

**T.C.  
IŞIK UNIVERSITY  
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES**

**MASTER THESIS  
DEPARTMENT OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS  
INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS PROGRAM**

**Ranya Alsharif FARHAT**

**“ARMED PEOPLE CANNOT BE DEFEATED”: THE RISE  
OF ARMED GROUPS IN POST-GADDAFI LIBYA AND THE  
IMPACT OF MILITARY EDUCATION.**

**SUPERVISOR  
Prof. Dr. Seda DEMIRALP**

**ISTANBUL, September 2024**

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Date: 16/09/2024

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**İSTANBUL, September 2024**

## ÖZET

### **“SİLAHLI HALK YENİLEMEZ”: KADDAFİ SONRASI LİBYA’DA SİLAHLI GRUPLARIN YÜKSELİŞİ VE ASKERİ EĞİTİMİN ETKİSİ**

Bu tez, Gaddafi'nin devrilmesinden sonra Libya'da ortaya çıkan ve günümüzde de varlığını sürdüren silahlı grupların oluşumunu, güç kazanmasını ve bu grupların kalıcılığını sağlayan dinamikleri anlamayı amaçlamaktadır. Libya'da silahlı grupların tarihsel gelişimini incelemek için tarihsel analiz yöntemi kullanılarak, bu grupların kökenleri derinlemesine araştırılmıştır. Elde edilen bulgular, bu grupların oluşumunun Gaddafi rejiminin izlediği stratejik politikalar ile bağlantılı olduğunu ortaya koymuştur. Rejim, Libya'da kabile bağlılıklarını kendi siyasi ve askeri çıkarları doğrultusunda manipüle ederek, toplumu askeri değerlerle şekillendirmiş ve askerileştirilmiş bir toplum yapısı oluşturmuştur. Bu süreç, kabile ilişkilerini daha da güçlendirmiş ve toplumda silahlanma kültürünü yaygınlaştırmıştır. Sonuç olarak, bu faktörler, post-Gaddafi dönemde silahlı grupların yeniden organize olmasını kolaylaştırmış ve istikrarsızlık ortamının kalıcı hale gelmesine neden olmuştur.

Araştırma, Libya'nın mevcut sosyo-politik durumunu anlamak için Dünya Değerler Araştırması (World Values Survey - WVS) 6. Dalga verileri başta olmak üzere, güvenilir kaynakları kullanmaktadır. WVS verileri, Libya toplumunda devlet kurumlarına yönelik yaygın bir güvensizliği ve hükümet boşluğunu gözler önüne sermiştir. Bu durum, silahlı grupların etkisini ve toplumsal desteğini artırmasına olanak tanımıştır. Araştırma, aynı zamanda kabile otoritesinin devlet otoritesinden üstün hale gelmesi, zayıf devlet yapısı ve Gaddafi döneminden miras kalan askeri anlayış gibi yapısal eksikliklerin silahlı grupların yükselişinde nasıl etkili olduğunu detaylandırmaktadır. Bu tez, literatürdeki önemli bir boşluğu doldurarak, Libya'nın kurumsal istikrarsızlığı

ve silahlı grupların güç kazanması konularında akademik tartışmalara yeni bir perspektif kazandırmayı amaçlamaktadır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Libya, Silahlı Gruplar, Askerileşme, Gaddafi

## ABSTRACT

### **“ARMED PEOPLE CANNOT BE DEFEATED”: THE RISE OF ARMED GROUPS IN POST-GADDAFI LIBYA AND THE IMPACT OF MILITARY EDUCATION.**

This thesis aims to comprehend the factors that led to the emergence and endurance of armed groups in Libya following the fall of Gaddafi. by employing historical analysis to trace the origins of these armed groups, which can be linked back to the regime's exploitation of tribal allegiances and the pervasive militarization of Libyan society. These factors have had a lasting impact on the country's political landscape, as enduring institutions, particularly tribal ties and militarization, continue to influence the situation.

This study thoroughly examines Libya's socio-political environment amidst considerable turmoil, leveraging the credibility and reliability of the World Values Survey (WVS) Wave 6 data, among other sources. The WVS data reveal a widespread distrust in governmental bodies, indicating a governance void that has facilitated the growth of armed factions.

The research illustrates that the rise of armed groups results from systemic deficiencies, such as weak state institutions, enhanced tribal authority over state authority, and the entrenchment of a military ethos under Gaddafi. This thesis enriches the academic conversation on institutional stability and the rise of Armed groups by addressing a critical gap in current research with novel empirical data and detailed analysis.

