

Helpdesk Research Report

Political economy of Libya after the Qadhafi regime

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Question

Present an annotated bibliography of key references on the political economy of Libya. Focus on references about the post-Qadhafi situation; a selection of key pre-2011 references can be used as relevant. Provide an overview of the key issues and suggest additional references.

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1. Overview

With the 2011 uprisings and the fall of the Qadhafi regime, Libya has experienced a radical transformation of its political system, with significant social and economic changes in state and society. As the current context remains fluid, understanding the new Libyan political economy is fraught with difficulty and uncertainty: which factors from Libyan history – old and recent – are still relevant, and what is new? This rapid review of the literature identified a limited rigorous evidence base on these questions. Frequently mentioned aspects of the political economy of Libya after the Qadhafi regime are:

- Libya **lacks a stable, unified and inclusive state**. Qadhafi had deliberately weakened the state and any social institutions that could have been a counterweight to the power of his regime. He had institutionalised government through informal rule by a small elite, wielding both oil-funded patronage and repression.
- The predominant social and political dynamic is **fragmentation** based on different interests, identities and loyalties. Individual and collective interests and identities are multiple and sometimes competing. Major ones relate to **cities, regions, tribes (including factions and families), political factions and religious orientation**. As a result, fragmented constituencies are

present in formal elite institution (e.g. the General National Congress, elected in 2012), and in informal institutions and Libyan society at large.

- **Local actors and dynamics** dominate politics, with a strong connection between cities or regions and tribes. The centre is weak, while some peripheries are empowered (e.g. some revolutionary strongholds and some places resisting further change). This is rooted in a long-term Libyan history of localism and regionalism, for example in the eastern province of Cyrenaica. There are regular tensions around the balance of power between the national, regional and local levels of power, and between major provinces.
- The new national rulers, who are composed of revolutionaries and the Muslim Brotherhood, have resorted to **patronage** to ensure political stability. To compensate their precarious hold on power, they have used resources from the oil and gas sectors and offered government appointments to all major factions. Allocation of oil money is a major stake.
- However, the political system is not always responsive to grievances and aspirations from **revolutionaries**, including on justice and reconciliation. In addition, a number of armed factions (e.g. brigades from the north-west city Zintan and federalists), are alienated from national decisions. The tensions between “pro-revolution” and conservative actors are a significant axis of political and economic opposition.
- **Security** is poor. National security forces have very little legitimacy and reach. An array of diverse revolutionary armed groups (e.g. in Misrata and Benghazi), factional militias, unregulated armed groups and jihadist groups have taken their place. Central rulers have in effect subcontracted security and conflict-resolution functions to some armed groups and local notables, creating ad hoc security arrangements.
- The defining feature of the economy remains **oil and its legacy of rentier state**: a starkly imbalanced economic structure, where nearly no sector beside energy is well developed; a largely inefficient state working for patronage; and poor economic governance (e.g. opacity, corruption, and lack of regulation and accountability).

After a brief discussion of the state of the evidence (section 2), the report summarises the findings of selected references about the key issues and actors (section 3) and political and regional differences (section 4). Section 5 identifies further references on Libyan political economy¹.

2. Evidence base

There is a **limited body of rigorous, empirically-based evidence** on the political economy of Libya since the 2011 uprisings. The overall evidence base is diversified, with a mix of quantitative, qualitative and mixed studies from academic, practitioner and policy-oriented sources (with academic sources dominant). A small number of academics and policy experts have been producing the key works on Libya and its political economy. Evidence thus tends to rely on findings by a small number of authors. Taken as a whole, the evidence base covers a range of local, regional and national levels, often with significant historical depth and the use of widely cited references. A majority of references are based at least partly on primary empirical research. Findings appear to be largely consistent. Authors may diverge on the degree of certainty and detail of their findings, and they sometimes look at distinct issues or places. One weakness of the evidence base is that non-academic references often do not clearly detail the methodology behind their findings.

¹ Within each sub-section of sections 3 and 4, references are ordered from most general to most specific. In section 5, the suggestions of additional references within each sub-section are ordered alphabetically.

All references on Libya since 2011 used in this report acknowledge **major uncertainties** about the political economy of the country, due to the fluid and complex situation there, and the challenges of fieldwork and data compilation. The “confusing array of forces and the institutional chaos” following the fall of Qadhafi are compounded by “a dearth of published research on the political forces that emerged during and after the revolution” (Lacher, 2013: p.5). Likewise, academic publications on post-revolutionary political economy are scarce, as the most pressing issue at the moment seems to be security (expert comment).

