

NA POZADÍ REVOLUCE

Externí aktéři v předrevoluční a porevoluční Libyi. Přehled aktuálního výzkumu.

BEYOND THE REVOLUTION

External Actors in Pre- & Post-Revolutionary Libya. Review of Current Research.

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Abstrakt

Jedním z klíčových faktorů vývoje v Libyi, rozdělené porevolučním děním mezi zneprátelené tábory usilující o kontrolu země, jsou vnější aktéři. Cílem předloženého přehledu výzkumu je shrnout významné západní publikace zabývající se otázkou role a zájmů vnějších aktérů v Libyi. Reflektovány jsou publikace zabývající se zájmy západních zemí Francie, UK, Itálie, USA či Německa a na druhé straně aktivitami Ruska, Egypta, Kataru, Saudské Arábie či Spojených arabských emirátů, jejichž rostoucí význam v porevoluční Libyi je spojován s probíhajícím konfliktem a vzájemnou rivalitou.

Abstract

External actors appear to be one of the key factors in post-revolutionary Libya - country divided by a civil conflict. Aim of this research review is to summarize major Western academic publications that focus on the role and interests of external actors in Libya. The review reflects on the writings dealing with the interests of Western actors - France, UK, Italy, Germany, USA - and the activities of Russia, Egypt, Qatar, Saudi Arabia or UAE, whose increasing influence in post-revolutionary Libya is related to the ongoing conflict and mutual rivalry.

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Klíčová slova

Libye; akademický výzkum; vnější aktéři; strategické zájmy; ekonomické vztahy; migrace; bezpečnost.

Keywords

Libya; Academic research; External actors; Strategic interests; Economic relations; Migration; Security.

INTRODUCTION

“Nations have no permanent friends or allies, they only have permanent interests.”

Lord Palmerston (1784-1865)

The Libyan revolution in 2011 meant a turnover from the perspective of both internal and external actors. Considering the latter, overthrow of one of the most hardline authoritarian régimes of the 20th century opened the door to a greater engagement of foreign actors that have become one of key factors in deepening of the post-revolutionary divisions of the country. However, a gradual change in the spectrum of actors involved in Libyan developments can be observed. Concurrently with the disengagement of Western states, which were pursuing strategic relations with the Qaddafi régime before the revolution, actors such as the Gulf states, Russia or Egypt gradually took over the role in shaping internal developments in Libya.

Despite the relevance of the role of external actors for both internal and international developments, Western¹ academic reflection on the interests or role of external actors in Libya seems to be rather selective and limited. The contemporary Western research on Libya is dominated by debates on internal drivers of revolutionary and post-revolutionary developments,² challenges of state-building, internal and wider regional security,³ the issue of Islamism,⁴ or, last but not least, the controversial issue of the international intervention and the R2P doctrine.⁵

The aim of this text is to review recent academic publications that discuss the role and interests of external actors in Libya that were considered as the most widely discussed

¹ The choice is led by the aim to reflect on the current Western research and its possible gaps from within. This should help in gaining a better understanding of the Libyan strategic environment.

² COLE, Peter and MCQUINN, Brian (eds.). *Libyan Revolution and its Aftermath*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015. ISBN 978-0-19-021096-0; BRAHIMI, Alia. *Libya's Revolution*. *The Journal of North African Studies*. 2011, vol. 16, no. 4, pp. 605-624. ISSN 1743-9345; PAOLETTI, Emanuela. *Libya: Roots of a Civil Conflict*. *Mediterranean Politics*. 2011, vol. 16, no. 2, pp. 313-319. ISSN 1743-9418.

³ JEBNOUN, Nouredine. *Beyond the mayhem: debating key dilemmas in Libya's statebuilding*. *The Journal of North African Studies*. 2015, vol. 20, no. 5, pp. 832-864. ISSN 1743-9345; SAWANI, Youssef Mohammad - PACK, Jason. *Libyan constitutionality and sovereignty post-Qadhafi: the Islamist, regionalist, and Amazigh challenges*. *The Journal of North African Studies*. 2013, vol. 18, no. 4, pp. 523-543. ISSN 1743-9345.

⁴ RONEN, Yehudit. *Libya: Teetering Between War and Diplomacy The Islamic State's Role in Disintegration*. *Diplomacy & Statecraft*. 2017, vol. 28, no. 1, pp. 110-127. ISSN 1557-301X.

⁵ BELLAMY, Alex. *Libya and the Responsibility to Protect: The Exception and the Norm*. *Ethics & International Affairs*. 2011, vol. 25, no. 3, pp. 263-269. ISSN 1747-7093; KŘÍŽ, Zdeněk - FRIDRICHOVÁ, Kateřina. *Libya and Criteria for Humanitarian Intervention*. *Czech Journal of Political Science*. 2015, vol. 22, no. 3, pp. 183-199. ISSN 1805-9503; KŘÍŽ, Zdeněk. *On some aspects of the UN Security Council Mandate Application during the NATO Operation Unified Protector*. *Obrana a strategie*. 2012, vol. 12, no. 2, pp. 17-26. ISSN 1802-7199.

or most influential in the context of their involvement in Libya. The review also aims to point out the white spaces or opportunities for further research on involvement of foreign actors in the country. Most of the publications are written in *lingua franca* of the academic world - English. Some of the papers are - considering both the origin of the author and the audience of the article - written in Czech. The primary focus of the review lies in academic, peer-reviewed articles, monographs, or proceedings by distinguished Western authors. Reports, working papers or other forms of publications are mentioned marginally for thematic triangulation or comparison purposes.

The review considers literature that covers both pre- and post-revolutionary involvement of actors that are considered as having the most intense relations with Libya. The text proceeds in a thematically-chronological order. Chronologically, the literature under review in each part is related to three periods: the pre-revolutionary times that include the colonial, monarchical and Qaddafi era, the revolutionary and intervention era, and post-revolutionary developments. Thematically, the first part mentions publications dealing with the role of Western states or supranational entities whose involvement in Libya is dated back to the pre-revolutionary and revolutionary periods: France, the UK, Italy, Germany, the USA, and the EU. The second part mentions the role of states whose activities emerge or re-emerge in Libya during or after the 2011 uprising, namely Russia, Egypt and the Gulf states; among them most notably Qatar, UAE and Saudi Arabia.