**Keywords:** Libya, Armed groups, Militarization, Gaddafi

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I would also like to extend my heartfelt thanks to my colleague, Tarik Makrini, for his support throughout this journey. Your assistance and willingness to listen to my ideas and concerns have been comforting. To all who have contributed to this journey in various ways, your support has been vital to my academic endeavor. Thank you for being part of this significant chapter in my life.

Ranya Alsharif FARHAT

## **DEDICATION**

To my cherished children,

This thesis is dedicated to you. Your laughter, dreams, and unconditional love have been the beacon through my most challenging days and the celebration in my brightest moments. Each word I have written has been inspired by my hope and aspiration for your future. May you always remember that through knowledge and understanding, we can shape a world filled with peace and compassion. You are the heart of all my endeavors, and it is to you that I dedicate not only this work but every step I take in the pursuit of making a difference.

With all the love in the world,

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>PAGE NO.</u>
APPROVAL PAGE .....	i
ÖZET.....	ii
ABSTRACT .....	iv
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS .....	v
DEDICATION.....	vi
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	vii
PAGE NUMBER.....	vii
LIST OF FIGURES .....	x
LIST OF TABLES .....	xi
ABBREVIATIONS LIST .....	xii
CHAPTER 1 .....	1
1. INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1 RELEVANCE OF THE STUDY.....	3
1.2. RESEARCH QUESTION .....	6
CHAPTER 2 .....	9
2. LITERATURE REVIEW.....	9
2.1 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK.....	14
2.1.1 The Persistence of Power: Analyzing Libya's Enduring Tribal and Militarized Institutions Through New Institutionalism Theory .....	18
2.1.1.1 Definitions of New Institutionalism.....	20
2.1.1.2 Militarization in Libya's Education System .....	21
CHAPTER 3 .....	23

<b>3. METHODOLOGY.....</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>3.1 RESEARCH QUESTIONS.....</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>3.2 ANALYSIS OF SOME ASPECTS OF WORLD VALUES SURVEY RESULTS, FOCUSING ON WAVE 6, COVERING 2010-2014.....</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>3.3 HISTORICAL ANALYSIS.....</b>	<b>28</b>
 <b>CHAPTER 4.....</b>	 <b>31</b>
<b>4. ANALYSIS.....</b>	<b>31</b>
<b>4.1 THE MONARCHICAL PERIOD (1951-1969): .....</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>4.1.1 Political landscape:.....</b>	<b>34</b>
<b>4.1.2 Overview of Institutional Dynamics:.....</b>	<b>34</b>
<b>4.2 THE GADDAFI ERA (1969-2011).....</b>	<b>36</b>
<b>4.2.1 Political Landscape .....</b>	<b>37</b>
4.2.1.1 Domestic Political Sphere.....	37
4.2.1.2 Libyan External Politics:.....	37
4.2.1.3 Impact of Compulsory Military Training on Libyan Education and Society:.....	39
4.2.1.4 The Militarization of Education: A Case Study of Libyan Schools Under Gaddafi .....	41
4.2.1.5 Analysis of the Impact of Mandatory Military Training:.....	48
4.2.1.6. Connection to the Emergence of Armed Groups: .....	49
<b>4.2.2 Overview of Institutional Dynamics:.....</b>	<b>50</b>
<b>4.3 THE LIBYAN UPRISING (2011).....</b>	<b>53</b>
<b>4.3.1 Military Influence and the Emergence of Armed Groups: A Comparative Analysis of Libya, Tunisia, and Egypt during the Arab Spring .....</b>	<b>55</b>
<b>4.4 LIBYA'S POST-GADDAFI EPOCH (2011-2014).....</b>	<b>59</b>

<b>4.4.1 Political landscape:</b> .....	<b>59</b>
<b>4.4.2 Overview of Institutional Dynamics:</b> .....	<b>61</b>
4.4.2.1 Quantitative Analysis: World Values Survey wave 6 Results and Supplementary Data from Eaton (2021) and Amnesty International (2021).....	<b>63</b>
<b>4.5. FORMATION OF THE ARMED GROUPS</b> .....	<b>77</b>
<b>CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS</b> .....	<b>85</b>
<b>REFERENCES</b> .....	<b>87</b>
<b>CURRICULUM VITAE</b> .....	<b>95</b>

