08/2008). In September of the same year, Condoleezza Rice became the first US secretary of state to visit Libya in more than half a century (Telegraph Online, 05/09/2008). In May 11th 2009 the United States raised its flag over its embassy in Libya for the first time in almost three decades (The Tripoli Post, 15/05/2009). In June of that year, Qaddafi visited Italy. In June 2009, Libya was elected as president of the 64th session of the UN General Assembly (Chinaveiw, 12/06/2009). The next month, Qaddafi attended the G-8 summit in Italy as head of the African Union where he shook hands with the US president Barack Obama. In August, of that year, Abdelbaset al-Megrahi, the Libyan convicted in connection with the bombing of Pan Am Flight 103 in 1988, was released from a Scottish jail on compassionate grounds (BBC News Online, 20/08/2009). In September of the same years, Qaddafi gave his first ever address to the UN (The Huffington Post Online, 25/09/2009).

This rapprochement with the major Western powers represented another shift in Libya's geopolitical discourse and, with it, Libyan identity in the international community. Qaddafi's disengagement from the Arab world had removed him from the strategically fraught Middle East conflict, mitigating Western hostility to Libya. At the same time, his engagement with African concerns gave him and Libya access to a set of allies, Mandela among them, willing and able to intercede on his behalf with the major Western powers. No longer was Libyan geopolitical alignment so clearly defined by a sense of existential threat. The country was now somewhat freer

to conceive of itself as a state not perpetually in search of allies to defend its security but, rather, as a country able to pursue, with growing confidence, its own advancement in a globalizing, radically changing world.

Speaking to Al-Jazeera channel in June 18th 2007, Qaddafi declared:

Now is the era of economy, consumption, markets, and investments. This is what unites people irrespective of language, religion and nationalities ... Nationalism has finished. ... Globalisation does not recognise religion, nationalism, language and colour. Rather it recognises demography and shared financial concern. It will be no place for small entities. The world in the future will be formed into only seven or ten big spaces and Libya will be part of the African space (Al-Qaddafi, 18/06/2007).

In May the next year, speaking to representatives from the region of al-Jabal al-Gharbi, about 200 km South-west of Tripoli, the Libyan leader returned to the theme. He argued that a new world map was taking shape in vast spaces “based on geographic and demographic consideration, rather than on national, linguistic, religious or racial ones.” He continued:

The phase of nationalist, linguistic, religious or racial unity is over and has given way to a new phase taking demography fully into account and based on the belief that the destiny of any community living in the same space is unique, regardless of colour, race, language or religion. ... The European Union [and] the United States are a testimony to that (Al-Qaddafi, 18/05/2008).

This was a geopolitical vision some distance from Qaddafi’s earlier sense of the existence of pervasive existential threats to Libya. Before identifying what drove this journey, we will look more briefly at a second form of discursive strategy in which he engaged: one involving the visual. The trajectory of Qaddafi’s geopolitical discourse — from its Pan-Arab and Pan-African variants to its rapprochement with the West — was expressed and reproduced also by social and semiotic practices of visual

communication such as pictures, dress, images, maps, and posters. Van Dijk draws attention to the need to analyse such non-verbal interactions:

[We] should not forget that discourse is often embedded in or otherwise related to ... non-verbal interactions, as is the case of talk and text at home, in parliament, in school, in the newsroom, the workfloor, the office, the shop, the agency, the hospital, the police station, or in prison (Van Dijk, 1998: 192).

It is to these non-verbal visual forms of communication used by Qaddafi that we turn in the next chapter.

Chapter Six

Discursive Strategy: Visual

Qaddafi's discursive strategy was not restricted to verbal communications. It seems quite clear that he and the Libyan government repeatedly 'flagged' in images and symbols the different primacies that applied in Libyan geopolitics over the 40 years to 2009. Among the bearers of these visual communications were Qaddafi's dress, the everyday activities of the government and government institutions such as television and newspapers, school curricula, and posters that appeared on streets, in shops and in other public places in Libya. This chapter suggests that these visual symbols were used as 'shifters' to confirm existing, or to introduce new, Libyan geopolitical concerns or choices. The scholarly literature on the analysis of images and symbols surveyed in the Methodology Chapter suggests, however, that any attempt to identify and analyse the intended and received meanings of images and symbols should remain tentative. And this caution will guide my approach in this chapter.

Symbolism appears to have been important in Qaddafi's personal life before the 1969 revolution that brought him to leadership in Libya. Image 1 shows Qaddafi in London wearing Libyan traditional dress when "he was sent on a nine month training programme at the Royal Armoured Corps training facility in Britain to become an army armoured officer" in 1966 (Greavette, 2005). Muscat describes Qaddafi's dress as "national costume, a silent reminder of the country to which he really belonged" (Muscat, 1980: 95).



Image 1: Qaddafi in London wearing Libya's national custom. (Muscat, 1980: 95)

In later years, on the 26th of October of every year, which marks the day of sadness (Yom al-hedad) at the Italian occupation of Libya, Qaddafi wore black dress to express his grief about what the Italians did to the country.

Another instance indicating the importance of symbolism in Qaddafi's personal life was that he used his Bedouin-style tent during official visits around the world. Likewise, when receiving guests in Libya he wore Libyan traditional cloth. In image 2, for example, Qaddafi wears Libyan dress when meeting then UK Prime Minister Tony Blair in his Bedouin tent in March 2004. The tent is decorated with the symbol of the *Jamahiriya* model — or 'authority of the people' that Qaddafi declared in March 1977 — as well as flags of Libya. The pictures of camels and palms appear to be offered as symbols of the Bedouin lifestyle in the desert and to connote Qaddafi's commitment to remaining true to his Bedouin roots and the country of his origin.



Image 2: Qaddafi meets former UK Prime Minister Tony Blair in his Bedouin tent in Tripoli in March 2004 (BBC News Online, 2004).

In the context of Qaddafi's expressions of Libya's geopolitical concern, the former Libyan Media Secretary (Minister for Media) Dr. Mohamed Al-Fetori, stated in an interview in September 2008: "In the early years of the revolution, Qaddafi would usually wear army uniform when he delivered his speeches, as well as when he attended Arab summits to express that Libya and the Arab world was engaged in a nationalist war against Israel" (Image 3). But, he added: "After the Arabs made peace with Israel and the former Egyptian president Anwar al-Sadat visited Israel in 1977, the army uniform lost its meaning in Qaddafi's mind at Arab summits" (Al-Fetori, 2008, interview, Appendix C). Qaddafi, however, continued to wear an army uniform on special occasions — for example, when he delivered speeches on the anniversary of the evacuation of the American and British bases from Libya (Image 4).

The army uniform was a 'power suit' that appeared to connote strength, power, resistance and defence against any potential occupation and colonization of Libya.

The closure of US and British bases in Libya, as Ronen notes, “was cause of celebration, and the day has since become a central event on Libya’s calendar. Qaddafi maximized the achievement politically, portraying it as a great moment in the history of modern Libya as well as in his career.” (Ronen, 2008: 11)



Image 3: Qaddafi sits in military uniform between the Egyptian president Nasser (left) and Syrian president Nur al-Din al-Atasi (right), at an Arab summit in Libya 1969 (Syrian History, 2008).

Dr Al-Fetori added: “Another example of Qaddafi’s use of symbolism during the early period was when he met the King of Jordan at an Algerian summit in 1974. He wore gloves when he shook hands with the Jordanian King Hussein who a few days earlier had shaken the hands of the then Israeli Prime Minister Shimon Peres.”



Image 4: Qaddafi wears army uniform during a speech in Tripoli on June 6th 2008, the anniversary of the closure of American bases from Libya (El-Mhedwi, 2008).

Qaddafi's Arab geopolitical concern was also 'flagged' and reflected in a variety of images promoted by the state. Between 1969 and the early 1990s, many images were used by the Libyan media, in different public offices or as street signs depicting the Arab world map. The most common depiction was a green map of the Arab world with sunrays emanating from Libya, throwing light on other parts of the Arab world. By applying Barthes' semiotic approach, which that describes both first (denotation) and second (connotation) layers of meaning (Barthes 1972 in Machin, 2007:23-25), the sunrays invite a positive attitude in the viewer towards Libya which takes on the appearance of a source of light or enlightenment. At the same time, the image connotes a united Arab world that emerges from Libya, then a prominent animator of Arab unity.

When Qaddafi shifted his geopolitical concern towards Africa from the late 1990s, new images and symbolic relationships emerged to replace those associated with the earlier period of Arab geopolitical primacy. Barthian visual semiotics and iconography, which suggest attention to “the individual bits and pieces within images” (Barthes in Van Leeuwen, 2001: 92), are relevant here. Images 5 and 7, for example, show Qaddafi’s dress with more than one symbol of African unity. The first such symbol is a green map of the African continent on Qaddafi’s shirt which, as it shows no borders, can be seen to connote a united Africa.



Image 5: Qaddafi and the president of Uganda Yoweri Kaguta Museveni in Kampala (El-Mhedwi; 2008).

Second, the use of green to colour the African continent is significant. Hall refers to as linguistic code or “language” of colour (Hall, 1997: 26-27). Kandinsky recommends a distinction between two kinds of values of colour — direct value and

associative value (Kandinsky, 1977, in Machin, 2007: 69) — an insight valuable in the Libyan case. Green has two kinds of value in Libyan culture. Green is Libya's national colour and, so, is used directly to represent Libyan national identity. Associatively, green represents the fertility of the land, survival, life and growth. Third, green is a symbol of devotion to Islam — an ancient association that can be traced back to the beginning of the Fatimid Dynasty between 909-1171. The Fatimid Dynasty was founded in Syria in the 10th century by Said ibn Husayn. They took green as their colour to symbolise their loyalty to Ali (the Prophet's cousin) who rescued the Prophet Mohamed from death by wrapping the prophet in his green robe and placing him on his bed to prevent an assassination attempt that was planned by Quraysh, a tribe to which the Prophet Muhammad belonged (Hadi, 1986: 5).

The Libyan national flag, however, was not green from the moment of the 1969 revolution. When Qaddafi and other young officers proclaimed the republic, a red-white-black horizontal tricolour (Image 6) flew on Libyan masts. These were the colours of the 'Arab Liberation Flag' adopted by the Egyptian revolution of 1952, where these colours were invested with new meanings. Black represented the past history of foreign coercion; white symbolised the bright future; and red stood for the bloody sacrifice required to restore the land to its rightful owners — that is, to get from black to white. Two years later the yellow sign — the hawk of the Quraysh — was added when Libya, Egypt and Syria formed the Federation of Arab Republics (Image 6). This flag was abolished in 1977 when Sadat visited Jerusalem and the peace treaty between Egypt and Israel was signed. It was at that point that Libya adopted its green flag after leaving the Federation of Arab Republics (Image 6) (Ollé, 1996).



Image 6: Flags of Libya since 1969 to present: Arab Liberation Flag on the left; Federation of Arab Republics Flag in the middle; and Green Revolution Flag on the right (Flags of the world, 2009).

Ronen notes that:

Libya perceived the flying of the Egyptian flag in Israel during Sadat's visit a desecration of an Arab symbol and, in protest, replaced its own national flag — hitherto identical to Egypt's — with a green one to honor the color of Islam. The act of choosing a new flag also symbolized the end of Libya's total identification with Egypt (Ronen, 2008: 110-111).

After Sadat's visit to Israel, Egypt was coloured in black on Libyan maps of the Arab world to express Qaddafi's and Libya's anger at Egypt's policy towards Israel. (Al-Fetori, 2008, interview, Appendix C) The US was also coloured in black on Libyan maps of the World to express anger at its support for Israel.

A second kind of sign carried on Qaddafi's dress were depictions of what visual semiotic analysts refer to as social actors, participants or carriers of meaning (Van Leeuwen 2001: 141-143 and Machin, 2007: 109-126). As can be seen in Images 5 and 7, Qaddafi is wearing a shirt carrying images of the founding fathers of independence and post-colonial statehood in Africa, as well as of national figures who called for African unity or led struggles against colonialism and imperialism. They include Nkrumah, Nasser and Lumumba. They are presented as carriers of meaning,

rather than as actors or goals. Qaddafi used these signs in his dress and on some posters (image 8) to express visually his African geopolitical concern.