There is also uncertainty about which past factors of Libyan political economy still apply, and what new ones may be. For instance, there is a consensus in the literature that the Qadhafi regime had far-reaching influence on the country’s political economy. Now, key factors such as the leadership by Muammar Qadhafi and his immediate family, and the set of formal government structures and processes tied to the *Jamāhīriyah* (“state of the masses”) are absent. This report does not make assumptions about what elements of past analyses still apply to the post-Qadhafi political economy. The body of this report therefore uses only references that examine Libya after the 2011 uprisings, though a selection of older references with likely relevance are listed in section 5².

Coverage and evidence gaps

Some **types of social groupings** are well covered, such as tribal, regional, local and religious affiliations, and to some extent ethnicity. Other social structures appear to be under-researched or not discussed in a systematic way in political economy analyses, including: class; gender³; migration (Libya as host, transit and departure country); age groups and generations; and (dis)ability.

The analysis of **economic sectors** is uneven. There is extensive discussion of the past, present and future of oil and, to a lesser extent, gas and banking sectors. By contrast, other sectors are barely discussed, including agriculture. Studies are also scarce on social services such as health, education, housing, social protection, employment, migration, and gender equality⁴.

3. Key actors and issues

Overview

Revolution and Its Discontents: State, Factions and Violence in the New Libya

Smits, R., Janssen, F., Briscoe, I., & Beswick, T. (2013). The Hague: Netherlands Institute of International Relations Clingendael. <http://www.clingendael.nl/sites/default/files/Libya%20-%20Revolution%20and%20its%20discontents.pdf>

Source: policy advice institute	Type: report
Methodology: not indicated (no methodology section); political economy analysis, which appears based on expert interviews, primary and secondary sources	

² This report is based on a search of literature from the past 10 years, with a focus on post-Qadhafi Libya.

³ This rapid literature review identified only one rigorous reference on gender and post-2011 Libyan political economy: Langhi, Z. (2013). Gender and State Building in Libya: Towards a Politics of Inclusion. *Journal of International Women’s Studies*, 14(5), 112-121. However, the journal indicates that it withdrew the article due to a conflict in publishing protocol (<http://vc.bridgew.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1723&context=jjws>).

⁴ By contrast an academic book by Otman and Karlberg (2007) about Libyan political economy in the 2000s, remains widely cited as a reference on the topic.

Statehood with a unitary authority and an inclusive political settlement remains to be built. Post-colonial Libya had been an “accidental state”, and Qadhafi created “institutionalized statelessness” (8-14). Qadhafi’s system functioned through the informal rule of a small group of leaders, and relied on oil-funded patronage and repression to ensure quiescence. The revolution brought down this system, and now faces the task of state-building.

The revolution spawned a strong **fragmentation** of distinct groups and interests – tribes, cities, regions and various Islamist orientations, with individuals having multiple loyalties. These constituencies now make up Libyan politics within the General National Congress. Small parties and non-party politicians predominated in the Congress, which is the primary vehicle for elite infighting. The new political establishment is thus faced with new cleavages and “recalcitrant spoilers” (1). The “hardline revolutionaries, aligned with the Muslim Brotherhood”, seem to have “a fragile and contested command” of the state (p.2).

The new rulers have turned towards **patronage** to ensure political stability, by using the oil and gas sectors and trying to include all the main groups in ministerial appointments. However, this system has not always been responsive to the revolutionaries’ grievances and ambitions. Estranged armed factions, such as brigades from the north-west city Zintan and federalists, may be looking to protection rackets as the only means to get what they want from the state. Political inclusiveness is also complicated as armed groups have tried to force the exclusion of former members of the Qadhafi regime in 2013.

There is currently a **breakdown of security**. Fragmentation has also diminished the legitimacy and reach of the national security forces. Hundreds of revolutionary armed groups and other militia have taken their place. Armed groups include not only revolutionary brigades (e.g. in Misrata and Benghazi), but also pressure groups linked to political groupings. Some factional militias have sought control over smuggling routes, adopted Jihadist ideology, carried out terrorist attacks and shot at civilian protesters. These militias seem to have growing connections to transnational Islamist groups (mostly al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb and its offshoots). Territorial power gained by armed force has become an essential part of the Libyan political system.