## LIST OF FIGURES

<b>Figure 4.1</b> Examination Question For Military Subject.....	43
<b>Figure 4.2</b> Students' Identification Cards.....	44
<b>Figure 4.3</b> Another Student ID.....	45
<b>Figure 4.4</b> A Military Card For a High School Diploma Student.....	45
<b>Figure 4.5</b> Transcripts Detailing Academic Subjects and Student Grades.....	46
<b>Figure 4.6</b> Official Certification of Military Training.....	47
<b>Figure 4.7</b> Photos Showing Female Students During Military Training .....	48

## LIST OF TABLES

<b>Table 4.1</b> Membership of Political Parties .....	65
<b>Table 4.2</b> Confidence : Armed Forces.....	66
<b>Table 4.3</b> Confidence : The Government .....	68
<b>Table 4.4</b> Confidence : The political Parties .....	69
<b>Table 4.5</b> Confidence : Parliament .....	70
<b>Table 4.6</b> Respect for individual human rights nowadays .....	71
<b>Table 4.7</b> Worries : A terrorist attack.....	72
<b>Table 4.8</b> Worries : Civil War .....	73

## **ABBREVIATIONS LIST**

**WVS:** World Value Survey

# CHAPTER 1

## 1. INTRODUCTION

This thesis aims to unravel the complex dynamics that led to the emergence and proliferation of armed groups in post-Gaddafi Libya. The dramatic collapse of Gaddafi's regime in 2011 left a power vacuum that enabled various factions to vie for control, exacerbating the country's fragmentation and instability. By employing new institutionalism theory, this study seeks to provide fresh perspectives on how institutional weaknesses and the erosion of governance contributed to the rise of armed groups in Libya.

Libya's history of militarization is deeply intertwined with its colonial past and the rise to power of Muammar Gaddafi. Strategically, Libya is located in North Africa with vast oil reserves. Libya has long been a focal point of regional and international interests, profoundly influencing its internal power dynamics and societal structures. During the early 20th century, Libya endured Italian colonial rule, which significantly disrupted traditional tribal structures and instilled a culture of armed resistance among the Libyan population (Simons, 1993). Following independence in 1951, Libya was governed by King Idris I under a monarchical system that aimed to establish stability but struggled with weak institutional frameworks and pervasive tribal divisions (Dunne, 2011).

In 1969, a young army officer, Muammar Gaddafi, led a coup that deposed the monarchy and established the Libyan Arab Republic. Gaddafi's regime was characterized by a unique blend of socialism and pan-Arabism, heavily influenced by his Green Book, which outlined his political philosophy. Central to Gaddafi's rule was the militarization of Libyan society, aiming to create a state where every citizen was both a civilian and a soldier, effectively erasing the boundaries between the two (Vandewalle, 2012).

One of Gaddafi's most impactful policies was integrating military training into the education system. In the early 1970s, compulsory military training

became a cornerstone of Libyan schools. This policy aimed to instill military values and readiness in the youth, creating what Gaddafi termed "armed citizens." Consequently, schools were transformed into quasi-military institutions, with students undergoing rigorous physical training and ideological indoctrination (Fadhli, 2006; Lutterbeck, 2009).

Gaddafi's militarization extended beyond education, deliberately weakening formal state institutions in favor of a complex web of tribal alliances and personal loyalty to maintain control. This strategy eroded the professionalism and independence of the military institution, turning it into an extension of Gaddafi's personal rule rather than a national defense force (McQuinn, 2017; Taylor, 2014). The deliberate erosion of the military's professionalism and cohesion was a calculated strategy. By enforcing a culture of militarization that blurred the lines between civilians and soldiers, Gaddafi weakened the military as an institution. This pervasive soldierhood, where every citizen was expected to embody both roles, diluted the armed forces' effectiveness by stretching their loyalty thin across multiple identities. Consequently, when confronted with the challenges of the 2011 revolution, the military found itself fragmented and unable to respond cohesively, highlighting the detrimental impact of Gaddafi's policies on the institution's integrity and functionality.

The 2011 uprising laid bare the fragility of these institutions. As the conflict intensified, the military splintered along tribal and factional lines, with some units siding with Gaddafi and others joining the opposition. This division within the military indicated the broader institutional decay that had taken root under Gaddafi's rule. The absence of a unified military response to the uprising underscored the lack of a robust and institutionalized military capable of steering the country through the transition (Simons, 1993; Taylor, 2014).

Libya's distinctive blend of economic imbalances, tribal rifts, the stark absence of robust state institutions, and the normalization of military culture presents a worthy contribution to academic exploration, offering profound insights into the national fragmentation. The thesis explores the Libyan scenario

and the dramatic collapse of Gaddafi's regime in 2011, when Libya found itself in the midst of a significant transition marked by governance vacuums and crises of authority.