The publications under review points out an overall weakening of the Western strategic, economic and security ties in the post-revolutionary times and on the other hand increased strategic, but also economic interests of 'non-traditional actors' that concurrently represent two sides of a proxy conflict in Libya and are generally considered as contributing to deepening the divisions of the country. The review identifies a number of white spaces on an imaginary Western research map of Libya, which include a deeper research on strategies of both Western and Middle-Eastern states on the state, sub-state and regional levels, but also critical insights into the role of the European states in the proxy war led by the Gulf states in Libya.

BACK TO THE LEGACY OF THE WEST

France, UK, Italy and Germany: Colonial Past, Ideological Confrontation and Strategic Ties

A considerable number of writings reflecting on the Euro-Libyan relations focus on the pre-2011 era. One of the issues, that were subject of academic research before 2011, includes Libya's relations with Italy - former colonial power, Great Britain and France, which administered the Libyan territory until 1951 after Italy's military capitulation in 1943. Several papers dealt with Libya's historical experience with Europe or the West, respectively, which was considered as the determinant of ties with the Qaddafi régime that came to power in 1969. Among others, Joffé⁶ pointed out that the Libyan experience with French, British and Italian colonialism contributed to forming of

⁶ JOFFÉ, George. Libya and Europe. *The Journal of North African Studies*. 2001, vol. 6, no. 4, pp. 75-77. ISSN 1743-9345; cf. VANDEWALLE, Dirk. A History of Modern Libya. 2nd edition. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012. pp. 24-84. ISBN 978-1-107-61574-8.

Qaddafi's anti-Western pre-conceptions. However, Green Book régime's anti-Western ideological orientation can be considered rather as a background topic in the available writings on Libya's relations with its former colonial powers. Particularly mentioned in this context is the negative influence of the UK - US proximity on Euro-Libyan relations during the first two decades of Qaddafi's rule.⁷ In this context, Ronen's analysis of the rupture in the UK-Libyan relations may be pointed out together with the parallel rupture in the US-Soviet, and, respectively, the rapprochement in the Soviet-Libyan relations.⁸

Available writings report on a highly pragmatic nature of the Euro-Libyan relations: despite the above-mentioned politically-ideological tensions, European states, such as Italy, France or Germany, maintained good economic relations with Libya for several decades. Among the authors writing on this topic, Joffé and Zoubir pointed out that mutually beneficial economic relations were developing between Libya and its European partners particularly on bilateral level. While Libya served as a major hydrocarbon exporter - almost 80 per cent of Libya's exports were sent to Germany, Italy and Spain - European countries were identified as producing three quarters of Libya's goods imports.⁹ In accordance with Joffé and Lombardi,¹⁰ Zoubir considers as the most important Libyan commercial ties those with Italy. He focuses on a gradual strengthening of these ties since the end of 1990s; in particular, he mentions the act of Italian apologies for the crimes committed during the colonial period and subsequent contracts, which included construction of pan-Libyan highway connecting Tunisia and Egypt.¹¹ He addresses also the Libyan economic ties with France, Libya's sixth trading partner. France was one of the first states pursuing mutual economic relations in the early 1970s; these were re-established after a period of instability in the early 2000s.¹²

The line of relations of European states with Libya, which was driven by pragmatic economic and strategic considerations, however, is far from unproblematic. Particularly, these relations have become subject of discussion in the context of the EU security and migration policies. Among non-academic works related to the implications for human rights issues, a paper written by Lutterbeck claims that EU privileges areas perceived as key - migration and energy - over human rights or political reforms agenda, which are seen as low profile.¹³ In a similar vein, Joffé criticized the proposal of the EU-

⁷ Cf. JOFFÉ, George - PAOLETTI, Emanuela. Libya's foreign policy process. *The Journal of North African Studies*. 2011, vol. 16, no. 2, pp. 194-202. ISSN 1743-9345; ST JOHN, Ronald Bruce. Libya: Reforming the Economy, not the Polity. In: ZOUBIR, Yahia H. - AMIRAH-FÉRNANDEZ, Haizam. *North Africa. Politics, Region and the Limits of Transformation*. London, New York: Routledge, 2008, pp. 56-58. ISBN 978-0-415-42921-4.

⁸ RONEN, Yehudit. Libya's conflict with Britain: Analysis of a diplomatic rupture. *Middle Eastern Studies*, 2006, vol. 42, no. 2, pp. 271 ff. ISSN 1743-7881.

⁹ JOFFÉ, ref. 1, pp. 77-80; ZOUBIR, Yahia H. Libya and Europe: economic realism at the rescue of the Qadhafi authoritarian regime. *Journal of contemporary European studies*. 2009, vol. 17, no. 3, p. 404. ISSN 1478-2790.

¹⁰ LOMBARDI, Ben. The Berlusconi Government and Intervention in Libya. *The International Spectator*. 2012, vol. 46, no. 4. pp. 37-39. ISSN 1751-9721.

¹¹ ZOUBIR, ref. 9, p. 410

¹² Ibid. p. 412-14; Joffé, ref. 6, p. 81

¹³ LUTTERBECK, Derek. Migrants, weapons and oil: Europe and Libya after the sanctions. *The Journal of North African Studies*. 2009, vol. 14, no. 2, pp. 180-181. ISSN 1743-9345.