According to Goodwin's work on conversation analysis and an ethnomethodological approach, we can see "how the visible body is used to build talk and action in moment-to-moment interaction and the way in which historically structured visual images and features of a setting participate in that process." (Goodwin, 2001: 179). As with Image 7, while Qaddafi was interviewed by Al-Jazeera channel in 2007 about his African geopolitical concern, he is linking verbal and visual communication by dressing in a shirt depicting the African map and African nationalist heroes. The association between verbal and non-verbal communication, according to Goodwin's approach is a strategy that is used to send messages easily and strongly (Goodwin, 2001: 157).

In Qaddafi's case, it is used to encourage Libyan, Arab or African audiences toward his geopolitical concerns. By applying Goodwin's approach, the visual images Qaddafi uses:

become meaningful through the way in which they help elaborate, and are elaborated by, a range of other semiotic fields — sequential organization, structure in the stream of speech, encompassing activities, etc. — that are being used by participants to both construct and make visible to each other relevant action (Goodwin, 2001: 179).

Moreover, the combination between verbal and non-verbal messages also concerns critical discourse analysts who argue that

CDA of a communicative interaction sets out to show that the semiotic and linguistic features of the interaction are systematically

connected with what is going on socially, and what is going on socially is indeed going on partly or wholly semiotically or linguistically (Chouliaraki and Fairclough, 1999: 113).



Image 7: Qaddafi in interview with Al-Jazeera TV in 2007



Image 8: Qaddafi and Sudanese president Omar al-Basher in Sirte on June 3rd 2007(El-Mhedwi, 2007).

In the more recent period — in the past 12 years — Qaddafi, as suggested in images 9 and 10, tends to wear African traditional dress when he meets African presidents or visits African countries, as well as when he represents Africa in international events such as G8 summit which was held in Italy in July 2009 (Image 10).



Image 9: Qaddafi being crowned 'King of Kings' by a section of African traditional leaders, sultans, sheiks and mayors during ceremonies in Benghazi (El-Mhedwi, 2008).

Image 9 signifies other visual discursive practice as well. In the background hangs the green map of Africa and the Arab part of Asia with sun rays of hope and enlightenment emerging from Libya as these two parts of Africa are held together by ties of unity. This seems to reflect Qaddafi's geopolitical suggestion, discussed in the previous chapter, that the Arab world should form a single block with Africa — or what he referred to as Arab-African space — in order to benefit from the forces of globalisation (Qaddafi, 01/ 09/2000) and “emerge as an important player on the international scene” (Solomon and Swart, 2005: 489).



Image 10: Libyan leader Qaddafi and President Obama shake hands at the G8 summit in Italy in July 9th 2009 (China Daily, 2009).

Qaddafi's African geopolitical concern has also been flagged and circulated at all levels of Libyan society. Since the late 1990s, many posters on streets and in official and public places reflected Qaddafi's African geopolitical concern. They carried the same meanings or ideas as those constructed in Qaddafi's dress, or on the maps and posters appearing behind him. Images 11, 12 and 13, for example, depict a green map of Africa with sun rays originating from Libya and without post-colonial borders. This represents Libya's role in informing and leading the quest for African unity. However, images 11 and 12 suggest something more: the image of the crowd of African people reaching out to Qaddafi suggests the approval of his African geopolitical vision by African people. The depiction of African nationalist heroes in image 13 mirror on the Libyan street what often appears on Qaddafi's dress.



Image 11: A poster depicting Qaddafi on a public building in Libya (Othman, 2009).



Image 12: Qaddafi's posters in a Libyan street (Othman, 2009)



Image 13: Qaddafi poster on Libyan Street depicting images of African leaders (Othman, 2009).

The Libyan news media have also textually and visually reflected African geopolitical concern. For example, in image 14, the daily television news programme was delivered after 1998 against a backdrop map of Africa. This map also projects the same message of enlightenment, while black, rather than green, symbolises the colour of the majority of Africa's people.



Image 14: Libyan public TV news presenter

Qaddafi carried a similar set of messages when he met his former Western critics after the rapprochement between the Libya and West. An instance of this can be seen in his dress in images 15 and 16, when he met US secretary of state Condoleezza Rice in September 2008 and UK Prime Minister Gordon Brown in July 2009. He wore white garment¹⁵ that symbolised or represented peace and bright future, and to express his new policy towards the West. However, the message carried by the medal ribbons that Qaddafi wears on his chest in Image 16 suggest Libya's readiness to defend itself against any potential attack such as the air attack on the 15th of April 1986 when the US, with the UK cooperation, bombed Libya (Zoubir, 2002: 33) killing over 70 people, among them Qaddafi's infant adopted daughter (Bianci, 2003: 9).

¹⁵ White in the Muslim and Arab worlds is also used to symbolize purity, peace. For example, while attending Friday prayers, many Muslims will wear white.



Image 15: Qaddafi with Rice during her visit to Libya (El-Mhedwi, 2008).



Image 16: Gordon Brown hold one-to-one talks with Qaddafi during the G8 summit in Italy in July 10th 2009 (Global Arab Network, 2009).

Qaddafi's dress in Images 15 and 16 also depicts an African map, suggesting that he still maintains a narrative of Pan-African unity. The combination between these visual signs — Libyan national dress, African maps and the white — suggest an overlap between African geopolitical primacy, Libya's recent rapprochement with the West and peace.

Another instance suggesting the importance of symbolism in Qaddafi's political thought is evident in Image 17 during the Italian PM Silvio Berlusconi delivery of an apology for Italian colonisation of Libya. Qaddafi is dressed in a traditional white Libyan robe of a kind in which those Libyans who fought the Italians during the occupation would have dressed — a symbol suggesting Qaddafi is continuing the struggle for which those people died. Qaddafi's traditional white Libyan dress also indicates a special and recent peaceful relationship with Italy.



Image 17: Italian apology for its colonial occupation of Libya (El-Mhedwi, 2008)

What is perhaps more interesting is the attendance of the elderly son of Al-Mukhtar, the leader of Libyan resistance to Italian occupation, at Berlusconi's delivery of Italy's apology (Image 18). Al Mukhtar was hanged by the Italian troops in 1931.



Image 18: Qaddafi with Omar Al-Mukhtar's elderly son while attending Italian PM Berlusconi apology for Italian colonisation of Libya (El-Mhedwi, 2008).

Al-Mukhtar's son travelled with Qaddafi to Italy during his three day visit in June 2009. The Libyan leader landed wearing a full-dress colonel's navy-blue uniform, with a photograph on his jacket's left lapel showing the arrest of Al-Mukhtar in 1931

by colonial Italian troops (Image 19). The ideas and values suggested by Qaddafi's army uniform and medal ribbons again amount to a statement that Libya will resist any future attempt to colonise or cow it. The picture of Al-Mukhtar recalled a painful chapter of Libyan history and Qaddafi used it as a visual reminder of the scarred legacy that Italian fascism left on the Libyan people. Al-Mukhtar was being projected as the symbol he had become — of the struggle for survival of not only Libya, but also of "Africa, Asia and the Arab world". Al-Mukhtar had become "part of Arab culture during the struggle against colonialism", according to the scholars Nasser and Boggero (Nasser and Boggero, 2008: 201).



Image 19: Qaddafi wearing army uniform with a photo of Al-Mukhtar and medal ribbons (The New York Times Online, 2009)

Qaddafi's combination of the army uniform and Al-Mukhtar's photo carries additional messages. Qaddafi was portraying the 1969 revolution he always had —

“as the continuation of the struggle for which Al-Mukthar and hundreds before him had died.” (St John, 1987: 28)

Qaddafi provides visually an example of what Machin refers to as “a grammar” — a combination of various kinds of signs and symbols to produce meaningful statements. (Machin, 2007: 2-5) The signs and symbols are of various kinds — from colours to clothing choices, from photographs to insignia, from the use of light to the selection of maps, and the like. These various devices are combined to convey significant messages about Libya’s place in the world and its geopolitical concerns. This multiple signification is used as a discursive strategy to express Libya’s outlook, and to capture the public imagination of Libyans and others beyond its borders. In Van Dijk’s words, visual expressions of this kind “may be a much more ‘powerful’ means of expressing opinion than words” (Van Dijk, 1998: 192).

We saw in a previous chapter quantitative evidence drawn from the text of Qaddafi’s speeches suggesting a periodisation of Libya’s geopolitical concern over the past 40 years. The frequency of the use of various words, phrases and combinations suggested that Libya’s primary geopolitical concern was the Arab world between 1969 to 1998, and Africa from about 1998 to 2009. I now move to see whether the timing of the change in Qaddafi’s visual messages about Libya’s geopolitical concern coincided with the change in his verbal messages on the same issue.

The analysis of Qaddafi’s visual semiotics shows a clear change in both Qaddafi’s dress and in the other images he projected that had a bearing on how Libya saw its place in the world and its geopolitical engagement. This result mirrors the findings in

the content analysis of Qaddafi's speeches and the analysis of his verbal discursive strategy in the previous chapter. The same periodisation applies. From 1969 to about 1998, Qaddafi's dress, as well as the images expressing geopolitical concern that he and Libyan government institutions reflected, promoted pan-Arab concerns; and from about 1998 through until 2009, they reflected African geopolitical concerns, as well as other fresh approaches taken by Libya to revise its place in the world. These other approaches included Libya's rapprochement with the West. We see that Qaddafi uses his clothing to express a desire for a warm relationship with the West. Indeed, his dress in the decade to 2009 sometimes simultaneously suggested a simultaneous geopolitical engagement with Africa and accommodation with the West — two developments that we know overlapped.

To summarise, what we have established in this chapter is that the messages in Qaddafi's dress and related visual expressions coincide strongly with the character of, and changes in, his verbal communication of Libyan geopolitical discourse. The Libyan leader evidently consciously chose to project visual symbols that complemented his verbal messages. He employed, in Machin's usage, a grammar that is unusually rhetorically comprehensive.

This relationship between the articulated and visual content in Qaddafi's expressions of geopolitical concern highlights Barthes' argument about the relationship between text and image. According to Barthes (1977), there are three possible image-text relations. The first is text supporting image, or what he refers as 'anchorage'. In this case language elucidates and guides the viewer towards an interpretation of an image. The second is image supporting text, or 'illustration'. In this case, the image

elucidates or realises the text. And the third relationship is one in which text and image are more equal determinants of meaning, or what he calls 'relay'. Here "text ... and image stand in a complementary relationship; the words, in the same way as the images, are fragments of a more general syntagm and the unity of the message is realized at a higher level" (Barthes, 1977 in Martinec and Salway, 2005, 341-342).

Chapter Seven

Discourse and Power

Introduction

Thus far in this study, our focus has fallen largely on the choices and options exercised by Qaddafi in his use of language about Libya's geopolitical concerns. This approach is limited. What is required is that we now move, in Fairclough's words, towards "analysing the variability of language and its social determinants and effects" (Fairclough, 1995: 18). Foucault states the same requirement more strongly. Our attention should not be directed only

to the great model of language (*langue*) and signs, but to that of war and battle. The history which bears and determines us has the form of a war rather than that of a language: relations of power not relation of meaning (original emphasis, Foucault, 1980:114-115).

That is to say, we must ask why Qaddafi was looking for unity first with other Arab countries and second with those in Africa and why Libya reached a sudden rapprochement with the West.

The determinants are to be found in geopolitics and the cultural context that gives it meaning (Ó Tuathail *et al.*, 1998: 6-7). As scholars of geopolitics note, "the study of geopolitics requires the study of geopolitical cultures and the interlocking networks of the power that condition how these cultures operate and function." (Ó Tuathail, 1998: 202) In other words, in this case we need to explore Libyan geopolitical discourse and

the changes it underwent *through the conditions that brought such changes into being* — that is, their historical social, political and economic context. Or, as Foucault puts it, we need to investigate the conditions under which discourse surfaced at a specific time (Foucault, 1972). To quote Van Dijk, “[t]ext and the talk of language users can not be explained without at least a serious cognitive analysis of the minds of such language users, and especially how much such minds shape and are shaped by discourse and other social practices in context” (Van Dijk, 1998: 10). This is what Fairclough also refers as “sociocultural analysis”. That is, analysis which

needs to address such issues as the relations of power that underlie the emergence and continuity of particular discourse types, ideological effects that might be associated with them, ways in which they construct social identities, cultural values they project, and so forth (Fairclough, 1995: 78).

As Hobsbawm’s puts it, nationalisms generally “are not part of free-floating philosophical discourse, but socially, historically and locally rooted, and must be explained in terms of these realities” (Hobsbawm, 1990: 9). The same could be said of geopolitics.