## **1.1 RELEVANCE OF THE STUDY**

This research focuses on the critical period in Libya between 2011 and 2014, which was marked by the fall of Gaddafi's dictatorship and the beginning of internal conflict that shaped Libya's recent history. It tracks the emergence of armed groups through a complex web of historical, economic, social, and political factors deeply rooted in Libya's past. The study embarks on a historical exploration, uncovering the origins and development of various armed groups that emerged after Gaddafi's downfall. It constructs a narrative that carefully integrates the influences of tribal dynamics, economic systems, institutional weaknesses, and ideological foundations, all of which have been compounded by the normalized culture of militarism.

The end of Gaddafi's regime in 2011 triggered widespread political and social unrest. One of the most significant issues to arise in its wake has been the growth and consolidation of armed groups. According to Amnesty International's report in 2021, these militias have not only avoided punishment for their human rights abuses but have also become influential players in Libya's socio-political arena (Amnesty International, 2021). This thesis examines the historical factors that have contributed to this situation, focusing on how the militarization of education under Gaddafi's regime has had lasting impacts on Libyan society.

The thesis explores tribal dynamics spanning various historical periods: the monarchical era, Gaddafi's reign, and the post-Gaddafi period. It aims to understand the socio-political complexities that have shaped Libya. It examines how Gaddafi strategically manipulated tribal loyalties to solidify his power, forming an intricate web of alliances that permeated all levels of society. Following the collapse of his regime, a surge of tribal conflicts and historical

grievances emerged, exposing the deep-seated divisions within Libyan society. In this volatile environment, armed factions capitalized on tribal connections to bolster their influence and pursue their goals (Romanet Perroux, 2019).

The study also highlights the economic link of Libya's rentier state model, characterized by an over-reliance on oil revenues that sustained the nation's fiscal wealth. The oil-dependent economy, which initially drove growth and wealth, ultimately fostered a cycle of dependency and fragility, exacerbating socio-economic disparities and nurturing a hotbed of corruption and rent-seeking behavior. Therefore, the armed groups within this context found an opportunity to commodify violence, seizing control of oil fields to secure support and resources for their endeavors (Dinicu, 2020).

This thesis is anchored in the critical examination of Libya's enduring legacy of fragile institutions, systematically entrenched during Gaddafi's decades-long autocracy. His personalized and centralized governance style significantly eroded the institutional framework of the Libyan state. Rather than being independent pillars of governance, state institutions became channels for Gaddafi's will, with appointments and promotions often based on loyalty over competence (McQuinn, 2017; Taylor, 2014).

The thesis explains the emergence of armed groups as influential power brokers following Gaddafi's downfall. These groups were often entrenched in tribal networks and looted the resources. The lack of effective governance structures allowed these groups to assume state functions, often imposing their own rules and administration in areas under their control.

The proliferation of armed groups and their assumption of quasi-state roles continued a cycle of instability and violence. The government's attempts to integrate these groups into a formal security apparatus were largely unsuccessful, as they had become too rooted and powerful within their localities. This situation was further complicated by ongoing political fragmentation and the armed groups' control over vital economic resources, such as oil, which they leveraged to finance their operations and solidify their positions (Lutterbeck, 2009; Carboni, 2013).

The legacy of weak institutions in Libya, a direct consequence of Gaddafi's personalized and authoritarian rule, set the stage for the state's fracturing post-regime collapse. The resulting power vacuum allowed armed groups to fill the void left by the state, leading to a fragmented security landscape and persistent instability. Understanding this legacy is crucial for comprehending the rise and persistence of armed groups in Libya.

The study focused on a crucial aspect that profoundly shaped Libyan society by implementing Gaddafi's Green Book maxim, "An armed people cannot be defeated." This principle, one of the philosophical bedrocks for his regime, encapsulated Gaddafi's belief in the militarization of society for empowerment and defense. It went beyond mere rhetoric, manifesting in policies that systematically incorporated military training and ideology into every aspect of Libyan life. As a result, the distinction between civilian life and military duty blurred significantly, reflecting the regime's overarching strategy of maintaining control through the widespread dissemination of armed capability and ideology, which effectively erased the boundaries between civilian life and military duty (Al-Gaddafi, 1976). The fall of Gaddafi's regime in Libya marked a significant turning point in the country's socio-political landscape. Among the many factors contributing to the emergence of armed groups, the militarization of education under Gaddafi's rule stands out. As (Eaton, 2021) highlights in "The Libyan Arab Armed Forces," military training was a fundamental component of Libya's educational system, which has had enduring impacts on the country's stability.