Libyan Framework Agreement, which was negotiated since 2008. He considers the whole policy line as driven by interests of Member states in controlling the European periphery.¹⁴ According to Hamood or Paoletti, Euro-Libyan cooperation in the migration control, or the extra-territorialization of European border control - as a result of transgovernmental cooperation in the justice and home affairs among EU member states¹⁵ - was mirroring the European inability or unwillingness to adopt a coherent approach to migration management in the region. With the view of the revolutionary and post-revolutionary times, European power politics and the lack of humanitarian and human rights protection on both sides of the Mediterranean was considered to have a too high cost in migrants' lives.¹⁶

Probably the most intensively discussed issue related to the role and interests of European actors in Libya has been the issue of the anti-Qaddafi intervention. The reviewed publications focus on different attitudes towards the intervention in the context of internal and external interests of the European countries in question. Discussed are the support of the intervention on the side France and Great Britain,¹⁷ but also the hesitation of Italy and Germany. The common French and British support for the uprising was analyzed from international, internal and historical point of view. Northern and Pack point out the support of the anti-Qaddafi uprising by Sarkozy's cabinet, or, respectively, by the highest diplomatic-intellectual circles. On the other hand, they argue, that Cameron's liberal-conservative government's stance was in accordance to previous cabinets' sharp position towards the Qaddafi régime.¹⁸ Davidson argues that the support of the British and French governments could be explained by the belief in the effectiveness of low-cost air war and view of the inability of free-riding on other's efforts.¹⁹ According to Ronen, one could only speculate about the role of the

¹⁴ JOFFÉ, George. Libya and the European Union: shared interests? *The Journal of North African Studies*. 2011, vol. 16, no. 2, pp. 246-247. ISSN 1743-9345.

¹⁵ LAVENEX, Sandra. Shifting up and out: The foreign policy of European immigration control. *West European Politics*. 2006, vol. 29, no. 2, pp. 329-350. ISSN 1743-9655.

¹⁶ HAMOOD, Sarah. EU-Libya Cooperation on Migration: A Raw Deal for Refugees and Migrants? *Journal of Refugee Studies*. 2008, vol. 21, no. 1, pp. 37-38. ISSN 1471-6925; ANDRIJASEVIC, Rutvica. DEPORTED: The Right of Asylum at the EU's External Border of Italy and Libya. *International Migration*. 2010, vol. 48, no. 1, pp. 148-174. ISSN 0020-7985; PAOLETTI, Emanuela. Migration and foreign policy: the case of Libya. *The Journal of North African Studies*. 2011, vol. 16, no. 2, pp. 215-231. ISSN 1743-9345; PAOLETTI, Emanuela. Power Relations and International Migration: The Case of Italy and Libya. *Political Studies*. 2011, vol. 59, no. 2, pp. 269-289. ISSN 1467-9248; SEEBERG, Peter. The Arab Uprisings and the EU's Migration Policies - The Cases of Egypt, Libya and Syria. *Democracy and Security*. 2013, vol. 9, no. 2, pp. 157-176. ISSN 1555-5860.

¹⁷ OVERBECK, Maximilian. European debates during the Libya crisis of 2011: shared identity, divergent action. *European Security*. 2014, vol. 23, no. 4, pp. 583-600. ISSN 0966-1545; KOENIG, Nicole. The EU and the Libyan Crisis - In Quest of Coherence? *The International Spectator*. 2011, vol. 46, no. 4, pp. 26-30; MENON, Anand. European Defence Policy from Lisbon to Libya. *Survival*. 2011, vol. 53, no. 3, pp. 75-90. ISSN 1468-2699.

¹⁸ NORTHERN, Richard - PACK, Jason. The role of outside actors. In: PACK, Jason (ed.). *The 2011 Libyan uprisings and the struggle for the post-Qadhafi future*. Houndmills, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013, pp. 117-121. ISBN 978-1-349-45582-9.

¹⁹ DAVIDSON, Jason W. France, Britain and the intervention in Libya: an integrated analysis. *Cambridge Review of International Affairs*. 2013, vol. 26, no. 2, pp. 310-329. ISSN 1474-449X.

historic legacy of the British military campaign in North Africa during the Second World War in influencing the British government's decision to intervene in the Libyan conflict in 2011.²⁰

In contrast to the Franco-British motivation, the initial Italian hesitation to join the anti-Qaddafi intervention is explained mainly by the efforts to maintain strategic security and economic ties from the Qaddafi era. Lombardi focuses on the Italian migration and commercial policies, claiming that the main goals of the Italian policy at that time were to preserve the commercial relationship with Libya and to prevent a mass exodus of illegal migrants from North Africa towards Italy.²¹ Last but not least, several authors analyzed the abstention of Germany from the UN Security Council Resolution 1973. As such, the abstention from the vote was interpreted - unlike Russia's or China's - as a veiled 'no'.²² Miskimmon suggests, that the German abstention was given by the inability of the Bundestag to lead an informed debate on the issue, by reluctance of leading politicians to ask the Bundestag for a mandate, by the concerns about the risks involved in the intervention, uncertainty about the French and British motives or, not less importantly, by the personal influence of Guido Westerwelle and by the constraints due to the upcoming regional elections.²³ Similarly, Bucher and colleagues observe a significant role of domestic audience in the German decision, which was influenced, in comparison to France, by a less clear guidance by the national media.²⁴

Compared to a relatively large number of publications dealing with Euro-Libyan pre-revolutionary relations, the post-2011 interests of European actors in Libya are mentioned in a significantly smaller amount of academic research paper, which Gaub calls 'bumpy relations'.²⁵ In other words, the structure of publications reflects general reduction of interest of European states in post-2011 Libya and an ongoing need to profile a new role in the country,²⁶ which finds itself in a vicious circle of a conflict, in which it 'cannot accept offers being made'.²⁷ Focusing on the few academic publications that reflect on post-2011 Euro-Libyan relations, there have been rather multilateral initiatives, including the activities of the UN support mission (UNSMIL),²⁸

²⁰ RONEN, Yehudit. Britain's Return to Libya: From the Battle of al-Alamein in the Western Libyan Desert to the Military Intervention in the 'Arab Spring' Upheaval. *Middle Eastern Studies*. 2013, vo. 49, no. 5, pp. 675-695. ISSN 1743-7881.