If so, it is important to combine Qaddafi’s changing discursive practice with a theory of power. Foucault argues in *Power and Knowledge* (1980) that changes in thoughts are not themselves the product of thoughts; there are forces (powers) that produce thoughts (Foucault in Hall, 1997: 45). Accordingly, I propose to establish what forces account for the formation of Qaddafi’s different geopolitical narratives, and I will do so by inquiring into the changing power dispositions that affected Libya and its international relations over the 40 years to 2009.

Three factors can explain Libyan geopolitical discourse. These factors are: the legacy of the colonial invasions that Libya and the Arab world experienced, Qaddafi's early life and education, and the influence of Egyptian President Nasser on Qaddafi.

The Legacy of Colonial Invasions of Libya and the Arab World

Due to its strategic geographical location in North Africa, Arab and Islamic worlds, Libya itself was afflicted for decades by a series of foreign invasions. Over “the past century alone, Libya has experienced a succession of colonial invaders: Turkish, Italian, German, French and British” (Grareavette, 2005), among whom it gained a reputation as ‘the gateway to Africa’. It is bounded to its West by the *Maghreb*, the western Islamic World of northwest Africa, which includes Tunisia, Algeria, Morocco, and Mauritania. To the south lie Niger, Chad, and Sudan. And to the east of Libya is the *Mashreq*, the eastern Islamic World composed of Egypt and the rest of the Middle East's Arab countries (Grareavette, 2005). With an area of 1,759,540 square kilometres, Libya is “the fourth largest [country] in both Africa and the Arab World and the fifteenth largest country in the world. One-quarter the size of the continental United States, it is larger than the combined area of France, Spain, Italy, and West Germany” (St John, 1987:12). Yet, despite its geographical size Libya was a country with a small population of 6,283,000 in mid 2009 (Population Reference Bureau, 2010).

Libya has a Mediterranean coastline of almost 1900 kilometres (Mansur, 2000: 20). It has long been viewed as vital ground for foreign domination by empires wanting to control the use of that strategic location (Grareavette, 2005).

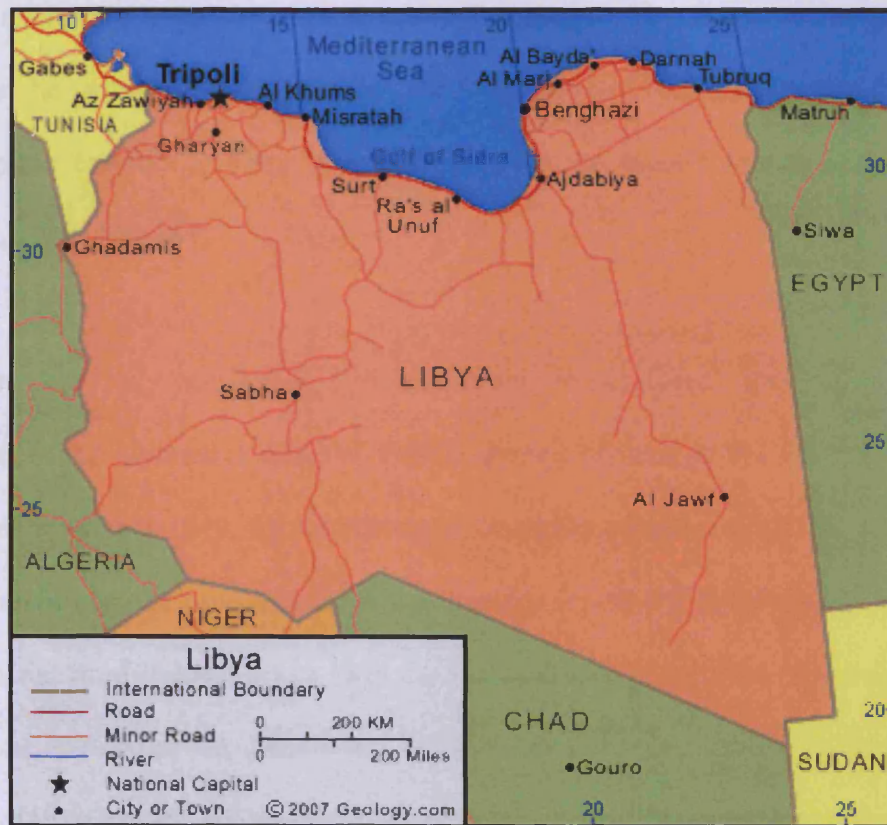


Image 20: Map of Libya. Source: (Geology.com, 2009)

As a result, “the history of Libyan region has been characterized by a seemingly never-ending procession of foreign rulers” (Collins, 1974: 10). Libya has suffered prolonged crisis — political, economic and social — particularly severe as a result of the Italian fascist occupation between 1911 and 1943. This legacy, as Dirk Vandewalle, in his book, *A History of Modern Libya*, notes,

left most future Libyans with dismal memories of their first exposure to a modern state. While the destruction of human life and the humiliating treatment of Libyans had left scars that would endure far beyond independence — even as the fascist slogans ... were slowly obliterated from farmhouses and government buildings throughout the kingdom — the Italian legacy proved enduringly destructive to the more impersonal sense of national unity and statehood that the inhabitants of Cyrenaica, Tripolitania, and Fezzan would need to face the challenges of political, social and economic development after 1951 (Vandewalle, 2006: 41).

Frederick Muscat, in his *My President My Son*, adds: “The times of the occupation were, for the people of Libya, perhaps the worst time of their history — a period of unbelievable cruelty ... They were subjected to the most inhuman of atrocities” (Muscat, 1980: 180-181).

When, in 1943, Italy was defeated by British and French forces, the British occupied Tripolitania and Cyrenaica and the French gained control of the Fezzan (St John, 2006). In November 1949, the UN General Assembly passed a resolution stating that Libya should become independent before January 1, 1952. (UNDP and UNIC, 2000: 7) Libya declared independence as a constitutional and hereditary monarchy under King Idris al-Sanousi on December 24, 1951 (UNDP and UNIC, 2000: 7). Yet, although Libya had gained its independence through the UN, it remained occupied in practice. The British military remained in control of military installations at Tobruk,¹⁷ while the US retained facilities at Wheelus Air Force Base near Tripoli. Several thousand Italian residents were also present in the form of a thriving business community which controlled the country’s economy and possessed most of the land (Muscat, 1980: 9).

Libya was, at that point, one of the poorest countries in the world. Some “94 per cent of the Libyan population was illiterate; there was not even one doctor; and infant mortality had reached a figure of 40 per cent” (Martinez, 2007: 91). Libya had little to offer internationally during that period. However, it remained important to the major Western powers due to its strategic geographical location. This fact was recognised by Henry Villard, the first chief of the US mission to Libya, who wrote in 1956:

¹⁷ British military installations established in 1953 (Martinez, 2007:85).

For the present, Libya's strategic location is, in a sense, its most important commodity. As long as the military requirements of Western powers are important, the political and economic stability of Libya is of direct as well as indirect concern to them (Villard, cited in Deeb, 1991: 23-24).

With the discovery of significant oil reserves in 1959 (Feld, 2003: 24) and the subsequent income from petroleum sales, one of the world's poorest countries quickly became wealthy. Libya became "the fifth largest exporter of oil in the world by 1969" (Collins, 1974: 14). As a result, it became increasingly important to the West (Ronen, 2008: 4), and attracted foreign oil companies, who according to Grareavette, "swarmed like bees to the Libyan honeycomb" (Grareavette, 2005). Although oil drastically improved Libya's finances, popular resentment grew as wealth remained concentrated in the hands of an elite. Most Libyans still had the same, low standard of living (Muscat, 1980: 24-25). Libyan oil also caused controversy in the Libyan media. The price of Libyan oil in 1964 was just \$2,21 a barrel, whereas other Middle East countries such as Iraq and Algeria sold the commodity for almost \$2,75 a barrel (Al-Balak, 1964: 5). The Western powers, however, were content with the situation: they not only had their military installations in Libya; they now also had ready access to the country's vast supply of oil reserves (Muscat, 1980: 9, 10).

What the West and Italians, in particular, inflicted upon Libya was comparable to Arab experiences and memories of, for example, French domination in Algeria, and to a lesser extent to Spanish colonialism in Morocco and British control of Egypt. These and other, similar experiences of European colonialism in the Arab world raised profound questions about the relationship between the Orient and the Occident, between the East and West — the theme explored in the works of Edward Said,

Culture and Imperialism and *Orientalism*. According to Said, the false representation of Arabs and Islamic culture in what he termed ‘orientalist’ thought — as a place isolated from the mainstream of human progress in sciences, arts and commerce — led Arab people to feel humiliated (Said, 1978: 206).

These feelings of national and cultural humiliation had profound effects on the responses of young Arab intellectuals. And the ranks of those so affected included Qaddafi. He and other young intellectuals came to believe that the Western powers set out to humiliate and damage the concerns of Arab states and to achieve world domination. As this study has shown, his rhetorical output, certainly in the years between 1969 and 1998, is dominated by this theme. In *Culture and Imperialism*, as previously discussed, Said argues that Arab nationalists’ and intellectuals’ experience of the Western powers produced an opposition to Western hegemony that has been a fundamental characteristic of Arab nationalism ever since (Said, 1993: 16). This is manifest in Qaddafi’s politics, notably in the period in which he gave primacy to Arab geopolitical concerns. Shared experiences of European colonialism in the Arab world — particularly Libya’s experience of the brutality of Italian fascist occupation — contributed to the development of Qaddafi’s political thought, influencing his calls for Pan Arab unity. Indeed, Vandewalle makes the same point. He argues that, “in Libya, the reaction against the West among the young revolutionaries [around Qaddafi] was in part based on Libyans’ historical memory of the Italian colonial period” (Vandewalle, 2006: 130-131). Qaddafi’s political journey increasingly takes on the appearance of a struggle to redeem the damage to Arab and other colonised cultures by the imperialist powers.

Qaddafi's Early Life and Education

The second factor that helps explain Libya's geopolitical discourse is Qaddafi's early life and education. Qaddafi was the son of a Bedouin Arab family from Sirte (Muscat, 1980: 9). He was born in 1942 in a Bedouin tent in the Libyan desert in Fezzan. His "parents were illiterate; most of his relatives dropped out of elementary school; and none finished high school" (St John, 2008: 91). It was, also, a struggle for Qaddafi it to get the education he aspired to (Muscat, 1980: 9). At great sacrifice, his family was able to send him to a Muslim elementary school (Collins, 1974: 16). It was during his time at secondary school in Sebha, the capital of Fezzan, that as a the 14-year old student had his first "regular access to Arab newspapers and radio broadcasts, most especially the 'Voice of the Arabs' news programme, originating from Cairo" (St John, 2008: 92). It was during this period that, Qaddafi was expelled from school for organising pro-Egyptian protests against King Idris's regime (Collins, 1974:15). He then went on to continue his high school studies in Mesrata before joining the army.

Qaddafi joined the Libyan army in 1963, along with a majority of other members of what subsequently became the Revolutionary Command Council (RCC) that would later bring about the revolution of 1969. He was later sent to the British Military Academy in Benghazi and, after graduating in 1965, the young man "was sent on a nine month training programme at the Royal Armoured Corps training facility in Britain to become an army armoured officer" (Grareavette, 2005). It has been said that "it was during this brief sojourn in England that the young Arab nationalist saw an England plagued with racial discrimination, class conflict, and moral anarchy"(Grareavette, 2005). "Qaddafi ... experienced, first-hand, the blatant western prejudice that he came to despise and it was during this trip abroad that he apparently

acquired his life-long distain for the decadent western lifestyle” (Grareavette, 2005).

During the years of his education — both at school and in the military — decisive events rocked the Middle East and the Arab World. These included the 1948 Arab defeat by Israel in Palestine; the 1952 revolution in Egypt that overthrew King Farouk and later brought Jamal Abdul Nasser to power; the 1956 Suez crisis; the formation and then collapse in 1961 of the United Arab Republic (UAR) between Egypt and Syria; Israel’s heavy defeat of Arab forces in the June 1967 war, said by some to be “the Waterloo of pan-Arabism” (Ajami, 1978: 365); and the Zionist government’s occupation of Egyptian and Palestinian land after 1967. Qaddafi was devastated by the Arab defeat in 1967 (Ronen, 2008: 4). He, like others, saw Israel as a military base to protect the concerns of Western imperialism. And he, like other young Arab intellectuals, wanted to ensure that Israel was replaced by a homeland for the Palestinians, believing that the path to achieve this was only through the unity of all Arab nations. Pan-Arabism, he believed, far from being dead needed to be asserted still more urgently than before.