Gaddafi's vision of society soldierhood was realized through various strategies, including transforming schools into military barracks and mandating military training for all Libyan students. This militarization, deeply embedded in the country's social and political structures, was predicated on a complex web of allegiances and the allocation of military roles and resources along these lines (Fadhli, 2006). However, this militarization strategy had profound consequences for the integrity and cohesion of the Libyan military. By prioritizing personal loyalty over professional military standards, Gaddafi fostered a force loyal to him rather than to the state or the principles of military professionalism. This

approach undermined the development of a meritocratic and cohesive military institution, ultimately contributing to its fragmentation during times of crisis, as seen during the 2011 uprising when the military split into pro- and anti-Gaddafi factions.

The erosion of a straightforward, professional military ethos, coupled with the widespread distribution of arms and military training to the civilian population, set the stage for the proliferation of armed groups following Gaddafi's downfall. The absence of a capable security force and the power vacuum left by the regime's collapse allowed these groups, many of which were rooted in the same tribal networks previously manipulated by Gaddafi, to emerge and vie for power. The result was a fragmented security landscape, with multiple armed factions operating with varying degrees of allegiance to the nascent government structures and often pursuing their agendas.

In essence, while intended to create an indomitable national front, Gaddafi's militarized vision for Libyan society inadvertently sowed the seeds of the military's disintegration and the rise of armed groups that continue to challenge Libya's stability and unity.

## **1.2. RESEARCH QUESTION**

The central research question guiding this thesis is:

**Q.** How did the militarization of education under Gaddafi's regime contribute to the emergence and persistence of armed groups in post-Gaddafi Libya?

The thesis arguments posit that the militarization of Libyan society under Gaddafi's rule, primarily through mandatory military training in schools, played a significant role in normalizing the use of force and eroding the state's monopoly on violence. This, combined with the collapse of state institutions and the absence of effective governance in the aftermath of Gaddafi's downfall, created a conducive environment for the proliferation of armed groups.

To interrogate this hypothesis, new institutionalism theory will be employed as the guiding lens to scrutinize the structural dynamics of the Libyan

state and the underlying processes that facilitated the ascendance of armed factions. This theory helps to understand why certain institutions, such as tribal institutions and militaristic institutional culture, were hard to change and continued to influence Libyan society post-Gaddafi.

The study's significance is underscored by the application of new institutionalism theory in understanding the complexities of post-Gaddafi Libya. The research illuminates how this theory sheds light on Libya's socio-political dynamics by presenting fresh empirical evidence, particularly regarding the impact of compulsory military training. This contribution enhances our understanding of new institutionalism and its impact on the Libyan context.

A case study approach focusing on compulsory military training in schools will be used to evaluate the hypothesis. This method provides a comprehensive understanding of the interconnectedness between Libya's socio-political conditions and the proliferation of armed groups. Historical analysis of significant events, such as political transitions and social upheavals, will be employed to understand the contextual factors influencing armed group emergence.

The study's objectives are threefold, aiming to provide a comprehensive understanding of the factors contributing to the rise of armed groups in post-Gaddafi Libya:

1. Impact of Mandatory Military Training:

The first objective is to examine how mandatory military training in Libyan schools under Gaddafi's regime impacted the militarization of society and the subsequent emergence of armed groups. This investigation will provide a detailed case study, exploring how Gaddafi's policies normalized military culture among the youth and embedded militaristic values deeply into Libyan society. The long-term societal impacts of such militarization will be scrutinized to understand its role in fostering an environment conducive to armed conflict.

2. Role of new institutionalism Theory:

The second objective is to analyze the role of new institutionalism theory in understanding the erosion of governance and the persistence of militaristic

and tribal institutions in post-Gaddafi Libya. By applying new institutionalism theory, the study will reveal how Gaddafi's deliberate weakening of state institutions facilitated the rise of non-state armed actors. The theory suggests that once institutions are established, they are resistant to change, which explains why the militaristic culture embedded through education continues to influence Libyan society even after Gaddafi's fall.

### 3. Nexus Between State Weakening and Armed Groups:

The third objective is to explore the connection between the weakening of state institutions, the breakdown of governance, and the proliferation of armed groups in Libya. This objective will contrast the state institutions and governance structures before and after Gaddafi's regime, highlighting changes such as the collapse of centralized state control and the emergence of fragmented power structures. It will also underscore the persistence of militarism and tribal influences, showing how these entrenched institutions have continued to shape the political and social landscape despite significant upheaval.