²¹ LOMBARDI, ref. 11, pp. 39-42; cf. NORTHERN - PACK, ref. 18, pp. 121-122

²² BROCKMEIER, Sarah. Germany and the Intervention in Libya. *Survival*. 2013, vol. 55, no. 6. pp. 63-90. ISSN 1468-2699.

²³ MISKIMMON, Alister. German Foreign Policy and the Libya Crisis. *German Politics*. 2012, vol. 21, no. 4, p. 404. ISSN 1743-8993; BROCKMEIER, ref. 23, p. 82.

²⁴ BUCHER, Jessica - ENGEL, Lena - HARFENSTELLER, Stephanie - DIJKSTRA, Hylke. Domestic politics, news media and humanitarian intervention: why France and Germany diverged over Libya. *European Security*. 2013, vol. 22, no. 4, pp. 524-539; ISSN 1746-1545.

²⁵ GAUB, Florence. The EU and Libya and the Art of the Possible. *The International Spectator*. 2014, vol. 49, no. 3, pp. 40-53. ISSN 1751-972.

²⁶ TOALDO, Mattia. Europe: Carving Out a New Role. In MEZTRAN, Karim - VARVELLI, Arturo (eds.). Foreign Actors in Libya's Crisis. Milano, Ledizioni LediPublishing, 2017. p. 57. ISBN 9788867056453. Available from: <https://goo.gl/ufGJGQ>

²⁷ GAUB, ref. 28, p. 40

²⁸ MARTIN, Ian. The United Nation's Role in the First Year of the Transition. In COLE, Peter -

negotiations of the - meanwhile failed - Skirath Agreement,²⁹ assistance to the fragile security sector, or European Border Assistance Mission (EUBAM) that aims to assist the capacities of Libya's border control.³⁰

The United States

The structure of the available publications focusing on the US interests in Libya resembles the pattern of the research on Euro-Libyan ties: more papers can be found on the pre-revolutionary developments than on the revolutionary and post-revolutionary period. Rather marginally are hereby mentioned the US - and British - interests in the Sanussi monarchy.³¹ Several authors focused on the development and wider geopolitical implications of the uneasy US relationship with the Qaddafi régime, which was handled as an utmost rogue³² one during the Raegan period - especially after 1986 and later after the Lockerbie bombing - yet, after the reconciliation of mutual ties dating to the late 1990s, it became a partner in the fight against Islamic extremism and terrorism.³³ The available writings demonstrate a highly pragmatic character of the US-Libyan relations over a longer period; both countries were willing to withdraw from their ideological positions to achieve other their economic and strategic security goals. In this context, Zoubir claims that Libya's policy decisions towards cooperation with the once despised Western enemy can be understood in relation to the US 'coercive diplomacy strategy', rather than by the overall ideological rapprochement. On the other hand, he observes the concessions on the US side along a limited number of issues.³⁴ Elsewhere, Zoubir claims that although Bush initially sought the régime change, both he and Clinton shifted their policies from the 'régime change' to 'policy change' around the WMD, Lockerbie and terrorism issues.³⁵ The US were considered as remaining highly cautious

MCQUINN, Brian (eds.). *The Libyan Revolution and its aftermath*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015, pp. 127-152. ISBN 978-0-19-021096-0; BODUSZYŃSKI, Mieczysław P. The external dimension of Libya's troubled transition: the international community and 'democratic knowledge' transfer. *The Journal of North African Studies*. 2015, vol. 20., no. 5. ISSN 1743-9345.

²⁹ TOALDO, ref. 27, pp. 57-72; cf. International Crisis Group. *The Libyan Political Agreement: Time for a Reset*. *Middle East and North Africa Report* [online]. 2016, no. 170. [cit 2017-6-26].

Available from: <https://goo.gl/8yHqWg>

³⁰ GAUB, ref. 25, pp. 47-51

³¹ VAN GENUGTEN, Saskia. *Libya in Western Foreign Policies, 1911-2011*. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016, 59 ff. ISBN 978-1-137-48949-4; cf. ZOUBIR ref. 34, pp. 48-49; pp. 31-32.

³² VAN GENUGTEN, ref. 31, 105 ff.; cf. ZOUBIR, Yahia H. The United States and Libya: the limits of coercive diplomacy. *The Journal of North African Studies*. 2011, vol. 16, no. 2, pp. 278-289. ISSN 1743-9345.

³³ ZOUBIR, Yahia. H. The United States and Libya: from confrontation to normalization. *Middle East Policy*. 2006, vol. 13, no. 2, pp. 54-56. ISSN 1475-4967; ZOUBIR, Yahia H. Libya in US foreign policy: from rogue state to good fellow? *Third World Quarterly*. 2002, vol. 23, no. 1, pp. 46-47. ISSN 1360-2241; VAN GENUGTEN, ref. 31, pp. 127-146.

³⁴ ZOUBIR, ref. 32, p. 283

³⁵ ZOUBIR, Yahia H. The United States, Islamism, Terrorism, and Democracy in the Maghreb: The Predominance of Security? In: ZOUBIR, Yahia H. - AMIRAH-FÉRNANDEZ, Haizam. *North Africa. Politics, Region and the Limits of Transformation*. London, New York: Routledge, 2008, pp. 56-58. ISBN 978-0-415-42921-4; cf. ZOUBIR, ref. 32, p. 282-284; ST JOHN, ref. 7, pp. 58-62

during the last decade of interaction with the Qaddafi régime.³⁶ Despite reaching the limits of cooperation in 2007, St John argued that considerable amount of important 'unfinished business' remained 'on the table',³⁷ which he or Zoubir located on an intersection of the US strategic interests³⁸ in wider regional security and Qaddafi's activities³⁹ in Maghreb, Sahara and the Sahel region.