Nasser’s Influence on Qaddafi

A third factor that helps explain Libya’s geopolitical discourse is the influence of Egyptian President Nasser on the Libyan leader. Qaddafi’s political awakening occurred during the 1950s when the Arab world, notably its intelligentsia, were excited by *Nasserism’s* beliefs in Pan-Arabism, and his resistance to Israel and the West. Nasser was the major exponent of Arab unity at that time. He was highly influential among Arabs well beyond the confines of Egypt, many of whom dreamed of achieving Arab unity and victory over Israel. This was the time when, as Joffé

notes, “Most people in the Arab world wanted political unity” (Joffé, 2008: 196). It was Nasser who led the call for the closure of Western bases in Libya. On Saturday February 22 1964, he said: “All Arabic people are waiting for the complete evacuation of foreign bases in Libya. It is a risk to Libya and the whole Arabic world” (Al-Balak, 1964: 3). At the time, though, the then Libyan government enjoyed a generally warm relationship with the West, particularly with Britain and the United States. But, this relationship isolated Libya somewhat from other Arab countries. (Muscat, 1980:10) In this atmosphere, there developed among Libyan Arab nationalists the view that “the monarchical regime [was] morally decadent and politically subservient to the imperial powers” (Martinez, 2007: 87).

The Arab defeat by Israel in June 1967 intensified ordinary Libyans’ discontent with their government’s foreign policy which alienated the country from anti-Israeli policies developing elsewhere in the Arab world. In a lecture about Libyan foreign policy given to the students of Libyan school of diplomacy on the June 6 2005, Mohammed Al-Zawi, former Libyan ambassador to London, said:

When the Arabs were defeated by Israel in 1967, the Libyan government was criticised for its disregard of this event. The rest of the Arab world, meanwhile, was speaking with one voice. It was declaring: ‘No to the defeat! Yes to Abdul Nasser.’ Libyans were the only Arabic people who felt they were not doing anything at all to advance the Arab cause. It was an emotional feeling, the feeling of a nation (Al-Zawi, 2005).

It is widely believed that it was the 1967 June war and dissatisfaction with Libya’s alienation from the rest of the Arab world that “provided a catalyst” for the overthrow of the Libyan king on September 1 1969 by a young group known as the Free Unionist Officers (FUO) led by a 28-year-old Muammar Abu Minyar al-Qaddafi (St

John, 1987: 14).

Qaddafi, as Vandewalle notes,

like other young Arab nationalists who had followed the ideological debates and struggles within Arab nationalism, viewed Egypt's Nasser as a dedicated Arab revolutionary who could return to the Arab world much of the grandeur and the power it had once possessed" (Vandewalle, 2006: 80 and Vandewalle, 2008: 10).

Collins also argues that Qaddafi "was very much influenced by the Egyptian revolution of 1952 and [saw] his attempts to further Arab unity as being in the tradition of Nasser" (Collins, 1974: 16). The Libyan leader, moreover, wanted to follow in Nasser's steps as the leading Pan-Arab figure, based in the belief that Nasser had "designated him the trustee of Arab nationalism" (Solomon and Swart, 2005: 471) — a belief which drove Qaddafi forward after Nasser's death in 1970.

Nasserism informed much of Qaddafi's search for a single pan-Arab polity based on anti-imperialism, anti-colonialism and anti-Zionism, and embracing all states inherited from the colonial era. Nasserism was similarly influential in his expressions of pan-Arabism. As Qaddafi saw it, a single Arab polity would strengthen Libyan and Arab influence in the world and ensure that a balance of power existed in the region. Yet, other factors could have played into this belief such as Vandewalle's suggestion that the Libyan government's use of the language of Arab nationalism was part of a quest for legitimacy (Vandewalle, 2006: 87). But Joffé (2008: 194-195) argues that Qaddafi's fears of an invasion from Libya's neighbours, particularly from Egypt to the east after Nasser's death in 1970, was his first and principle concern in his quest for Arab unity. Rising tensions with the major Western powers over the first 25 years of his leadership, Libya's historical experience of foreign invasions, its strategic

location and its oil reserves gave him ample grounds to fear attack. One attack did take place, on the 15th of April 1986, when the US, with UK cooperation, bombed Libyan military facilities and residential areas of Tripoli and Benghazi (Zoubir, 2002: 33), killing over 70 people, among them Qaddafi's infant adopted daughter (Bianci, 2003: 9).

Qaddafi's was aware of the need for powerful allies in the region, and the highest priority on his agenda was to construct a united Arab political block that would ensure the security of Libya and strengthen the Arab factor on the world stage. His Pan-Arab project was, in this sense, a strategic necessity; it was a response — a defensive one — against the threat he perceived from colonialism, Western imperialism and Israel. As Qaddafi himself declared two years after his assumption of power: “As long as the world is subjected to the law of survival of the strongest, we want to be stronger in order to survive” (Al-Qaddafi', 23/08/1971). So it was that, in his view, “Arab unity is the protection of freedom. Arab unity is a powerful shield that protects the independence of the homeland. Arab unity is a fortress that protects the Arab nation. Arab unity is a safe refuge against colonialism and imperialism;” (Al-Qaddafi, 04/12/1972) and “without unity, this [Arab] nation cannot live and will be swallowed by the Zionism with the help of America, state after state (Al-Qaddafi, 07/10/1984).

How, then, did Qaddafi come to abandon his redemptive-protective view of Pan Arabism that he had promoted so fervently for 30 years? The answer most frequently offered is his growing frustration and disillusionment with other Arab leaders. The last straw for him was their failure to show the courage required to violate Western-inspired sanctions against Libya, even if only for humanitarian cases — whereas some

African leaders were willing to do so. Huliaras takes this view. He writes in *African Affairs*: “The Libyan-black African rapprochement reflects Qaddafi’s disappointment with the limited support he ... received from Arab countries in his efforts to confront the international sanctions that were imposed on Libya after the explosion of PanAm flight 103” (Huliaras, 2001:5). Huliaras adds, Qaddafi’s surprising shift towards Africa came

immediately after foreign ministers attending the Arab League meeting in Cairo in September 1998 turned down Tripoli’s request to defy the UN embargo imposed on Libya and follow the path of the Organization of African Unity which took that decision at its ... summit in Burkina Faso in June of the same year (Huliaras, 2001:10).

Likewise, St John, suggests that, the shift in Libyan foreign policy from Arab world to African continent was “rooted in part in the failure of Arab states to support Libya in the Lockerbie dispute” (St John, 2008: 99). Al-Atrash, a Libyan academic and analyst in Peace and Security, takes the same view in a paper presented in International Peace Research Association (IPRA) conference in 2008: “Libya’s lacking Arab support during the Lockerbie crisis ... had negative impact on Libya’s new policy towards the Arab world. This had made Libya to focus on Africa” (Al-Atrash, 2008: 12).

Martinez, in his work *The Libya Paradox*, also states that,

The backing given by the African states to the campaign for the suspension of the sanctions, which were in the event partially lifted by the United Nations in June 1998, induced Qaddafi to abandon the ideology of pan-Arabism and to espouse pan-Africanism in its place (Martinez, 2007: 108).

Solomon and Swart agree: “Qaddafi was in dire need of a new source of foreign policy support, and Africa [showed] itself ready, willing and able to share its solidarity with an isolated Libya” (Solomon and Swart, 2005: 470). So, too, Ray Takeyh, a research fellow at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy:

There is a certain logic to this new focus; after all, the Organization of African Unity (OAU) was the only regional group to defy the UN sanctions on Libya, and Nelson Mandela, Africa's elder statesman, was instrumental in resolving the Lockerbie crisis. While Arab politicians equivocated during the 1990s, African leaders warmly embraced Qaddafi (Takeyh, 2001: 66).

Vandewalle agrees:

the rationale for the Arab leaders' reluctance to contravene the sanctions — based in part on the realization that doing so would undermine their own insistence for the implementation of UN Resolution 242 of 1967 that called on Israel to trade land for peace — was considered self-serving and hypocritical in Tripoli (Vandewalle, 2006: 194-195).

The editor in chief of *The Tripoli Post* Newspaper, Dr. Saeed Al-Aswd, supported this explanation in an interview with the author in September 2008: "Unlike African leaders, the Arabs did not stand by Libya during the sanctions, and this was the time when Libya decided to change its political concern towards Africa" (Al-Aswd, 2008, interview, Appendix D). Dr. Saleh Abraham, Director of Academy of Graduate Studies in Tripoli takes a similar view. He saw Qaddafi's frustration and disillusionment with Arab leaders as among the main factors that contributed to Libya's geopolitical shift from Arab world to an African geopolitical concern: "The negative attitude of Arab regimes towards Libya during the international sanctions was one of the main reasons behind Qaddafi's shift towards Africa". He adds, "[Even] the attitude of other countries like Malta and Greece were much better than the Arabs." (Abraham, 2008, interview, Appendix E). And Qaddafi himself supports this interpretation of his actions. He declared: "Libyans must realise the benefit of Africa and what Africa means for them. They should compare the conference [of the OAU

in] Ouagadougou [in June 1998] to other conferences, and they should compare the leaders of Africa to other Arab leaders” (Al-Qaddafi, 05/09/1998).

But Solyman Mansur, in his book, *The Libyan Foreign Policy toward Africa*, takes a different view. He argues that the reconceptualisation of geopolitics into regional and international spaces at all levels of political and economic strategy that accompanied globalisation was the main factor that prompted the Libyan leadership to adopt a new policy on Africa and to build an integrated African space (Mansur, 2005: 6). Fathe Imhammad in his work, *The Regional and International Political Factors and their Impacts on Libyan Foreign Policy between 1990-2000*, also takes a similar view. He argues that the Libyan leadership was seeking regional integration in order to stave off the negative consequences that might flow from globalisation (Imhammad, 2008: 234-235). The former Libyan Secretary for Media (Media Minister), Dr. Mohamed Al-Fetori, agrees. He believes that Qaddafi’s shift towards Africa was planned over time. He says:

Critics may say that this shift has come with factors such as Lockerbie crisis and the sanctions imposed by the United Nations. However, Libya’s concentration on Africa is a strategic one. It has come after the end of the Cold War, in the age of globalisation, which reduced the distance and the borders between countries (Al-Fetori, 2008, interview, Appendix C).

He continues:

There was great concern that the conception of the nation state in the world was finished and the alternative is [to focus on] world spaces or a continental space. For example, now political analysts talk about a Latin American space, and the whole world is aware of this [new spatial thinking] and the end of the nation state.

For this reason, Dr. Al-Fetori argues, “Libya was aware of the need for integrating in one of the big spaces in the world, and the highest priority on its agenda was to integrate with African space, as Libya forms part of Africa.” Dr. Al-Fetori, however concludes: “Libya did not let the Arabs down. It has called on the Arabs to join the African Union to form a united single space (Al-Fetori, 2008, interview, Appendix C).

Dr. Saleh Abraham also suggests that “the Libyan leader saw that the world [was] forming itself into large spaces and that the Arabs should join the African space — as they do not form a large block in the way China does, for example.” He adds,

Rethinking Libya’s geopolitical position, Qaddafi saw that geography in the age of globalisation is more important than nationalist longings. Chad and Niger, for example, are more important for Libya than other Arab countries if we consider their geographical location in relation to Libya.

He adds: “Libya wanted to play a significant role in Africa as it forms a link between Europe and Africa and other spaces” (Abraham, 2008, interview, Appendix E).

Dr. Miloud Al- Mehadbi, foreign affairs director for the World Centre for the Studies and Researches of the *Green Book*, offers a synthesis on the factors that prompted Libya to shift its geopolitical concern from Arab to African concerns. It was a result of “the end of the Cold War, Africa’s attitude towards the sanctions against Libya, as well as, the awareness of the significant role that Libya can play in Africa, which has been able to open the door [for Libya] to negotiate with the international community” (Al-Mehadbi, 2008, interview, Appendix F).

And Dr. Al-Mehadbi suggests an additional factor to explain Qaddafi’s shift from Pan-Arab to Pan-African unity. He argues: “One of the reasons behind Libya’s shift

towards Africa was the Libyan leader's frustration with failure of the Arab nationalist project" (Al-Mehadbi, 2008, interview, Appendix F). St John supports this suggestion by Dr. Al-Mehadbi. He believes that Qaddafi's disillusionment with other Arab leaders over the failure of the Arab unity was a major factor behind Qaddafi's shift towards Africa: "Over time, different issues contributed to [Qaddafi's] frustration with the Arab world, but the central one remained the failure to develop a coherent pan-Arab movement" (St John, 2008: 101).