By addressing these objectives, this thesis aims to contribute to the scholarly understanding of the complex dynamics that have unfolded in Libya since the fall of Gaddafi. It seeks to provide insights into the challenges of rebuilding state institutions and restoring stability in the aftermath of institutional collapse. The research will illuminate the broader implications of militarization and institutional resilience in fragile states.

The initial sections of the study will delve into historical analysis, examining the environmental conditions that facilitated the emergence of armed groups. This approach will provide a comprehensive backdrop against which the current situation in Libya can be understood, offering valuable perspectives for future policy and scholarly work. These sections will explore:

1. Libya during the monarchy,
2. Libya under Gaddafi's rule, and
3. Libya post-regime collapse.

The final section will analyze the formation of these armed groups. The concluding chapter will summarize the findings and provide insights drawn from the research.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

In this chapter, we will examine the new institutionalism theory, a crucial aspect shaping the political and strategic landscapes in Libya. The exploration begins with a comprehensive literature review that assimilates existing research to identify gaps and nuances. Following this, we will analyze new institutionalism theory to understand its role in addressing state fragility, conflict resolution, and regional instability.

This study examines the substantial effect of compulsory military training embedded within the educational framework for Libyan citizens on the escalation and expansion of armed factions in the country. According to Eaton (Eaton, 2021), the historical and institutional dimensions of military training under Gaddafi's dictatorship are meticulously scrutinized. The findings indicate that the incorporation of military training into the educational system was a strategy not only for national defense but also for inculcating Libyan youth with a culture of militarism and fealty to the Gaddafi regime. This educational militarization produced a citizenry proficient in military techniques and ideologically disposed toward the use of force, which played a role in the emergence of armed groups post-Gaddafi. The absence of a robust government and judicial system has created an environment conducive to the proliferation of these factions. They have capitalized on the power vacuum to establish control over territories and exploit critical resources, such as oil revenues, to support their operations. The frailty of essential national institutions, including the military and police, has intensified the crisis, as highlighted by (Heggy, 2017).

Generations of Libyans were extensively trained in weapon use, a legacy that facilitated the formation of armed groups amidst the chaos following Gaddafi's downfall. The institutional fragility of Libyan structures,

encompassing both the military and police, has been instrumental in this phenomenon. The police force's inability to maintain security and the military's challenge in exerting control across the nation have created fertile ground for armed factions to assert themselves as dominant powers in various regions of Libya (Kausch, 2019). According to Borghard and Pischedda (2012), the alliances formed between armed groups and the proficiency in weaponry significantly influenced the military landscape in post-Gaddafi Libya.

In the wake of the Gaddafi regime's fall during the Arab Spring of 2011, the sudden absence of centralized authority created conditions ripe for the emergence of armed groups. The absence of a strong and inclusive political framework to fill the vacuum left by Gaddafi led to the proliferation of armed groups, many of whom were already proficient in the use of weapons due to the extensive military training received from an early age. These groups often align themselves with tribal affiliations, given that tribes are the fundamental social units in Libyan society (Blakemore, 2021).

Moreover, the Gaddafi regime's policy of deliberately weakening state institutions has had long-lasting effects. By co-opting tribal leaders and bypassing formal structures, Gaddafi undermined the development of a strong and unified state apparatus. This legacy has left Libya ill-prepared to handle the governance and security challenges following its downfall. The absence of a functioning state has allowed armed groups to flourish, resulting in a constant power struggle and the fragmentation of authority across the country (Hajjar, 1980).

Through the lens of new institutionalism theory, this thesis seeks to provide valuable insights into the intricate scenario in Libya, particularly concerning the formation of armed groups and the impact of military instruction given to citizens throughout their schooling years. The current disarray in Libya can be traced back to the practices of earlier regimes, which significantly exacerbated these factors (Hatitah, 2013).

The absence of robust institutions poses a significant challenge for countries transitioning to a democratic system, which is evident in Libya's case.

Over a period of four decades, the Libyan state lacked genuinely effective institutions. Competence and professionalism were disregarded, and those in leadership positions were chosen based on their unwavering loyalty to the ruler rather than their qualifications or capabilities (Noakes & Wilson, 2023). Gaddafi's political and social regime deliberately undermined the institutionalization process in Libya. He suppressed formal state institutions and relied on informal power networks built around personal loyalties and tribal affiliations. This tactic hindered the development of robust institutions mediating conflicts, providing governance, and establishing the rule of law (Hajjar, 1980). The absence of an effective government after the collapse of the regime has allowed these groups to assume control over territories and resources, including oil fields, providing them with the means to finance their activities (International Crisis Group, 2014). Additionally, the lack of a functional justice system has contributed to the emergence of vigilante groups that enforce their version of justice (Lacher, 2014).