The US-Libyan relationships in the post-revolutionary era have been subject to relatively few academic writings; they can be tracked in several policy-oriented papers.⁴⁰ This fact also relates to Fishman's argument on the relatively low priority of Libya in the US foreign policy agenda - even considered in the context of Middle-East policies.⁴¹ The US participation in the anti-Qaddafi intervention was reflected rather via the optics of multilateral NATO or UN involvement,⁴² or, respectively, the liberal interventionism principles.⁴³ Northern and Pack note in this context that the Obama administration - reluctant to take a leading role in this case - encouraged European countries to do so, while making clear their support for the interveners' cause.⁴⁴ The reflection of the American post-revolutionary involvement is further set into the context of multilateral initiatives, including support of the efforts lead by Martin Kobler and Bernardino Leon to end the ongoing civil war, the continued fight against extremist Islamism, which found expression also in the anti-ISIS Operation Odyssey Lightning in summer 2016, or help with solving the Libyan Central Bank crisis.⁴⁵ Fishman also points out that the Trump

³⁶ NORTHERN - PACK, ref. 18, p. 120

³⁷ ST JOHN, Ronald Bruce. Libya and the United States: A Faustian Pact. *Middle East Policy*. 2008, vol. 15, no. 1, p. 146. ISSN 1475-4967.

³⁸ ZOUBIR, ref. 29(1), p. 6; ZOUBIR, Yahia H. The United States and Maghreb-Sahel security. *International affairs*. 2009, vol. 85, no. 5, pp. 977-995; cf. ZOUBIR, ref. 31, pp. 277-279.

³⁹ JOFFÉ, George. Libya's Saharan destiny. *The Journal of North African Studies*. 2005, vol. 10, no. 3-4, pp. 605-617. ISSN 1743-9345.

⁴⁰ E.g. BLANCHARD, Christopher, M. Libya: Transition and U.S. Policy. Congressional research service [online]. 2017, October 2 [cit 2017-10-15]. Available from:

<https://fas.org/sgp/crs/row/RL33142.pdf>; BLANCHARD, Christopher, M. - HUMUD, Carla, E. The Islamic State and U.S. Policy. Congressional research service [online]. 2017, February 2 [cit 2017-10-15]. Available from: <https://fas.org/sgp/crs/mideast/R43612.pdf>

⁴¹ FISHMAN, Ben. United States: Reluctant Engagement. In: MEZRAN, Karim - VARVELLI, Arturo (eds.). *Foreign Actors in Libya's Crisis*. Milano, Ledizioni LediPublishing, 2017. pp. 20-21. ISBN 9788867056453. Available from: <https://goo.gl/hKSBuE>; cf. MEZRAN, Karim - VARVELLI, Arturo. *Libyan Crisis: International Actors at Play*. In MEZRAN, Karim - VARVELLI, Arturo (eds.). *Foreign Actors in Libya's Crisis*. Milano, Ledizioni LediPublishing, 2017. pp. 91ff. ISBN 9788867056453. Available from: <https://goo.gl/rbYkuU>

⁴² E.g. JONES, Bruce D. Libya and the Responsibilities of Power. *Survival*. 2011, vol. 53, no. 3, pp. 51-60. ISSN 1468-2699.

⁴³ E.g. MURRAY, Robert W. Humanitarianism, Responsibility or Rationality? Evaluating Intervention as State Strategy. In HEHIR, Aidan - MURRAY, Robert W. *Libya. The Responsibility to Protect and the Future of Humanitarian Intervention*. Houndmills, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013. ISBN 978-1-137-27395-6; CHIVVIS, Christopher. Libya and the Future of Liberal Intervention. *Survival*. 2012, vol. 54, no. 6, pp. 69-92. ISSN 1468-2699.

⁴⁴ NORTHERN - PACK, ref. 18, p. 120

⁴⁵ MEZRAN, Karim - VARVELLI, Arturo. *Libyan Crisis: International Actors at Play*. In MEZRAN, Karim - VARVELLI, Arturo (eds.). *Foreign Actors in Libya's Crisis*. Milano, Ledizioni LediPublishing, 2017. p. 21. ISBN 9788867056453. Available from: <https://goo.gl/yZLCPa>; cf. BODUSZYŃSKI, ref. 29, pp. 742-744. ; cf. BODUSZYŃSKI, ref. 29, pp. 742-744

administration's disengagement from Libya has enabled other actors, including Russia, to pursue their own interests in Libya.⁴⁶

RE-EMERGING POWERS: RUSSIA, EGYPT, GULF RIVALS AND TURKEY

Russia and Egypt: Game with the Haftar Factor

Whereas available publications cover the role of Russia and Egypt during the Qaddafi rule and in course of the 2011 uprising rather marginally, an increased discussion of their activities and interests in the Middle East can be observed in the recent years. Russia and Egypt are considered two key countries with respect to internationalization of the ongoing Libyan civil conflict.⁴⁷ In the literature focusing on the role of Russia in Libya, a broad consensus can be observed on importance of strategic security and geopolitical ties between the USSR and later Russia with the Qaddafi régime. Among others, Lefèvre and Beccaro point to various Russian efforts to re-establish previous Soviet-Libyan, or Russia-Libyan, respectively, relations.⁴⁸ Lefèvre argues that the Russian comeback after 2015 can be related to the void left by the Western countries and, at the same time, by the national economic interests determined by the faltering Russian economy. His position is in line with Beccaro, who claims that Russian Middle Eastern strategy is motivated by the imperative of consolidation of Russia's position in international politics. In this context, Becarro mentions Russian activities on a wider regional level - in Algeria, Morocco or Egypt - and on the local level. Here, Russia provides military and technical support to the camp of Khalifa Haftar, but declares support also to the internationally recognized Government of National Agreement (GNA).⁴⁹ In line with view shared by Megerisi or Toaldo, Beccaro considers the support for both sides of the conflict -the Haftar camp, or the Tobruk government, respectively, and on the other hand the GNA - as a further impetus for the escalation of the Libyan conflict.⁵⁰ In a short note, Katz, who dates the renewal of Russia-Libyan strategic ties back to the end of 2012, mentions negotiations about the renewal of operations between the Russian oil company Tatneft and Libyan National Oil Corporation and talks on resuming arms sales to Libya.⁵¹ Krylova aims to answer the question of conditions of the continuity of Russia's involvement in Libya. She observes Russia's role in the country via the optics of path-dependence or the lock-in effects logic.⁵² She argues that the