Vandewalle argues that the many attempts Libya made to unify with other Arab states "all withered away, some of them almost as soon as the ink on the agreements was dry", largely because of Arab states' opinions of Qaddafi. These included "[Qaddafi's] self-perception as the ideological heir to Jamal Abdul-Nasser", which, says Vandewalle, "had never been shared by the region's leaders. They viewed his activism, his blunt assessments of friend and foe alike, with suspicion and, more often than not, with disdain" (Vandewalle, 2006:193). At the same time, Vandewalle argues:

Qaddafi's long-simmering anger at the inability of the Arab world to present a unified front against Israel and the West, and at its impotence in trying to turn the Arab league into a viable organization that could adopt his own vision of Arab solidarity, had led to a number of verbal skirmishes during Arab summits that resulted in further mutual alienation (Vandewalle, 2006:193).

Greavette (2005) believes that the several attempts Libya made to enter into full political unity with other Arab states failed because they all had to be negotiated under Qaddafi's restrictive and idealistic terms and because of Qaddafi's growing disillusion with his fellow Arab leaders (Greavette, 2005). Qaddafi was frustrated by their talk of unity.

A further explanation of Qaddafi's shift to an African geopolitical discourse, according to Imhammad, is Qaddafi's frustration with several developments that defined the Arab world in 1990s. The decade, Imhammad argues, saw a major transformation in the Arab geopolitical context. The changes included Iraq's invasion of Kuwait on 2nd August 1990 and the subsequent US invasion of Iraq, and the Palestinians' pursuit of peace with Israel in the Oslo process of 1995 — much to the disgust of Libya which had supported them to the hilt in their fight against Zionism (Imhammad, 2008: 145-184). In a 1998 speech in Tripoli, Qaddafi indicated just such disillusionment:

I cannot stay with people who are not ready to defend their dignity ... I cannot participate in the queue, which receives orders from America? ... Who stood with Lebanon and prevented the Israeli aircraft from killing the children of Lebanon in Cana ...? And the children of Libya in 1986 ...? Now they are occupying the Golan Heights and southern Lebanon, the Red Sea, Arabian Gulf, and Ceuta and Melilla ... We are from one father and one mother, and our origin is Arabic ... [But] the Libyan people are not looking for their blood type. This does not benefit them. They are looking for protection, support, authority and economic power ... We are Arabs, but our political, geographical, economic and security destinies are in Africa (Al-Qaddafi, 05/10/1998)

Imhammad also sees the collapse of Soviet Union as another factor behind Qaddafi's shift to African concern (Imhammad, 2008: 139-143). Ronen argues that the collapse of USSR

definitely affected Libya's relations with ... African states. The strategic, political, economic, and military changes resulting from the end of the Cold War were detrimental for Tripoli. ... The subsequent emergence of a US-dominated New World Order further destabilized Qaddafi's essential interests and political position, causing him to reevaluate the potential diplomatic assets

of Libya's African environs (Ronen, 2008: 197).

Dr. Abraham Al-Ghawil, the Libyan coordinator of the defence panel for the two Libyan suspects of Lockerbie incident, however, goes further to say that "the Arab concern in Qaddafi's mind did not change. What Qaddafi wanted was to link Asia with Africa in one single state because he believes that the Zionists and colonialists want to separate Arab Africa from Arab Asia, or to separate the East from the West." He adds, "The report of British House of Lords in 02/11/1917 and the speech of Winston Churchill that supported the Balfour declaration and Zionist plans for a Jewish 'national home' in Palestine declared that it is enough for this project to separate Arab Asia from Arab Africa (Al-Ghawil, 2008, interview, Appendix G).

It seems that, the turning point in the history of Libya's geopolitical realignment from the Arab world to the African continent emerged as a reaction to several developments and factors: Libya's intense feelings of vulnerability to attack from outside; Libya's disappointment and increasing frustration with the Arab political environment; Arab leaders' failure to foster greater unity against the West and Zionism; the costs of the Arab failure to support Libya in the face of the Lockerbie, and Qaddafi's reconceptualisation of geopolitics in response to globalisation and its challenges. All these factors appear to have caused Qaddafi to lose interest in Pan-Arab nationalism, to lose confidence in his Arab neighbours, to consider embracing a Pan-African geopolitical identity, as well as to set out on a course to establish a new position for Libya on the geopolitical stage. He hoped this new course would produce the security in numbers and the economic prosperity which he had sought from the Arab world but not received. Instead, his and Libya's labours to advance the pan Arab cause had earned them only rejection, increasing vulnerability and economic decline.

The post-colonial Middle East was not ready to give up post colonial borders. Post-colonial Arab governments were not willing to abandon their positions as rulers of nation states in order to foster a single Arab polity. Qaddafi understood that he had to accept the existence of separate states in Libya's future relations with the rest of the Arab world. Qaddafi himself declared, "I have been crying slogans of Arab unity and brandishing standard of Arab nationalism for many years but it has not been realised. This means that I was talking to the desert." He added, in an interview with the Arab satellite television channel AAN in September 1998: "I have no more time to lose talking with Arabs." He announced: "I am returning back to realism ... I now talk about Pan-Africanism and African unity" Now, for Qaddafi, Africa was

the unparalleled great power which Libyan people should rely on to avoid any strikes against them from whatever power. Africa is the great fortified trench in which the Libyan people are holed up in the case of any confrontation with the enemy from any direction ... Libyan people are completely dependent on the ability of the black African continent to provide great protection and defence (Al-Qaddafi, 05/10/1998).

Thus, Qaddafi's shift towards Africa seemed to be strategic necessity. It was not only an essential defensive bulwark against colonialism and Western imperialism; it was also a means to maintain economic prosperity in the face of challenges pose by globalisation. The Libyan leader again saw the possibility of protection through broader unity. This made his Pan-African project — as his Pan Arabism had been earlier — a response-defensive tactic that was discursively generated.

Having examined the first and second conceptualizations of Libya's geopolitical concern and the discursive environment that fostered their production, the discussion now turns to how Libya's third view of its geopolitical concern became a rapprochement with the West. Had those behind the Libyan revolution, which has

been in direct conflict with Western governments in general and the US in particular for three decades, given up their former principles? Had all the issues that once determined Libya's hostile relations with the West suddenly disappeared?

Libya's rapprochement with the West in the new millennium understandably generated widespread concern. The most frequent suggestion was that this rapprochement was the fruit of years of sanctions and diplomatic efforts. An alternative explanation often offered was that the US-led invasions of Iraq in 1991 and, particularly, in 2003 pushed Qaddafi into an accommodation with the West because he feared he could suffer Saddam Hussain's fate. Martinez (2007) reflects this view: "[T]he overthrow of Saddam Hussein led to panic and to a new feeling of vulnerability. The apprehension of Libyan officials that the United States might invade Libya became a probability, exacerbating their feeling of insecurity" (Martinez, 2007: 6).

The former Libyan General Secretary of the People Committee (Prime Minister), Dr. Shukri Ghanem, in an interview on the BBC Radio 4's Today programme in February 24th 2004, however, rejected this explanation. Appearances, he said, could be deceptive.

The rapprochement had nothing to do with what had happened in Iraq. He said:

We came to a conclusion ... after the problems we have faced because of the sanctions ... that it was easier for us to buy peace. This is why we agreed on the compensation [of almost \$2.7 billion for the families of victims of the Lockerbie bombing for which the west held Libya responsible]. Let us put the whole case behind us and let us look forward (Ghanem, 2004).

When asked about Libya's offer to abandon its programme to develop weapons of mass destruction (WMD) Dr. Ghanem added:

If you obtain these weapons, you cannot use them. America could not use them in Vietnam or in Kampuchea. Our policy now is to concentrate on our economic development and improve the standard of living for our people. So we need the money that we are spending on guns to be spent on butter (Ghanem, 2004).

Boucek (2004) takes a similar view. He argues that: “This change in Libyan foreign policy was not a reaction to war in Iraq as much as it was a continuation of Tripoli’s desire to end its pariah status and return to the fold” (Boucek, 2004).

The Guardian tends to agree:

Libya’s promises to abandon its WMD was achieved by discussion...by endless talk, mostly in London, lately in Libya, and finally in a London gentlemen’s club. Boring perhaps, but effective, and here, with the shock and awe, is a lesson for the Pentagon to absorb... As Libya has indicated, the Iraq war actually made agreement more difficult, it was eventually reached despite, not because of, Iraq (The Guardian, 2003: 15)

Other writers also say this change has come mainly as the result of a Libyan desire to reinvigorate its economy. Ronen explains how international sanctions had a great impact on Libya: “In 1990s, the Libyan economy endured a cumulative loss of between US\$24 billion and US\$33 billion as a result of the UN sanctions” (Ronen, 2008:186). Khaled Ali, an Egyptian journalist, also finds the explanation in economics: “[T]he Libyan leadership had come to realise that the Lockerbie crisis, consequent sanctions, and regional international isolation led to its current political and economic position” (Ali, 2004). Deeb takes a similar view in an article, in the *Middle East Policy Journal*: “[I]t was ... imperative for Qaddafi that the sanctions be lifted so that the prices of consumer goods would fall and foreign capital return to revitalize the ailing economy” (Deeb, 2000: 150). Dr. Younis Lahweij makes the point

that Libya was not without something to offer as it sought a rapprochement. In his unpublished PhD thesis, *Ideology and Power in Libyan Foreign Policy*, he states that: “Through oil price increases and bargaining with oil companies Libya asserted a status and leverage in its relations with the West” (Lahwej, 1988).

International Sanctions may, indeed, have contributed to the Libyan change in its geopolitical discourse. The effects of the international embargo on Libya and the lives of its people worsened daily in most economic sectors between 1992 and 2003. The consequence of the embargo, according to the Libyan government, was the loss of an estimated \$24 billion, by 1998 (Martinez, 2007: 14). The international embargo on Libya’s oil and gas industry, which had accounted for an estimated 95% of national output (GDP) (McCrum and Partrick, 2005: 31), was seriously damaging Libya’s domestic economy and foreign earnings. Production dropped from a peak of 3.3 million barrels a day in the 1970s to 1.3 million in the 1990s (Venditti, 2005: 4) Libya realized that the Lockerbie crisis, consequent sanctions and regional and international isolation had led to this economic position. “We could not afford an aggressive exploration programme,” says Abdullah Salem Al-Badri, The former chairman of the Libyan National Oil Corporation (Noc), Al-Badri adds:

We were just maintaining our equipment and facilities. Libya is now moving towards a variety of economic reforms. The intention is to attract foreign investment into the country and to increase oil production capacity from 1.60million barrel a day to 2 million barrel a day by 2010 and 3 million bb/d by 2015 (Al-Badri cited in Venditti, 2005: 4).

International isolation has also left the telecommunications sector, for example, hungry for modern technology. Until the years of 2003, Libya was behind its neighbours in communications technology. The head of Libyan telecommunications

sector, Qaddafi's son Mohammed, said in May 2005 in an interview with *The Times*, "We think of telecommunications as being like the nervous system in the human body. But, due to international sanctions, that nerve system had been shut down for a while." He added: "At one point we were the most advanced country in this part of the world but unfortunately we have now lost that position" (Mohammed al-Qaddafi cited in Venditti, 2005: 8).

In the 'Report on the Impact of the UN Sanctions against Libya' given in September 1996 to the then Secretary General of the United Nations, Boutros Boutros-Ghali, by the Libyan Mission to the UN, an even bleaker picture emerged. Libyan hospitals, and therefore Libyan citizens, were suffering badly. "[T]he Libyan authorities reported that at least 15,570 individuals were in need of personal medical care, and that the sanctions had prevented more than 8,500 foreign doctors from coming to Libya" (Martinez, 2007: 14). Lack of medication, technology and the latest treatments meant desperately sick people were forced to travel to neighbouring countries for treatment. Unable to afford lengthy rehabilitation visits to foreign countries, these people often had to travel back to Libya shortly after treatment. Tragically, the journey home, however successful the treatment had been, often proved fatal. The author's mother, as late as 1998, suffered just such a fate. Having travelled to Tunisia for a vital operation, the daylong journey home by car exhausted her already depleted reserves of energy. Unable to convalesce appropriately, she succumbed to her illness just days after returning to her native land.