The 2011 Libyan Uprisings and the Struggle for the Post-Qadhafi Future

Pack, J. (Ed.) (2013). New York: Palgrave Macmillan. Excerpts available at:

http://books.google.co.uk/books?id=soKBM_I0k3cC

Source: academic	Type: edited book (collection of contributions)
Methodology: generally based on primary and secondary sources and fieldwork (before and/or after the uprisings); largely social science analysis by widely cited academic or policy authors	

This collection of contributions explores a range of political economy issues in depth, often anchoring them in long-term historical perspectives⁵. Among others, it addresses:

- Relations between a **weak power centre and peripheries that seek autonomy** – both revolutionary peripheries and those that support the old order or a conservative change (Pack).
- The dynamics generated by **tribes, Islam, oil and regionalism**, which retain perennial significance in society, norms and institutions. This is a major continuity with Libyan history (Sawani).
- The post-Qadhafi economy, where the legacy of a **rentier state** constrains policy (St John).

⁵ The limited space of a helpdesk report and the diversity of topics examined in this book make it impossible to present summaries of each chapter.

- The rise of **tribal politics** – for social action, debate, military mobilisation, substitute governance, and political positioning – and the related **primacy of local interests and loyalties** (Lacher; also see Lacher 2013 in this report).
- The South of Libya, with a focus on the complex political and armed mobilisations of the Tuaregs and Tubu. Their mobilisations have stemmed from legacies of Qadhafi-era marginalisation and manipulation and from nuanced **ethnic, local and ideological loyalties** (Smith).
- The diversity of **Islamist politics** and mobilisations, with significant differences between Salafists, Muslim Brothers and violent jihadists (Benotman, Pack & Brandon).

Security issues

Divided We Stand: Libya’s Enduring Conflicts

International Crisis Group (2012). International Crisis Group, Middle East/North Africa Report No 130. [http://www.crisisgroup.org/~media/Files/Middle%20East%20North%20Africa/North%20Africa/libya/130-divided-we-stand-libyas-enduring-conflicts.pdf](http://www.crisisgroup.org/~/media/Files/Middle%20East%20North%20Africa/North%20Africa/libya/130-divided-we-stand-libyas-enduring-conflicts.pdf)

Source: police advice institute	Type: report
Methodology: no methodology section; policy-oriented social science analysis, which appears to be based on fieldwork (interviews and observation), and primary and secondary sources	

The main factor driving both positive and negative developments in Libya has been the **lack of a fully functioning state and of effective army or police** (i). Local actors – civilian and military councils, revolutionary brigades, notables – “have stepped in to provide safety, mediate disputes and impose ceasefires” (i).

- The **rebels** who rose up against Qadhafi were much better armed. Suspicious of former members of the old regime and “pleased with their newfound power”, they were unwilling to surrender their autonomy (i).
- **Central authorities** have in effect subcontracted security to largely autonomous armed groups. The National Transitional Council encouraged the parallel military and police forces set up by revolutionary brigades, because it viewed them as necessary for the state to secure the country.
- **Local notables** have proven to be effective mediators adept at leading negotiations to achieve longer-lasting ceasefires. To do so, they have appealed to Libyan identity and Islam and resorted to social pressure as well as customary law.

During and after the 2011 uprisings, an **ad hoc security patchwork** has had significant success. During the uprisings, proliferating armed groups sought material advantage, political influence or revenge. Yet local leaders, revolutionary brigades and a variety of civilian and military councils “took it upon themselves to keep the country whole” (p.i). But these actors have both contained and fuelled conflicts: some armed groups still “target foes and settle scores; battle for political and economic influence; evade accountability; and entrench geographic and community rivalries” (p.i). Ad hoc security is also **unsustainable in the absence of a strong state**, and local conflicts are frozen rather than resolved (p.i).

The fall of the Qadhafi regime and the collapse of the security forces left in their wake “an armed population with 42 years worth of pent-up **grievances**”, rivalries between communities and towns, and intra-communal conflicts. Disputes “are rooted in competing claims over land, property and power that pre-existed Qadhafi” (p.ii). They were exacerbated by the regime’s clientelism and patronage, then by communities’ varying positions during the uprisings, and by acts of revenge in its aftermath.