⁴⁶ FISHMAN, ref. 41, pp. 92, 101

⁴⁷ BECCARO, ref. 47, p. 73; cf. MEGERISI, ref. 54, p. 24

⁴⁸ LEFÈVRE, Raphaël. The pitfalls of Russia's growing influence in Libya. *The Journal of North African Studies*. 2017, vol. 22, no. 3, p. 330. ISSN 1743-9345; BECCARO, Andrea. Russia: Looking for a Warm Sea. In: MEZRAN, Karim - VARVELLI, Arturo (eds.). *Foreign Actors in Libya's Crisis*. Milano, Ledizioni LediPublishing, 2017, pp. 75-76. ISBN 9788867056453. Available from: <https://goo.gl/TmRBES>; cf. ZOUBIR, ref. 8, pp. 409, 412.; cf. ZOUBIR, ref. 8, pp. 409, 412.

⁴⁹ BECCARO, ref. 48, pp. 78-83; cf. LEFÈVRE, ref. 47, pp. 330-331

⁵⁰ BECCARO, ref. 48, pp. 86-89; cf. MEGERISI, Tarek - TOALDO, Mattia. Russia in Libya, A Driver for Escalation? *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace* [online]. 2016, December 8 [cit 2017-10-15]. Available from: <https://goo.gl/FDfuB7>.

⁵¹ KATZ, Mark N. Russia and the Conflict in Syria: Four Myths. *Middle East Policy*. 2013, vol. 20, no. 2, p. 42. ISSN 1475-4967.

⁵² Especially the *path dependence* approach provides a useful perspective for research on the role of Western actors.

Russian-Libyan economic relations in the gas and oil industries, transportation or military sphere, which date back to the Qaddafi times, had effects on constraining the ability of Libya's new elites to decrease significantly Russia's presence in the country.⁵³

The involvement of Egypt, Libya's most influential neighbour,⁵⁴ has been recently discussed in the context of economic and security activities pursued by the Sisi administration since 2013. Egypt has been considered as driven by various interests and ties. It was considered as an important ally of Russia,⁵⁵ but also as an active participant of the UAE anti-Islamist mission.⁵⁶ In the reflection of Russia's influence in Egypt, Becarro argues that Moscow gained a new position in Cairo after the disagreements between the US and Egypt in the aftermath of the Arab Spring. He reports on Egyptian-Russian ties on the military, economic, but also on diplomatic levels.⁵⁷ According to Megerisi, who focuses on Cairo's involvement in the Libya's divided arena, Egypt's unqualified support for Haftar's camp and its anti-Islamist ideology, which casts Islamism - associated also with the Libyan Muslim Brotherhood - as a vehicle for terrorism, has only hampered the possibility of a political solution and escalated the ongoing proxy war.⁵⁸ In agreement with Megerisi's findings, Mühlberger's paper argues that Egypt's internal motivation is the prevention of insecurity spillovers from Libya. Further, Egypt's activities - on the one hand the support for Haftar's coalition, on the other hand the declaration of support for the unity government (GNA) - is in line with the currently prevailing foreign-policy narrative of Egypt as a bridge between Africa and the Middle East. This stance implies also the proactive posture in regional and international affairs. Hereby, the support for Haftar's anti-Islamist Dignity coalition is considered as a fallback option in case of escalation of the Libyan conflict.⁵⁹

The Gulf Rivals: United Arab Emirates vs. Qatar & Co.

Whereas any possible pre-revolutionary interests and activities of the Gulf states in Libya remain rather undocumented in Western research papers, activities of the Gulf countries during the 2011 revolution and in the post-revolutionary era have been subject to a limited number of academic and a wider range of non-academic publications. Several authors hereby mention the strategic cooperation of Qatar and the United Arab Emirates during the revolution: both of the states are reported to cooperate behind the scenes to secure the Arab League statement that supported the adoption of the UN Security Council Resolution 1973. Besides diplomatic efforts, Qatar and the UAE were reported to deliver strategic, material, humanitarian, but also personal support to the Libyan rebels; arming rebel militias was also mentioned, along

⁵³ KRYLOVA, Yulia. Lock-in effect in the Russian-Libyan economic relations in the post-Arab Spring period. *The Journal of North African Studies*. 2017, vol. 22, no. 4, pp. 578-594. ISSN 1743-9345.

⁵⁴ MEGERISI, Tarek. Egypt, Algeria, Tunisia. Neighbouring States - Diverging Approaches. In: MEZRAN, Karim - VARVELLI, Arturo (eds.). *Foreign Actors in Libya's Crisis*. Milano, Ledizioni LediPublishing, 2017. p. 24. ISBN 9788867056453. Available from: <https://goo.gl/SY5sH5>

⁵⁵ BECCARO, ref. 48, pp. 78-79

⁵⁶ MÜHLBERGER, ref. 59, pp. 106

⁵⁷ BECCARO, ref. 48, pp. 78-79

⁵⁸ MEGERISI, ref. 54, pp. 24-29

⁵⁹ MÜHLBERGER, Wolfgang. Egypt's Foreign and Security Policy in Post-R2P Libya. *The International Spectator*. 2016, vol. 51, no. 2, pp. 99-112. ISSN 1751-9721.

with providing jets, surveillance missions, humanitarian supplies or financial help to the emerging political movements, and, in particular in the Qatari case, support for the moderate Islamists.⁶⁰ In this context, several authors emphasized the role of the Al-Jazeera station, in particular, the employment of preacher Allī-al Sallabi as an Al-Jazeera studio analyst. The broadcaster was considered as contributing to impelling the uprisings by portraying Islamists as a central unified force in the uprisings.⁶¹