The emergence of armed groups in Libya can be attributed to a complex interplay of socioeconomic factors, political instability, ethno-tribal divisions, and the legacy of Gaddafi's regime (Akl, 2017). From an economic standpoint, Libya's heavy reliance on oil revenues created a rentier state that failed to diversify its economy and provide opportunities for its citizens (Waddams, 2023). This lack of economic diversification and high unemployment contributed to social unrest and grievances. The resulting frustration and disillusionment created favourable conditions for armed groups to recruit individuals seeking economic incentives and personal gain (Kausch, 2019). "Economic factors, including corruption and the lack of economic opportunities, have fuelled the emergence of armed groups in Libya." (Kaldor, 2018). By addressing these socioeconomic disparities and promoting inclusive economic growth, the state could have potentially mitigated the emergence of armed groups.

Additionally, the political instability that followed Gaddafi's overthrow and the subsequent power vacuum played a crucial role. The weakened central

government and the absence of effective governance allowed various armed groups to exploit the situation and assert their influence. The state's inability to provide security and governance created an environment conducive to the emergence of armed groups (Khawas, 2014).

Integrating the new institutionalism theory aims to deepen our comprehension of the roots of the emergence of armed groups in the country. Tribal institutions, as long-lasting entities, remained strong even after the fall of Gaddafi's regime. Ethno-tribal divisions within Libyan society further fuelled the authority of these armed groups.

Libya's diverse ethnic and tribal composition, exacerbated by the collapse of the state, intensified existing tensions and grievances. Armed groups aligned along ethnic and tribal lines emerged to protect the interests of their respective communities. In addition, Libyan citizens have long been familiar with bearing arms. Militarism, deeply entrenched in Libyan society, has continued to exist despite the regime change. This continuity aligns with the new institutionalism theory's prediction that established institutions are hard to change. This stems from the unique perspective that every citizen, regardless of their day-to-day profession or background, is simultaneously seen as a civilian and a member of the military force. This dual identity has been deeply ingrained through comprehensive training programs that have been a part of secondary school curricula for four decades. The cultural and national ethos supporting this practice is captured in the powerful slogan made by Gaddafi: "The armed people cannot be defeated." This slogan underscores the belief that well-armed and trained personnel are a formidable force capable of safeguarding its interests; these facts cannot be overlooked in understanding the situation's complexity in Libya. (Browning & Abdelhalim, 2016).

Through the lens of new institutionalism theory, this thesis seeks to provide valuable insights into the intricate scenario in Libya, particularly concerning the formation of armed groups and the impact of military instruction given to citizens throughout their schooling years. The current state of disarray in Libya can be traced back to the practices of earlier regimes, which played a

significant role in exacerbating these factors (Hatitah, 2013). The absence of robust institutions poses a significant challenge for countries transitioning to a democratic system, evident in Libya's case. While existing studies have explored various aspects of militarization in Libya, this thesis contributes to the literature by focusing specifically on the consequence of military training in schools and its long-term effects on Libyan society. Previous research has examined the role of tribalism in the military structure, the level of independence and professionalism of military institutions throughout Libya's modern history, and the economic resources available to armed groups (Eaton et al., 2020; Gaub, 2013). However, this work differentiates itself by highlighting the continuity of militaristic culture ingrained through educational practices under Gaddafi's regime and its impact on post-Gaddafi militarization.

Understanding that Libyan children received military training while in school is crucial to comprehending how the populace became rapidly militarized after Gaddafi's death. This context explains why individuals, already familiar with military practices, quickly formed and joined armed groups once the central authority collapsed. Unlike other studies that primarily focus on the immediate aftermath of Gaddafi's regime, this thesis delves into the deeper, long-term societal impacts of institutionalized militarism, providing a unique perspective on the formation and persistence of armed groups in Libya. For decades, the Libyan state lacked genuinely effective institutions. Competence and professionalism were disregarded, and those in leadership positions were chosen based on their unwavering loyalty to the ruler rather than their qualifications or capabilities (Noakes & Wilson, 2023). Gaddafi's political and social regime deliberately undermined the institutionalization process in Libya. He suppressed formal state institutions and relied on informal power networks built around personal loyalties and tribal affiliations. This tactic hindered the development of robust institutions mediating conflicts, providing governance, and establishing the rule of law (Hajjar, 1980).

Under Gaddafi's regime, the military was heavily personalized and tribalized, serving as an extension of his rule rather than an independent

institution. This lack of professionalization and autonomy led to a military deeply embedded in the political and tribal fabric of Libyan society, which ultimately contributed to the chaos and emergence of armed groups post-Gaddafi.