Economic structure

Libya: Post-War Challenges

Vandewalle, D. (2011). African Development Bank, Economic Brief.

http://www.afdb.org/fileadmin/uploads/afdb/Documents/Publications/Brocure%20Anglais%20Lybie_No rth%20Africa%20Quarterly%20Analytical.pdf

Source: practitioner (regional organisation)	Type: report
Methodology: social science analysis, based on desk review of existing literature and author's previous field studies (author is widely cited academic specialist on Libya)	

Under Qadhafi, Libya developed the political and economic problems of a **rentier oil state**, which were exacerbated by Qadhafi's ideological opposition to modern state institutions. The problems included: "low and inconsistent regulation, overcentralization of economic power in the hands of the regime, Dutch Disease⁶, lack of diversification, high inefficiencies, and extensive patronage" (p.4). State intervention in the economy was "pervasive but primitive": it dominated all manufacturing, agriculture, retail, banking, insurance, major services and trade. The government also provided interest-free credit, spending, subsidies, price control and massive public employment.

By 2011, the economy continued to show **economic imbalances** and remained subject to "political manipulation at the expense of economic expertise" (p.10). In priority areas such as "human capital", education and unemployment, very little progress had been made by 2011 (p.9).

Governance challenges are "enormous" (p.1). This is due to traditional distrust between different tribal groups and between provinces. Another problem is the lack of shared frameworks and institutions to resolve differences and organise power relations.

From Inherited Wealth to Productive Economy. Planning for Development in Post-Civil War Libya

Vandewalle, D. (2013). African Development Bank, Economic Brief.

<http://www.afdb.org/fileadmin/uploads/afdb/Documents/Publications/Economic%20Brief%20-%20From%20Inherited%20Wealth%20to%20Productive%20Economy%20-%20Planning%20for%20Development%20in%20Post-Civil%20War%20Libya.pdf>

Source: practitioner (regional organisation)	Type: report
Methodology: not indicated (no methodology section); social science analysis, which seems to be based on primary and secondary sources and on expertise of widely cited author (academic specialist)	

Distinct but interrelated difficulties hamper plans for the long-term, integrated development of Libya:

- A **rentier state** (see previous paper in this report).
- **Larger political economy issues:** extensive patronage, intermediation and corruption; high state autonomy; low levels of regulation; and the fragmentation of society, which raises problems of trust, personal initiative-taking, and legitimacy.
- **Security and order.**

For now, the economy remains typical of a **non-diversified, inefficient oil exporter**:

⁶ Dutch Disease refers to the relationship between the increase in exploitation of natural resources and a decline in manufacturing or agriculture.

- **Resources** are: a rich endowment of hydrocarbon resources, substantial capital reserves, and “human capital” (but few Libyans have the skills needed by the economy and there is high unemployment).
- **Institutions** have low levels of regulation, accountability, transparency and rule of law.
- State **management** is inefficient, with weak economic guidance. There are low levels of private enterprise and a traditional distrust of private entrepreneurs.
- The **business environment** is not conducive to foreign participation, with an unpredictable legal and investment climate, and a lack of access to experts and expertise. There is also limited use of regional and international expertise and participation beyond the energy sector.
- There is little **sectoral** diversification. Sectors with low levels of development include healthcare, education, urban planning, agriculture, transit trade, construction and tourism. The banking system is weak. There is a high level of informal economic activities in several sectors. Outside the hydrocarbon sector, efficiency is low, and upstream/downstream activity is lacking in the hydrocarbon sector.
- Libya’s **geography** makes it an important transit location between Europe and sub-Saharan Africa, and for trans-Maghrebi and Maghrebi-Arab trade.

The traditional role of **state welfare** has not been transformed. A number of ordinary Libyans have become accustomed to a distributive state and associate the greater reliance on private sector after 2003 with the inequities this produced. The payments to revolutionaries who fought against the former regime, to former political prisoners, and to the population at large, indicate the difficulties for an oil state to avoid using public funds for temporary political goals.

Debates about the economy were important during the civil war, but have largely waned as other priorities have taken centre stage (such as economic reconstruction and the legacies of 2011 violence). Yet with unchanged fiscal policies, spending trends will severely erode the country's wealth, even if hydrocarbon prices remain high (p.2).

Oil and gas sectors

Energy Policies and Domestic Politics in the MENA Region in the Aftermath of the Arab Upheavals: The Cases of Lebanon, Libya, and KSA

Khodr, H., & Ruble, I. (2013). *Politics & Policy*, 41(5), 656–689. <http://dx.doi.org/doi:10.1111/polp.12033>

Source: peer-reviewed academic journal	Type: article
Methodology: social science study using a cross-sectional exploratory comparison of three cases, based on secondary sources (academic, practitioner and policy sources)	

Libya benefits from large energy resources with a small population. However, the energy sector has to contend with **negative legacies**: corrupt and opaque governance; no parliamentary oversight of the use of national resources; no rule of law; inefficient and biased energy subsidies which have often benefited the richest; and overstaffing in the public sector.