Writings dealing with the post-2011 developments report on an increasing role of the Gulf monarchies, particularly the UAE, Qatar, and Saudi Arabia. These countries provided large amounts of foreign aid mainly to Egypt, but also to Libya. Van Genugten suggests that they were motivated by creating favourable environment for their investments.⁶² Only few available academic writings hereby document wider implications of the Gulf rivalry for the development of Libya's post-revolutionary internal cleavages.⁶³ However, the available literature provides a rather general identification of the state actors and their interests in Libya. A more detailed information on the development of the fluid proxy conflict and steps of its main actors is provided in non-academic publication formats.⁶⁴ Qatar together with Saudi Arabia, Turkey⁶⁵ or Sudan are reported to stand on one side of the Gulf proxy conflict. They support Islamic currents in Libya, which were represented since 2014 by the administration in Tripoli - the 'National Salvation Government' (NSG) and the General National Council (GNC).⁶⁶ The other conflict side is generally considered to be represented by the United Arab Emirates, Jordan or Bahrain, together with Egypt, Russia, or France. These countries side with the Tobruk and al-Bayda authorities, which are closely tied to the networks around general Khalifa Haftar, who controls Eastern

⁶⁰ NORTHERN - PACK, ref. 18, p. 122-125; cf. BODUSZYŃSKI, ref. 29, p. 744-745; VAN GENUGTEN, ref. 56 p. 41-49

⁶¹ AL NAHED, Sumaya. Covering Libya: A Framing Analysis of Al Jazeera and BBC Coverage of the 2011 Libyan Uprising and NATO Intervention. *Middle East Critique*. 2015, vol. 24, no. 3, pp. 251-267. ISSN 1943-6157; cf. NORTHERN - PACK, ref. 18, pp. 123-124; VAN GENUGTEN, ref. 62, pp. 43-46; BENOTMAN, Noman - PACK, Jason - BRANDON, James. Islamists. In PACK, Jason (ed.). *The 2011 Libyan uprisings and the struggle for the post-Qadhafi future*. Houndmills, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013. p. 192. ISBN 978-1-349-45582-9. Benotman et al. (pp. 191-192), however, point out that the role of the Islamists in the Libyan revolution should not be overestimated; they were an important, yet not preponderant force.

⁶² VAN GENUGTEN, Saskia. The Gulf States: Channeling Regional Ambitions in Different Directions. In: MEZRAN, Karim - VARVELLI, Arturo (eds.). *Foreign Actors in Libya's Crisis*. Milano, Ledizioni LediPublishing, 2017. p. 49-51. ISBN 9788867056453. Available from: <https://goo.gl/GKwvze>

⁶³ NORTHERN - PACK, ref. 18, pp. 122-125

⁶⁴ E.g. MEZRAN, Karim - MILLER, ELISSA. Libya: From Intervention to Proxy War [online]. Rafik Hariri Center for the Middle East. 2017, July 11 [cit 2017-12-10]. Available from: <https://goo.gl/Ww7Zol>

⁶⁵ TASTEKIN, Fehim. Turkey's war in Libya. *al-Monitor* [online]. 2014, December, 4 [cit 2017-10-15]. Available from: <https://goo.gl/ctbCWZ>; KAYA OGLU, Barin. Why Turkey is making a return to Libya [online]. 2016, June 14 [cit 2017-10-15]. Available from: <https://goo.gl/RiUzhK>

⁶⁶ VAN GENUGTEN, ref. 62, p. 55; NORTHERN - PACK, ref. 18, pp. 121-123, 133; cf. CAFIERO, Giorgio - WAGNER, Daniel. How the Gulf Arab Rivalry Tore Libya Apart. *The National Interest* [online]. 2015, December 11 [cit 2017-10-15]. Available from: <https://goo.gl/zmgvsE>

part of Libya and who has declared fight against any form of Islamism.⁶⁷ Only marginal attention is hereby paid to the wider consequences of the double game played by some of the external actors, that are concurrently keeping in touch with both warring parties.⁶⁸ The discussion of the role of the Libyan conflict in the light of a wider regional involvement of the Gulf states is secondary. In this context, Van Genugten claims that the Gulf states' reaction to the emerging Libyan conflict in 2012-2014 was overshadowed by their interests in the neighbouring countries, particularly in Egypt, where Qatar supported President Morsi's administration and Saudi Arabia and the UAE backed the subsequent military establishment of Abdel Fattah al-Sisi. She argues, that also the change in the Saudi leadership in 2015, subsequent prioritization of the anti-Iran agenda, or, respectively, of the war in Yemen, and following anti-Qatar tensions within the GCC had effects on the developments in Libya in terms of gains of the Khalifa Haftar camp.⁶⁹

CONCLUSION: WHITE SPACES ON THE RESEARCH MAP OF LIBYA

This text reviewed the recent Western research that deals with the role and interests of external actors in Libya. The review considered the most influential players in the Libyan arena that include Italy, France, UK, Russia, Egypt, UAE, Qatar, but also Turkey, Jordan, or Germany. The first part reflected on the writings focusing on the role of Western actors in Libya, considered as having a long and winding tradition of their engagement in Libya dating back to colonial era. A considerable part of the literature pointed out political tensions between the Qaddafi régime and the West and, on the other hand, the relatively flourishing economic and strategic security relations. Pre-revolutionary Libya was presented as an important economic partner of the European countries, particularly the UK, France, Italy, Germany, or Spain. On the other hand, several authors questioned the cooperation of individual member states with Libya in the energy field or migration control, which was in their view pursued at the expense of human lives. The main topic of recent research related to European actors consisted in their role in the 2011 intervention; several authors hereby observe differences in the motivations of France and UK, Italy and Germany given by both internal and internationally-political constellations. The UK and France - main supporters of the intervention - were considered as driven by the international power constellation, mainly the US unwillingness to take a lead of the intervention. On the other hand, Italy and Germany were presented as motivated by internal concerns, in particular, in the Italian case, by maintaining the economic and strategic ties with the Qaddafi régime that helped them control African migration flows. The writings covering post-2011 relations pointed out an ongoing, yet not successful search for a new European role in Libya. Several multilateral initiatives were mentioned, including the EUBAM mission or the negotiations of the - meanwhile failed - Skhirat agreement.