Many sectors of business have suffered from the absence of up-to-date resources. Banking is among them. A reporter on the London *Times* describes being told by a

hotel reception manager in the capital, Tripoli: “I am sorry sir, but we do not accept credit cards in this hotel.” The hotel involved, the Al Kabeer Hotel, is a large tourist facility whose impressive building dominates the seafront of the capital (Venditti, 2005: 7). “The lack of modernisation in the banking sector is connected to the years of the international embargo,” according to Farhat Ekdara, deputy governor of the central bank of Libya. “We were not allowed to use credit cards or to buy software and hardware on the international market since most were American made” (Venditti, 2005: 7). The serious effects suffered in banking, telecommunications and oil lie behind Libya’s crippling unemployment.

And it is this unemployment that provided the major push that propelled Libya back to the international fold. Two decades of isolation and worsening economic hardship had to be brought to an end. In spite of having only 5.5 million citizens, Libya’s unemployment had reached high levels. One in seven members of Libya’s workforce (15%) was out of work. (Libya Jamahiriya Broadcasting cooperation, 2005)

The lifting of sanctions soon showed signs of having the desired effect. As foreign companies returned to open offices, the government felt able to draw up new employment laws that obliged foreign firms in Libya to employ more Libyans than foreigners. It was one measure to cut unemployment (McCrum and Partrick, 2005: 21). Economists suggested the economy was beginning to turn around. The Libyan dinar became significantly stronger against the US dollar. Foreign oil companies returned and fresh investment began flowing, encouraging the government to increase the national minimum wage.

Ali suggests that Libya needs the benefit of close cooperation with the West to promote political stability and broaden its international political role.

The focus of Libya's new foreign policy has been to promote Libya as a state enjoying good relations with countries around the world, and as a leading player in peacemaking and the promotion of political stability on both regional and international levels (Ali, 2004).

Joffé agrees. He says that the Libyan rapprochement towards the West

is not just a question of Libya's willingness to adapt to international norms or to recognize its responsibilities. Nor is it solely a question of its natural resources in oil and gas, although both concerns must play their part. It seems, instead, to reflect Libya's potential geopolitical role within the collective policy assumptions of European states and the United States, a role that also reflects its own security concerns and aspirations (Joffé, 2008: 192).

He adds that one of the major security interests for Libyan foreign policy makers has been its energy security:

Libya, unlike most states which must ensure that they have untrammelled access to energy supplies, is more concerned about its access to oil services and to the international market, for, without this, it cannot gain the economic rent on which its economy, society, and polity depend (Joffé, 2008:195).

Ronen believes that the Libyan rapprochement with the West was also the result of Libya's shift towards Africa. He argues that Libya's African policies offered Qaddafi a way back into the international community. Mandela and other African leaders opened some doors through which Libya could re-establish dialogue with the West and move towards the resolution of sources of painful conflict with the West. These included the Lockerbie disaster, for which the West had blamed Libya (Ronen, 2002: 71).

Another determinant of Libyan recent rapprochement with the West has been, according to Solomon and Swart, the growing threat of militant Islamist opposition to Qaddafi's life and rule, particularly the Libyan Islamic Fighting Group (LIFG) (Al-Jama'a al-Islamiya al-Muqatila bi-Libya) that emerged in 1990s (Solomon and Swart, 2005: 484). St John argues that "in the post-9/11 world, [Qaddafi] became an early and enthusiastic supporter of the war on terror. In particular, he supported the elimination of Islamist groups that were as much a threat to his regime as they were to the United States" (St John, 2008: 103).

However, in an interview with the author in 2005, Dr. Al-Mahadi Amberish, the former Libyan Secretary of Culture (the Libyan culture minister) who was a diplomat at the Libyan bureau in Washington from 1978 until 1981, denied any relationship between Libyan recent foreign policy shift towards the West and its fight against the extremist Islamist groups:

We were against the Islamic radicalism. We were against Osama Bin Laden, and we were the first nation to ask Interpol to pursue him. At that time, the US defended him and said these were people simply fighting for their rights. The US is the only nation that has changed. The US is now calling these people terrorists. Libya has maintained only one position.

Dr. Amberish continued,

Libya has always been against the Islamic radicalism and remains so today. By contrast, the US has at one time supported the very people they now vilify. The US stands like a lone reed in the winds of international relations. The US cannot make up its mind. Finally, perhaps temporarily, America thinks Libya's regime is right after all (Imberish 2005, interview, Appendix H).

Dr Amberish's claim about Libyan hostility to politicised Islamic radicalism gets support from Michael Binyon, a British journalist on *the Times* who writes: "Libya has never embraced the Islamic radicalism sweeping much of the Middle East ... and

Islamists count Qaddafi among leaders they want to overthrow” (Binyon, 2005: 3).

Another factor said to have contributed to the Libya’s rapprochement with the West was, Martinez argues, the role that Qaddafi’s son Saif al-Islam and other Libyan reformers have played. These reformers, according to Martinez, “have developed relationships of trust with the West in strategic fields such as oil and the war against terrorism” (Martinez, 2007: 114). He describes Saif al-Islam as “an advocate for Libya’s changes of direction” (Martinez, 2007: 102). Ronen argues that: “Unlike Qaddafi, [Saif al-Islam and other Libyan reformists] negotiated Tripoli’s foreign interests pragmatically — purely on the bases of national concerns and international norms rather than on historical, ideological, or emotional bases” (Ronen, 2008: 6).

Joffé’s view of the recent change in relationship between Libya and the West also describes Libya’s foreign policy as pragmatic. He states: “Through the 1990s, Libya sought to demonstrate that its ideological commitments were nothing more than rhetoric, and that an increasing pragmatism reflected the real core of the country’s foreign policy aims, particularly with respect to the United States and Europe.” But, he also suggests, Libya ‘has been able to rejoin the international community with little evident compromise in its perceived interests or its ideological preconceptions, as well as its policy-making institutions or the personnel which manipulate them — the prodigal returned, in short!” (Joffé, 2008: 192).

Other analysts believe that the change in the relationship between Libya and the West is the result of a strategic decision made longer ago than is apparent. Khalil Matar, a

Lebanese American author who wrote *Lockerbie and Libya* in 2003, argues that the world has changed radically since the earlier 1990s and that Libyans had to move decisively to nullify the threat that this new situation held for them. “Negotiations between both sides have been ongoing for almost ten years, and I would not call it a dramatic change,” he said. “Libya had to make a logical and rational evaluation and ask what political position it should take: How can we deal with the international atmosphere?” He added: “Libyans found that the whole world had changed. The Soviet Union’s collapse and Eastern Europe’s disintegration left the world without balance.” He continues: “Libya was a victim of these changes. Nobody stood beside her. No-one was willing to take a bullet for her — even those nations that Libya had been allied to in the past.” He says:

Palestinians, for example, whose own liberation was the basis of Libya’s revolutionary aims, went to the Madrid negotiations which led to the Oslo agreement, leaving their old ally behind. What choice did Libya have? Without allies, ostracised and hated: how could [Libya] possibly face the world alone?” (Matar, 2005, Appendix: I).

The Libyan leadership cannot be blamed for wanting to move with the times, according to Mustafa El-Feki, chairman of the Egyptian parliament's Foreign Affairs Committee, in an article in 2004:

The recent Libyan announcement concerning weapons of mass destruction should not have come as a surprise. Libya's political discourse has been changing for a decade now, and it has had ramifications in the Lockerbie case, in African affairs and in Tripoli's quest to have sanctions lifted.

He added: “In the past ten years, Tripoli has been changing tack in a careful and well thought out manner as it seeks to refurbish its international image, readjust its regional policy, and forge a workable relationship with the West” (El-Feki, 2004).

And what about the change in the West's attitude to Libya? Qaddafi, the man described by *Time* magazine in mid-1980 as "the most dangerous man in the world", (cited in Anderson, 2003: 333) and Libya, which had been isolated from the West for almost three decades and was seen as a godfather of international terrorism, seemed suddenly to have won genuine favour among Western leaders. The latter now visited Libya with cordiality, ease and with words of praise for Colonel Qaddafi. Many believed that their visits were a public relations reward for Libya's decision in December 2003 to give up efforts to develop nuclear arms and other weapons of mass destruction. There was, however, another perhaps more plausible explanation. It was that Western leaders wanted their countries to benefit from Libya's rich oil and gas resources at a time of growing global energy insecurity. They wanted their relationship with Libya to be conducted in the economic rather than the political arena. Libya, with its plentiful oil reserves that are cheap to recover, is situated close to European markets. Many of these resources are, as yet, untouched due to the crippling sanctions and the harm these did to Libya's ability to exploit them.

Abdullah Salem Al-Badri, chairman of the Libyan National Oil Corporation (Noc) says: "Libya is seen as important in a geopolitical and business sense" (Al-Badri, Cited in Venditti, 2005: 4). Indeed, Tony Blair's visit to Libya in 2004 was set to re-open the door for UK business links with the country. As he met Colonel Qaddafi, it was announced that the Anglo-Dutch oil giant, Shell, had signed a deal worth up to £550m for gas exploration rights off the Libyan coast. In addition to Shell, other British firms had already begun tapping into opportunities in Libya. They included

engineering contractor Balfour Beatty, construction firm AMEC and the UK's biggest defence contractor BAE Systems (BBC News Online, 25/03/2004).

The French president was another Western leader who did not make his visit to Libya unaccompanied. While Chirac shook hands in his photo call with Qaddafi, he was flanked by a large delegation of French business leaders keen to win contracts with Libya. On June 4 2004, US Assistant Secretary for Commerce William Lash, speaking during a trade visit to Tripoli, said that oil shipments from Libya to the US had already begun (Libyan Jamahiriya Broadcasting Cooperation, 2005).

Libya has since consolidated its position on the wider economic and political stage. In late 2009, it appeared to be projecting a markedly more 'normal' posture in interstate relations: that of a nation-for-itself, now seeking to produce for its people the social goods, particularly security and economic prosperity that been denied it by isolation and international sanctions. This 'Libya first' approach suggested that another geopolitical discourse was nascent. Although distinct from the discourses that produced Qaddafi's periods of Arab and African geopolitical concern, it shared with them a common responsive-defensive character. Based on an improvement in relations with the West, it sought to safeguard Libya's interests through cooperation with the major industrial powers and with Libya's Arab-African neighbours by prioritising full and active participation in international political and economic organisations. This new beginning came at the end of a long journey. Typified by acute antagonism for most of the 40 years to 2009, Libyan geopolitical discourse now showed intimations of mutuality. The terrain travelled to reach this point had been

what Foucault might indeed have called a “field of force relations” (Foucault, 1978: 101-102).

We have examined how Qaddafi used carefully-chosen words, phrases, rhetorical devices and visual symbols to express these three Libyan geopolitical discourses. What remains to be addressed is the relationship between Libyan geopolitical discourses. The next chapter examines this issue.

Chapter Eight

Conclusion

This study set out to understand how and why Libya's geopolitical discourse changed on several occasions over the 40 years to 2009. This involved repeatedly repositioning Libya in the global community, sometimes radically.

Towards the end of Chapter Three, which deals with the methodological approach this study takes, I offered the following hypothesis in answer to this question: In order to counter perceived and actual threats to Libyan sovereignty and survival, Qaddafi repeatedly shifted Libyan geopolitical discourse in a series of manoeuvres that amounted to a tactically polyvalent responsive-defensive strategy. And I listed six propositions I would have to verify in order to justify the hypothesis. They were that, over the forty years to 2009,

- Qaddafi was the principal animator of Libyan geopolitical discourse;
- Libyan geopolitical discourse shifted several times;
- these discursive shifts were reactions to perceived or actual threats;
- these discursive shifts were intended to reposition the country in ways that improved its capacity to defend itself internationally;
- these discursive shifts sometimes appeared to contradict earlier geopolitical discourse; and
- these discursive shifts, even when seemingly contradictory, sought to serve the same strategy, namely the defence of Libyan sovereignty and security.

I now proceed to examine the extent to which these seven propositions have, or have not been, verified.

We turn first to the question of whether or not Qaddafi can be understood to have been the principal animator of Libyan geopolitical discourse over the period. In the introduction to Chapter Three, I analysed with help from other leading scholars, Libya's political structures and decision making processes. They are, by any analysis, *sui generis* and, for that reason, not easily understood. A defining characteristic of these decision making processes, however, is the ability to intervene in any affair of state in Libya that Qaddafi has — derived, evidently, from an extraordinary level of popular legitimacy. My analysis of Qaddafi's many speeches dealing with Libyan foreign policy and the strategic positioning of the country — together with their often passionate personal style of expression, and the way in which they foreshadow or reflect changes in Libyan geopolitical position or thinking — indicates the leadership he exercises on these matters. Joffé spoke on this issue for all scholarship on, and political analysis of, Libyan affairs in saying:

the ideology of the Libyan state is, officially, very much the personal creation of its leader, Qaddafi, a feature that will have profound implications for the way in which policy is formulated and articulated in Libya. Formally, this is a function of both the peculiar ideology and the nature of the Libyan state, and of the decision-making processes and structures inherent in it, whether in the foreign or domestic fields (Joffé, 2008: 196).