The key issues for the energy sector are **security and stability**. There is continued uncertainty about “security conditions, state cohesion, political institutions, the return of foreign capital and expertise, contract terms, and industry oversight” (p.674). The oil and natural gas industries are, however, recovering.

Libyan **energy policies** face a number of obstacles (pp.678-679):

- **Political challenges:** political transition, turmoil and insecurity; long-suppressed groups aiming for supremacy; minority groups looking for greater influence and liberal groups demanding reforms; strategic changes in the structure of the political systems; state-building.
- **Policy challenges:** no national energy policy, adequate policies and regulations; few experts in the administration of the energy sector; ongoing reform of legislative institutions.
- **Administrative challenges:** absence of adequate human resources planning; lack of capacity building; no “sound governance”.
- **Strategic challenges:** relation with the European Union.
- **Economic challenges:** oil prices; increased demand for energy; competition between big consumers of energy; less oil from the Middle East, leading to decreased influence; rentier economy; development of new energies.

4. Political and regional differences

Fault Lines of the Revolution: Political Actors, Camps and Conflicts in the New Libya

Lacher, W. (2013). Berlin: Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik / German Institute for International and Security Affairs, SWP Research Paper 2013/RP 04. http://www.swp-berlin.org/fileadmin/contents/products/research_papers/2013_RP04_lac.pdf

Source: police advice institute	Type: report
Methodology: no methodology section; author is widely cited expert on Libya; social science analysis, which appears based on interviews, primary and secondary sources	

The study identifies the key post-2011 actors and their interests, alliances and conflicts. The first observation is that post-2011 Libya is deeply divided, with a **fragmented political landscape**.

Two opposing camps are emerging, “each including a wide range of interests” (p.5):

- Forces that define themselves as revolutionary. They seek a total renewal of political and business elites, and a monopoly of the gains from the uprisings to their advantage.
- A “heterogeneous camp of established, moderate and conservative forces” (p.5). They want to re-establish stability and fear further loss of influence to the revolutionaries. This camp comprises “the actual or potential losers of a continuing revolution” (p.35).

This dominant rift runs through elites and the General National Congress. It also divides different cities, tribes and elements in the security sector, threatening to separate them into winners and losers. This division means that reading the situation as a struggle between Islamists and seculars/liberals is “misleading” (35).

The rift is particularly visible in **four areas of conflict**:

- The balance of power between **local and regional actors** which “is still being negotiated or fought over” (p.6). Such conflicts often stem from particular cities and tribes being on different sides in the civil war.
- Power struggles in the **security sector**.
- Conflicts over **justice and reconciliation**.

- The **economy and public sector**. Conflict is emerging over state expenditure, public sector, property rights and control of smuggling.

Local actors dominate politics. The above-mentioned conflicts remain “largely confined to the local level or individual sectors” (p.5). Institutional arrangements vary by area: structures with strong internal cohesion have emerged in some revolutionary strongholds, while power remains highly contested in other places. There is no visible national power struggle between both camps: the predominance of local structures and their rivalries is reflected at the national level, including in the General National Congress and the government. Only some Islamist organisations are beginning to craft a clear national agenda. Otherwise, “parochial interests and shifting coalitions” derived from local networks dominate, including in Mahmoud Jibril’s National Forces Alliance (p.6). The revolutionary camp is divided into factions, which are mostly based on local interests and, in some cases, on ideology as well. Many revolutionary leaders remain in armed groups.

Libya in Transition: The Fragile and Insecure Relation between the Local, the National and the Regional

Holm, U. (2013). In L. Riis Andersen (Ed.), *How the Local Matters. Democratization in Libya, Pakistan, Yemen and Palestine*. Copenhagen: Danish Institute for International Studies, 1, 26-45.

http://www.diis.dk/files/publications/Reports2013/RP2013-01-How-the-local-matters_web.jpg.pdf

Source: police advice institute	Type: report
Methodology: no methodology section; social science analysis, which seems based on secondary sources	

A **plurality of competing power sources** has shaped the political culture of Libya (p.26). This comprises “tribal, regional, Islamic, civil and urban political organisation and state-like institutions which result in different conceptions of power, rule and legitimacy” (pp.26-27). With the revolution, **local actors** have enjoyed greater public trust and legitimacy than central ones because local non-state armed groups ousted the Qadhafi regime and have since provided a minimum of security and social welfare.