⁶⁷ MEZRAN, VARVELLI, ref. 4, p. 21; VAN GENUGTEN, ref. 63, p. 52; MÜHLBERGER, ref. 57, pp. 106, 120-121; cf. BARFI, Barak. Khalifa Haftar: Rebuilding Libya from the Top Down. Research Note, no. 22. *The Washington Institute for Near East Policy* [online]. August, 2014 [cit 2017-12-8]. Available from: <https://goo.gl/o3Yrtl>

⁶⁸ e.g. MEZRAN, VARVELLI, ref. 46, pp. 17-21

⁶⁹ VAN GENUGTEN, ref. 63. pp. 51-54

Research papers focusing on the role and interests of United States deal relatively deeply with the complicated relationship with the Green Book régime, which developed, in the US perspective, from a rogue to a partner in the Global War on Terror. The available literature agrees on the fact that Libya has not been a priority for the US administration, even in the context of its Middle East policies. Several authors hereby pointed out the American hesitation to take a lead of the international intervention and further disengagement from participating in the conundrum of the civil war. Available literature reflects also on the US decreasing engagement in Libya since 2012. It mentions the US support for multilateral efforts to solve the ongoing conflict politically, but also anti-terrorist campaigns, which included the Odyssey Lightning operation of 2016.

Writings dealing with the role of the actors (re)emergent in post-revolutionary Libya discuss increasing activities of Egypt and Russia, which are currently considered among the key actors internationalizing the Libyan conflict. Libya was considered as a part of Russia's strategy of consolidating its position in international politics. Hereby, several authors pointed out the relevance of ties dating back to the Qaddafi era, which helped to re-establish the Russian influence in the gas and oil industries, transportation or military spheres. In several writings, Russia, together with Egypt, but also some European countries, was mentioned as playing a double game in the Gulf countries' proxy war. On the one hand, Russia has been supporting general Haftar and his anti-terrorism campaign, on the other hand, it joined the Western states in declaration of support to the internationally recognized Government of National Accord. This strategy was considered as a means of keeping influence on both sides of the ongoing conflict. Similarly, the current Egyptian foreign policy towards Libya was considered as led by the aim to increase the country's influence in the region, or shaped by the idea of a bridge between Africa and the Middle East, respectively, by the anti-Islamist position of the Sisi administration, and no less by the pragmatic goal of building up a politically stable neighbour.

The last section discussed the literature dealing with involvement of Qatar, United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia and their allies. The Gulf states are widely seen as the main external instigators of a proxy war in Libya, which practically divides the country and delays any political solution of the conflict. The available literature discusses more a general line of relations among the Gulf countries from initial cooperation in support of the uprisings to the Qatari turn to support of the Islamist movement. As the papers dealing with the engagement of the Gulf states in the further escalation of the Libyan conflict were considered as providing general information, it was pointed out that more information can be found in non-academic publications.

When summarizing the reflection of interests of the external actors in Libya provided by the literature under review, we can observe shift in preferences or possibilities of external actors to pursue their interests in the pre- and post-revolutionary era. In this light, post-revolutionary (dis)engagement of Western states, particularly the US, in the Libyan affairs can be interpreted. This was considered also as given by the inability of the new internationally recognized Libyan administration to answer adequately to the offers being made, but also by Western interests and commitments in the wider Middle East. The shift is visible also in the activities of non-traditional or (re)emergent actors: Russia and Egypt, and the Gulf states, which were considered as pursuing their wider

strategic geopolitical and security interests in Libya. Both Russia and Egypt were reported to seek economic, diplomatic and military ties with Libya. Last but not least, interests of the Gulf states were reflected largely in the perspective of ongoing rivalry between Qatar and the United Arab Emirates, or Saudi Arabia, respectively, and their allies, which was considered as a key for their activities in Libya. Compared to the 'traditional' ties of the Western states, the 'non-traditional' or (re)emergent states were tentatively reported to have preferred relations with sub-state entities, be it the Islamist movements, or the Tobruk and Al-Bayda administrations and the networks around former general Khalifa Haftar. The available literature indicates that the non-traditional actors have addressed more precisely the actors playing a substantial role in the ongoing Libyan civil conflict.

Despite the fact that the number of publications focusing on the role and interests of external actors in Libya is growing, an overall thematic spectrum of the reviewed publications can be still considered as limited. Future opportunities for Western research can be observed in deeper investigation on the role of the 'emerging' states, in particular, the identification of development of wider strategies of the Gulf countries or other Middle-Eastern state- and non-state actors in the Libyan conflict, involvement of Russia in the pre-revolutionary period, or Russian and Egyptian strategies on the sub-state level. The participation of European countries⁷⁰ in the proxy war is a topic for a critical research; this perspective was related mainly to the Gulf states. A deeper reflection would be needed also on possible factors leading to dis-engagement of European states and the US in post-revolutionary Libya. Finally, further research should also address the role of trans-national power networks, individual or group external actors in post-revolutionary Libya. Nevertheless, security reasons are a factor limiting opportunities to pursue research directly in Libya. A further limiting factor for an academic research can be seen in generally dynamic developments related to the conflict or in the involvement of classified information. Owing to these factors, an imaginary Western research map of the country, which was called 'terra incognita'⁷¹ in 2011, will stay full of white spaces in the near future.

⁷⁰ MEZRAN, VARVELLI, ref. 42, p. 21

⁷¹ WEHREY, Frederic. Libya's Terra Incognita. Who and What Will Follow Qaddafi? Foreign Affairs [online] February 28, 2011 [cit 2017-10-15]. Available at: <https://goo.gl/M7Jokg>