There is no evidence to be found to contradict the overwhelming weight of corroboration that exists for his role as not merely principal animator of Libyan geopolitical discourse but as its progenitor.

Second, we move to the issue of whether Libyan geopolitical discourse shifted a

number of times over the forty years. It clearly did. I first establish this quantitatively in Chapter Four, which examines data from a content analysis of 188 speeches by the Libyan leader. This chapter indicates how Libyan foreign policy, and regional and strategic concerns, shifted — notably from Arab-centered to African-centered concerns in about 1998. Qualitative analysis of his speeches in the two chapters, Five and Six, dealing with first verbal and then visual discursive strategy, confirmed that the shift in Libya's concerns coincided with a foreign policy and strategic repositioning. The shift that occurred moved Libya away from seeing itself as potentially subsumable within a single pan-Arab polity to a position in which it appeared subsumable within a pan-African project. Thereafter, Qaddafi moved towards yet other narratives and ways of seeing Libya's place in the world. He entered a rapprochement with the major Western powers, which he had in the past considered the main threats to Libyan security, and towards a radical reconceptualisation of the global community as one in which a respatialisation was underway which seemed likely to make the pursuit of national interests anachronistic and counterproductive to any community. Indeed, a finding of this study is a periodisation of Libyan geopolitical discourse. The years 1969 and 1998 bracket a period of pan-Arabism. It is here that the foundations of Qaddafi's discourse are constructed, the ideational content of which I establish in terms of its lexicology, placing the Libyan leader within the Arab nationalist lexicon derived from Nasserism. Thereafter came a period of pan-Africanism. And this pan-African period engendered a third, the emergence of Libya as a nation-for-itself.

I now consider the third and fourth propositions: that these discursive shifts were a response to perceived or actual threats to Libya, and that they were intended to

reposition the country in ways that improved its capacity to defend itself internationally. Both the timing of the shifts and the terms in which they were explained by, mainly, Qaddafi strongly suggest that they were responses to a sense of threat. This is evident not only in Chapter Seven on Discourse and Power but also in Chapters Five and Six, which deal with discursive strategy. Whatever Qaddafi's deep ideological commitment to pan-Arabism, he saw in the success of its project the prospect of security for Libyans (along with all other Arabs). When it became evident that his passionate pan-Arab commitment was not only meeting the obdurate disregard of fellow Arab leaders but also fuelling his antagonistic relationship with the Western powers, he sought allies elsewhere — within the pan-African project. When African leaders, such as Mandela, offered to open up opportunities for him to reach an accommodation with the Western powers and, so, to ease sanctions and other threats to Libya, he took these opportunities and moved towards a view of Libya's place in the world as a nation-for-itself. With each repositioning, geopolitical discourse underwent change, and the narrative it contained spoke of different allies and different, and usually less worrisome, threats to Libyan security and its prospects of prosperity. In other words, Qaddafi used these various geopolitical discourses to responsive-defensive effect in order to mitigate perceived or actual threats to Libya.

Yet these repositionings seemed to contradict each other and, in some cases, seemed internally contradictory. Reaching an accommodation with the Western powers, for example, seemed a polar opposite to the discourse of Qaddafi's pan-Arabism in the 1970s. Likewise, although the territory of Arab and African overlapped, there was, on the face of it, a considerable difference between Libya being subsumed in a pan-Arab, as opposed to a pan-African, polity. . The significance of these apparent contradictions

lies not in the evident conflict between them but, instead, in the subtleties they suggest in Qaddafi's view of Libyan security as a means to unite Arab and African worlds, rather than his preferring one over the other. Then, too, by the 2000s Libya was manifestly asserting its own interests as a single nation in the world, on a pragmatic basis, while both expressing itself in favour of a putative United States of Africa and suggesting that a respatialisation of the globe as a result of globalisation made nationalism and allied pursuits redundant.

But — and here we arrive at the sixth proposition — these contradictions were more apparent than real. What distinguished them from each other was what, paradoxically, also gave them their compound unity. Each discourse served the same strategy. That objective was the security and prosperity of Libya and Libyans. Expressed in another way — in the terms of the chemical metaphor used by Foucault — each of the discourses had the power to combine with particular sets of circumstances to produce the same compound result: the security and prosperity of Libyans. Qaddafi's use of geopolitical discourse was, in this sense, 'tactically polyvalent'.

In summary, then, we can say that, in order to counter perceived and actual threats to Libyan sovereignty and survival, Qaddafi repeatedly shifted Libyan geopolitical discourse in a series of manoeuvres that amounted to a tactically polyvalent responsive-defensive strategy. The hypothesis is sustained.

The hypothesis might be seen to suggest that Qaddafi's changes were entirely instrumental or opportunistic. This would, however, not be correct. Qaddafi started

out with a deep commitment to pan-Arabism and a set of values rooted in the values and simplicity of his early experience, his culture, history and religion. Pan-Arabism did appear to him — as to many other Arab leaders in the mid-20th Century — to offer their people the best chance of survival and prosperity. To Qaddafi, the case of Libya was no different. But, in the years from 1969, the strength of his pan-Arab commitment — and the faintheartedness of other Arab leaders — left him and Libya more exposed and vulnerable. This painful paradox caused Qaddafi eventually to seek to reposition his country geopolitically. This and subsequent repositionings echo the statement commonly attributed to the British economist John Maynard Keynes that “When the facts change, I change my mind. What do you do, sir?” (Keynes cited in Malabre, 1994: 220) Apparent inconsistency is no weakness when confronted by different threats; it is a measure of intelligence. What did *not* change was Qaddafi own personal identity as an Arab and Libya’s identity as a territory of Arab people; what *did* change was Libya’s geopolitical positioning and discourse. He was rejecting Arab governments, but not the Arab world of which he continued to consider himself and Libya a part. This is evident in, among other things, the fact that Libya retained throughout, to 2010, the formal national name the Great Socialist People’s Libyan *Arab* Jamahiriya (my emphasis).

The apparent contradictions, paradoxes and rationalisations that permeate the data with which this study is concerned began to make sense to me only when, in the early days of my research, I encountered two insights. One was from Foucault, the other from Hobsbawm.

Foucault’s notion of tactical polyvalence — that “discourses are tactical elements or blocks operating in the field of force relations” in such a way that “there can exist

different and even contradictory discourses within the same strategy” — contains, it seems to me, an insight of inestimable value to the study of political communications and international relations. It has been, as far as I am aware, used far too seldom in these areas.

Hobsbawm’s recognition that nations can conceive for themselves different ways of defining themselves in response to particular challenges or frustrations is similarly helpful. The respatialisation of the world theorised by some in response to globalisation, along with reassertions of the centrality of the nation state by others, creates debates to which Hobsbawm’s insight may be particularly helpful.

Finally, from our analysis of Libyan geopolitical discourse, it becomes apparent that Libya’s historical and geographical strategic location, Qaddafi’s early life, and his political and cultural experience contributed to the formulation of Libyan geopolitical discourse over the 40 years to 2009. Understanding Libyan geopolitical discourse and the changes it underwent, in other words, is not something that can be established objectively and independently of the conditions which brought such changes into being. Discourse, in other words, arises where history and biography meet.

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Appendices

Appendix A

A content coding schedule of Qaddafi's speeches

Arab Concern

Date of Speech

Day _____ Month _____ Year _____

Where it happened?

1. Libya; 2. Arab country; 3. African country; 4. Other

Event

1. National event; 2. Arab event; 3. African event; 4. International event.

Who is targeted at?

Domestic audience; 2. Arab audience; 3. African audience; 4. Other

The frequency use of members of family words in Arab concern (Arab unity- Pan-Arab unity-Arab nationalism-Pan-Arabism-One land-One nation-One Arab people) in the speech.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34		
35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50		
55	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70		
71	72	73	74	75	76	77	78	79	not used								

The frequency use of themes associated with Arab concern?

1. Colonialism____; 2. Imperialism____; 3. Zionism/Israel____; 4. Occupation____ 5. Crusade____; 6. Racism____; 7. Artificial borders____; 8. Enemy____; 9. Plot____; 10. Betrayal____; 11. Regionalism____; 12. US____; 13. UK____; 14. Italy____; 15. Freedom____; 16. Independence____; 17. Resistance____; 18. Confront____; 29. Peace____; 20. Defense____; 21.Libya____; 22. Security____; 23. Stability____; 24. Strength____; 25. Challenge____; 26 Globalization____; 27. Resources____; 28. Sanctions; 29. Palestine____; 30. Islam____; 31. Language____; 32. History____; 33. Geography____; 34. Existence____; 35. Dignity____; 36. National duty____; 37. Liberation____; 38. ____; 39. Arab Regimes____; 40. Omar al-Muktar____; 41. Nasser____; 42. Mandela____; 43. Slaves____; 44. Other____

African Concern

The frequency use of members of family words in African project (African union-United States of Africa-African space) in the speech.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34		
35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50		
55	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70		
71	72	73	74	75	76	77	78	79	not used								

The frequency use of themes associated with African concern?

2. Colonialism____; 2. Imperialism____; 3. Zionism/Israel____; 4. Occupation____ 5. Crusade____; 6. Racism____; 7. Artificial borders____; 8. Enemy____; 9. Plot____; 10. Betrayal____; 11. Regionalism____; 12. US____; 13. UK____; 14. Italy____; 15. Freedom____; 16. Independence____; 17. Resistance____; 18. Confront____; 29. Peace____; 20. Defense____; 21.Libya____; 22. Security____; 23. Stability____; 24. Strength____; 25. Challenge____; 26 Globalization____; 27. Resources____; 28. Sanctions; 29. Palestine____; 30. Islam____; 31. Language____; 32. History____; 33. Geography____; 34. Existence____; 35. Dignity____; 36. National duty____; 37. Liberation____; 38. ____; 39. Arab Regimes____; 40. Omar al-Muktar____; 41. Nasser____; 42. Mandela____; 43. Slaves____; 44. Other____

Note:

Appendix B: Tables

Table 1: Frequency of speeches suggesting an Arab geopolitical concern, an African geopolitical concern, and neither concern, and where the speeches were delivered

Sample	Arab Geopolitical Concern	African Geopolitical Concern	No Arab/African Concerns
Total Speeches: 188	124 (66%)	16 (8%)	48 (26%)
Location of delivery:	Libya: 114 Arab: 10 African: 0	Libya: 6 Arab: 0 African: 10	Libya: 41 Arab: 2 African: 3 Other: 2

Table 2: Frequency of references to Arab geopolitical concern in Qaddafi's speeches per four-year interval and average frequency of this concern per speech

Intervals	Number of Speeches	Frequency of references to Arab Geopolitical Concern Over Four-Year Interval	Average Frequency of References to Arab Geopolitical Concern Per Speech
1969-1972	48	1572	32.75
1973-1976	23	281	12.22
1977-1980	19	244	12.84
1981-1984	21	508	24.19
1985-1988	14	198	14.14
1989-1992	14	153	10.93
1993-1996	13	54	4.15
1997-2000	20	156	7.8
2001-2004	5	0	0
2005-2008	11	0	0
SUM	188	3166	

Table3: Frequency of references to African geopolitical concern in Qaddafi's speeches per four-year interval and average frequency of expressions of this concern per speech within each interval

Intervals	Number of Speeches	Frequency of references to African Geopolitical Concern Over Four-Year Interval	Average Frequency of References to African Geopolitical Concern Per Speech
1969-1972	48	1	0.02
1973-1976	23	7	0.30
1977-1980	19	0	0
1981-1984	21	0	0
1985-1988	14	1	0.07
1989-1992	14	0	0
1993-1996	13	0	0
1997-2000	20	97	4.85
2001-2004	5	46	9.2
2005-2008	11	69	6.27
SUM	188	221	

Table 4: Frequency of words most commonly associated with an Arab geopolitical concern in Qaddafi's speeches in each four-year interval between 1969 and 2008.