Since 2012, there have been **three main challenges**: state monopoly versus privatisation of the use of violence; the relationship between centre and periphery (“localism”); and “accountability and transparency in the distribution of oil money” (p.27).

The political and institutional **culture of the Qadhafi era** impacts on the present situation. In particular, Qadhafi used institutional instability, arbitrariness and concentration of power to stifle any counter-power. This left a legacy of mistrust in decision-making and centralisation among the population. Since 2011, a myriad of armed non-state actors and other local and tribal actors have thus mistrusted and resisted attempts at setting up a centralised locus of power in Tripoli. At the same time, delegations of power to cities and regions, with a weak power centre, have meant that the periphery (local councils and armed non-state actors) keeps its monopoly of political and military strength.

Informal actors matter:

- There are multiple informal and formal **security entities** at the local and regional level, overlapping and sometimes fighting. The numerous armed non-state groups “are fighting amongst themselves and against centralisation of power in Tripoli”, while the new army is very weak (p.29). At least four categories of armed groups are currently active, each performing different political and social functions. They can be identified as: the powerful revolutionary brigades in the east and west (based on place or tribe); unregulated brigades; post-revolutionary brigades (primarily defending “pro-Qadhafi neighbourhoods”); and militias (including criminal networks and violent extremists) (pp.30-31).

- **Tribes** are one of several factors that have underpinned social and geographic dynamics since 2011, with a diversity of positions within tribes as well. Tribes have played an important role in conflict resolution within and across tribes. However, other types of social structures have also proven significant, in particular workplace and neighbourhood solidarity in coastal cities (especially among youth).
- **Regional identities** remain influential. For example the eastern region of Cyrenaica has a long history of resistance to outside rule and of marginalisation and repression under Qadhafi. Such differences among regions have led to discussions and conflicts about regional autonomy, (de)centralisation and localism, and federalism. There are also issues related to **ethnicity** (for Berbers, Tubu and Tuaregs) and race (e.g. Black Libyans who have been discriminated against).

Religious groups did not do very well in the 2012 elections, coming a distant second behind a loose national coalition spanning the tribes and cities of the country (called the National Forces Alliance). Some religious groups (e.g. Salafists, Muslim Brotherhood) have criticised or attacked people or groups on religious grounds.

Oil and gas wealth has become a major economic and political resource after the first discoveries in the 1950s. Close to 80 per cent of proven oil reserves are in the eastern Sirte basin. Oil production has now gone back to a high level. All regions are dependent on each other for a functioning oil system. Use of energy profits had been opaque and kleptocratic under Qadhafi, in collaboration with foreign oil companies. There is a popular demand for transparency and equal distribution of oil money (especially in Cyrenaica), to improve educational, health and social welfare and make it responsive to local needs.

Tribes, Revolution, and Political Culture in the Cyrenaica Region of Libya

Hüsken, T. T. (2012). In M. Bouziane, C. Harders, & A. Hoffmann (Eds.) (2013). *Local Politics and Contemporary Transformations in The Arab World. Governance Beyond the Center*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 214-231. Excerpts available from <http://books.google.co.uk/books?id=UezQAQAQBAJ>

Source: academic	Type: chapter in edited book
Methodology: social science analysis based on fieldwork and primary and secondary sources	

In Cyrenaica (eastern Libya), the political culture is shaped by multiple competing powers and the “intertwining of state and non-state actors” (p.214). Researchers have conceptualised this as “**heterarchy**” (p.214). In Cyrenaica, the heterarchy is made up of “tribal, state-like, Islamic, youth, civil, and militia-like forms” of political organisation (p.214).

In particular, the local and regional politics of **extended families** and of **tribes** (including the sub-level of factions, families and individuals) matter. They create political order in line with their own logics. These longstanding actors are embedded in a specific place (village, town or region) or social group (tribe), while also having connections to politics in power centres and global currents. The 2011 uprisings and its aftermath have confirmed these actors’ “historical depth, persistence and vitality” in Cyrenaica (p.215).

Other important social formations in this heterarchy are **political Islam, youth and civil intellectuals**.

5. Further references

Libyan political economy up to fall of Qadhafi regime

Long-term historical perspectives

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6. About this report

Key websites

- African Development Bank – Libya: <http://www.afdb.org/en/countries/north-africa/libya/>
- International Crisis Group - Libya: <http://www.crisisgroup.org/en/regions/middle-east-north-africa/north-africa/libya.aspx>
- Jadaliyya – Libya: <http://www.jadaliyya.com/pages/index/Libya>

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