Intervals	<i>Umma</i>	Palestine	Israel	US	Libya	Colonialism	Enemy
1969-1972	485	309	97	62	285	293	107
1973-1976	102	144	67	39	61	20	44
1977-1980	222	147	201	177	147	107	78
1981-1984	308	360	568	625	239	99	177
1985-1988	113	179	152	179	88	23	70
1989-1992	78	71	58	109	37	19	27
1993-1996	131	168	181	128	86	49	51
1997-2000	30	1	29	20	10	13	1
2001-2004	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2005-2008	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SUM	1469	1379	1353	1339	953	623	555

Table 5: Frequencies of words less commonly associated with an Arab geopolitical concern in Qaddafi's speeches per four-year interval, between 1969 and 2008.

Intervals	Regimes	Freedom	Liberation	Occupation	Confront	Betrayal	Nasser
1969-1972	11	238	115	105	24	25	31
1973-1976	93	29	29	11	21	7	49
1977-1980	28	25	24	40	56	20	55
1981-1984	175	60	88	40	67	118	55
1985-1988	98	32	40	7	23	52	19
1989-1992	14	7	13	14	99	5	10
1993-1996	51	9	16	86	14	29	12
1997-2000	29	7	4	5	0	2	7
2001-2004	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2005-2008	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SUM	499	407	329	308	304	258	238

Table 6: Frequencies of words still less commonly associated with an Arab geopolitical concern in Qaddafi's speeches per four-year interval since 1969 until 2008.

Intervals	Resistance	Defence	Challenge	Borders	Regionalism	Italy	Strength	UK
1969-1972	48	91	85	45	97	54	80	53
1973-1976	24	13	5	12	12	0	16	0
1977-1980	22	26	27	19	12	25	27	0
1981-1984	70	42	66	28	28	39	15	21
1985-1988	27	14	5	34	10	6	6	18
1989-1992	1	8	5	19	10	5	2	9
1993-1996	15	8	4	25	1	34	2	39
1997-2000	0	3	2	5	0	4	5	1
2001-2004	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2005-2008	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SUM	207	205	199	187	170	167	153	141

Table 7: Frequencies of words least commonly associated with an Arab geopolitical concern in Qaddafi's speeches per four-year interval between 1969 and 2008.

Intervals	Imperialism	Dignity	Plot	Resources	Independence	Mukhtar	Crusade	Language	Racism
1969-1972	1	38	10	47	16	1	0	31	5
1973-1976	1	9	8	4	6	1	3	7	0
1977-1980	0	20	27	6	1	53	7	0	2
1981-1984	45	30	26	7	18	0	48	0	2
1985-1988	36	10	4	4	2	0	4	0	2
1989-1992	24	10	13	7	0	1	2	1	5
1993-1996	18	6	20	3	13	7	7	0	7
1997-2000	2	0	1	1	10	0	2	0	2
2001-2004	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2005-2008	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
M	127	123	109	101	66	63	63	39	25

Table 8: Frequencies of words associated least frequently with an Arab geopolitical concern in Qaddafi's speeches per four-year interval between 1969 and 2008.

Intervals	Sanctions	Nat. Duty	Security	History	Geography	Stability
1969-1972	0	4	0	5	6	0
1973-1976	0	1	0	1	0	0
1977-1980	0	5	2	0	0	0
1981-1984	0	0	3	0	0	0
1985-1988	0	0	4	0	0	3
1989-1992	0	0	1	0	0	0
1993-1996	9	0	0	1	0	0
1997-2000	1	0	0	0	0	0
2001-2004	0	0	0	0	0	0
2005-2008	0	0	0	0	0	0
SUM	10	10	10	7	6	3

Table 9: Frequencies of words most commonly associated with African geopolitical concern in Qaddafi's speeches in each four-year interval between 1969 and 2008.

Intervals	Resources	Colonialism	Defence	Globalisation	US	Borders	Libya	Strength
1969-1972	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1973-1976	0	0	0	0	7	0	0	0
1977-1980	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1981-1984	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1985-1988	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1989-1992	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1993-1996	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1997-2000	65	51	21	14	18	9	10	10
2001-2004	37	9	4	1	0	5	4	1
2005-2008	45	7	6	3	0	1	0	3
SUM	147	67	31	18	18	15	14	14

Table 10: Frequencies of words less commonly associated with an African geopolitical concern in Qaddafi's speeches per four-year interval, between 1969 and 2008.

Interval	Islam	Freedom	Challenge	Imperialism	Occupation	Slaves	Israel/Zionism
1969-1972	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1973-1976	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1977-1980	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1981-1984	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1985-1988	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1989-1992	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1993-1996	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1997-2000	13	9	9	10	5	0	10
2001-2004	0	1	3	1	3	5	0
2005-2008	0	2	0	0	2	5	0
SUM	13	12	12	10	10	10	10

Appendix C

Extract from the interview with Dr. Mohammed al-Fetori, the former media Libyan Secretary (Media Minister), Tripoli September 23, 2008 (Translated from Arabic by the author).

Q. Can you tell me about the changes that Libya undergone in the past 40 years, from Arab unity project to African unity project, then the recent development in the relationship between Libya and the West?

A. I think the Libyan leader's shift towards Africa was planned over time. Critics may say that this shift has come with factors such as Lockerbie crisis and the sanctions imposed by the United Nations. However, Libya's concentration on Africa is a strategic one. It has come after the end of the Cold War, in the age of globalisation, which reduced the distance and the borders between countries. There was great concern that the conception of the nation state in the world was finished and the alternative is [to focus on] world spaces or a continental space. For example, now political analysts talk about a Latin American space, and the whole world is aware of this [new spatial thinking] and the end of the nation state. Libya was aware of the need for integrating in one of the big spaces in the world, and the highest priority on its agenda was to integrate with African space, as Libya forms part of Africa. Libya did not let the Arabs down. It has called on the Arabs to join the African Union to form a united single space.

Q. I argue that Qaddafi's dress reflect his political views. What is your view on that?

Symbolism has been also important in the Libyan leader's life. For example, on 26th

of October of every year in which marks the day of sadness (Youm al-hedad) the Libyan leader wears black dress to express his sadness about what the Italians have done in Libya.

Another example of the leader's symbolism was in the early years of the revolution. Qaddafi was predominantly wearing army uniform when he delivered his speeches, as well as when he attended Arab summits to express that Libya and the Arab world is in a nationalist war with Israel. However, After the Arabs made peace with Israel and the former Egyptian president Anwar al-Sadat visited Israel in 1977, the army uniform lost its meaning in Qaddafi's mind at Arab summits.

Another example of Qaddafi's use of symbolism during the early period was when he met the King of Jordan at an Algerian summit in 1974. He wore gloves when he shook hands with the Jordanian King Hussein who a few days earlier had shaken the hands of the then Israeli Prime Minister Shimon Peres."

Appendix D

Extract from the interview with Dr. Saeed al-Aswd, an editor of chief of The Tripoli Post Newspaper. Tripoli September 23, 2008 (Translated from Arabic by the author).

Q. What is behind the recent change from Arab unity to African unity project?

A. Unlike African leaders, the Arabs did not stand by Libya during the sanctions, and this was the time when Libya decided to change its political concern towards Africa.

Appendix E

Extract from the interview with Dr. Saleh Abraham, Saleh Ibrahim, Director of Academy of Graduate Studies Tripoli September 22, 2008. (Translated from Arabic by the author)

Q. How had Libyan foreign policy changed since 1969?

A. There are many foreign and internal factors behind any political direction for any country in the world. It is also that countries are facing some crises that determine their foreign and internal policies. In the early years, the revolution was a nationalist movement continuation to Nasserism movement. This the real start of the revolution beside to some internal factors, such as the evacuation of the foreign bases in Libya. However, the main thing was the nationalist feeling and the Arab Israeli conflict.

However, after 1973 war and the start of the Arab Israeli negotiations, the nationalist direction weakened. After that appeared the Green Book Ideology, and the concentration became more on the internal issue and the revolutionary ideological perspective reflected our attitude of other nations. The differences between Qaddafi's ideology and other ideologies such socialism and capitalism caused tensions between Libya and other country. However, as a result of American's support to Israel and Libya's altitude of capitalism, the tension was more with America than with the Soviet Union. For this reason, Libyan had to invest all its strength and resources as a small country to keep and defend its united land when it was under the American threat. As a result, Libya changed from a country that wanted lead the Arabs to Arab

unity to a country that concern about its matter. The issue became an internal matter. There are also other factors that caused Libya to follow this direction such the war with Chad, the sanctions that were imposed on Libya by the United Nations, and then the collapse of the Soviet Union.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, Libya understood that the world has changed and the Western camp won the battle. However, Libya kept its ideology, but treated the new development with a new face and started to negotiate with the American and English, as well as to develop its internal system, particularly the economy.

Q. But how do you describe the changes that Libyan undergone over the past 40 years from the Arab unity to African unity project.

A. Qaddafi's frustration and disillusionment with Arab leaders as among the main factors that contributed to Libya's geopolitical shift from Arab world to an African geopolitical concern: "the negative attitude of Arab regimes towards Libya during the international sanctions was one of the main reasons behind Qaddafi's shift towards Africa. [Even] the attitude of other countries like Malta and Greece were much better than the Arabs.

Moreover, the Libyan leader saw that the world [was] forming itself into large **spaces** and that the Arabs should join the African space — as they do not form a large block in the way China does, for example. Rethinking Libya's geopolitical position, Qaddafi saw that geography in the age of globalisation is more important than nationalist longings. Chad and Niger, for example, are more important for Libya than other Arab countries if we consider their geographical location in relation to Libya. Libya wanted

to play a significant role in Africa as it forms a link between Europe and Africa and other spaces.

Appendix F

Extract from the interview with Dr. Miloud al- Mehadbi, a foreign affairs director for the World Centre for the Studies and Researches of the *Green Book*, September, 25, 2008 (Translated from Arabic by the author).

Q. How to describe the changes in Libyan political discourse from Arab to African unity project?

A. Libya's geopolitical shift from Arab to African concerns was a consequence of the end of the Cold War, Africa's attitude towards the sanctions against Libya, as well as, the awareness of the significant role that Libya can play in Africa, which has been able to open the door [for Libya] to negotiate with the international community. However, One of the reasons behind Libya's shift towards Africa was the Libyan leader's frustration with failure of the Arab nationalist project.

Appendix G

Extract from the interview with Dr. Abraham Al-Ghawil, the Libyan coordinator of the defence panel for the two Libyan suspects of Lockerbie incident, Tripoli September 13-9, 2008 (Translated from Arabic by the author).

Q. What the main factors that affected Libyan foreign policy in the last four decades?

A. I believe that the Arabic role in Qaddafi's mind did not change. What Qaddafi wanted is that to link Asia with Africa. The idea of one state as the Zionism wanted to separate Arab Africa from Arab Asia or to separate the East from the West. More than two thirds of Africans are Muslim. The report of house of lord in 2/11/1917 and the speech of Churchill support the Belford promise when he said that it enough for this project to separate Arab Asia from Arab Africa. And as Samuel Huntington said that the real enemy is the third world and we have take under consideration that this world should not have a centre state.

Appendix H

Extract from the interview with Dr Al-Mhadi Imberish, former Libyan Secretary of the General People's Committee of Culture (Culture Minister), Tripoli June 28th 2005 (Translated from Arabic by the author).

Q. Why has Libya change its policy towards the West?

A. We did not end our relationship with the US and Britain. The US and Britain ended their relationship with us. What happened to the West [that caused it] to change its policy towards Libya? We were seen as a terrorist country and now, suddenly, we are not. These countries have returned to us. The real question we should be asking is to the West. Why did you leave this house? And why do you now seek to come back?

We were against the Islamic radicalism. We were against Osama Bin Laden, and we were the first nation to ask Interpol to pursue him. At that time, the US defended him and said these were people simply fighting for their rights. The US is the only nation that has changed. The US is now calling these people terrorists. Libya has maintained only one position. Libya has always been against the Islamic radicalism and remains so today. By contrast, the US has at one time supported the very people they now vilify. The US stands like a lone reed in the winds of international relations. The US cannot make up its mind. Finally, perhaps temporarily, America thinks Libya's regime is right after all.

Appendix I

Extract from the interview with Khalil Mater, a Lebanese journalist, a Lebanese American author who wrote *Lockerbie and Libya* in 2003, and who has reported on the United Nations for 20 years and covered diplomatic and legal disputes over Lockerbie disaster, Tripoli June, 6 2005 (Translated from Arabic by the author)

Q. How do you describe the recent dramatic change in Libyan foreign policy towards the West?

A. Actually negotiations between both sides have been ongoing for almost 10 years and I would not call it a dramatic change. Libya was a victim of Soviet Union collapse and Eastern Europe's disintegration and no-one was willing to take a bullet for her.