According to Bellin, the durability of authoritarian regimes often hinges on the nature of their coercive apparatus, particularly the military. A professional and independent military is a cornerstone of stable governance and democratic resilience. Bellin contrasts professional militaries, which are insulated from political interference, with those deeply intertwined with regime elites through patrimonial and tribal ties (Bellin, 2004).

The absence of an effective government after the regime's collapse has allowed these groups to assume control over territories and resources, including oil fields, providing them with the means to finance their activities (International Crisis Group, 2014). Additionally, the lack of a functional justice system has contributed to the emergence of vigilante groups that enforce their version of justice (Lacher, 2014). Amnesty International (2021) provides a detailed account of the human rights abuses committed by militias following the fall of Gaddafi. The report documents specific incidents of torture, unlawful killings, and other forms of violence perpetrated by these groups. It also highlights the failure of the Libyan justice system to hold these militias accountable, creating a culture of impunity.

## **2.1 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

This study segment meticulously examines the theoretical and conceptual underpinnings that frame the research. It advances the proposition that Muammar Gaddafi's strategic consolidation of power was linked to the debilitation of the Libyan state apparatus during his tenure. He instituted an autocratic regime that systematically dismantled institutional checks and balances, significantly diminishing the state's efficacy and autonomy. Under

Gaddafi's rule, Libya became excessively reliant on his personalist leadership style, compromising its ability to function independently (El-Khawwas, 2014).

The study further suggests that the subsequent demise of Gaddafi precipitated the collapse of these already weakened state structures. This collapse engendered a power vacuum, which was quickly exploited by a plethora of emergent armed groups. To expand this analysis, it is critical to acknowledge that these armed groups primarily consisted of ordinary citizens. These individuals had been systematically trained in the use of firearms over generations as part of state policy. This widespread militarization of the populace meant that, when the opportunity arose following the state's collapse, they were uniquely positioned to transition into organized armed factions (Govern, 2012).

Amnesty International (2021) provides a detailed account of the initial rise of militias post-Gaddafi, stating, "Since the fall of Gaddafi's regime, Libya has been engulfed by lawlessness and impunity for war crimes committed by rival militias. These militias, formed during the uprising, have entrenched themselves in Libyan society, operating with little to no accountability. Their power and influence have only grown in the absence of a strong central government, leading to a pervasive climate of fear and instability." This observation highlights the direct correlation between the collapse of Gaddafi's regime and the rise of militia groups, providing a crucial context for understanding the current socio-political challenges in Libya.

This transformation from ordinary citizenry to armed groups was facilitated by the availability of military training and the existing socio-political conditions. The pervasive culture of militarism endorsed and propagated by the state for decades ensured that a significant portion of the population was versed in military tactics and the handling of weapons, which already were widely spread in Libya after the downfall of the regime (Eaton, 2021). elaborates on this point, noting, "The militarization of education under Gaddafi's regime played a pivotal role in embedding a culture of violence within Libyan society. The state's focus on school military training equipped ordinary citizens with the skills and mindset necessary to form armed groups." When the centralized authority

disintegrated, these citizens-turned-combatants could mobilize rapidly, forming groups that filled the power void left by Gaddafi's fall (Gaub, 2013).

Incorporating this understanding into the study illuminates the dual role of Libyan citizens as both the backbone of society and potential agents of militarized power. It underscores the latent capability within the civilian population to organize into formidable armed groups, a potential that was actualized in the post-Gaddafi era. This perspective is essential for a comprehensive analysis of the state's collapse and the rise of armed groups in Libya, providing clarity on the transformational dynamics within the Libyan society.

These groups, emerging in a post-Gaddafi landscape, were not only a product of the power vacuum but were also significantly influenced by Libya's rentier economy. The nation's heavy reliance on oil exports created an economic structure where controlling state institutions, particularly those managing oil resources, became profitable. This economic backdrop provided a compelling incentive for these armed factions to seize control of state institutions. The capture of these institutions was not merely a political objective but was primarily driven by a desire to access and control oil rents. Such control was seen as vital for these groups to consolidate and maintain their power, further exacerbating the fragmentation of the state and fuelling continuous conflicts over resources and territorial control (Dinicu, 2020).

Therefore, the collapse of the Libyan state and the rise of armed groups can be traced back to the systemic weakening of state institutions under Gaddafi's rule, compounded by the peculiarities of Libya's oil-dependent economy. This study aims to explore these interconnected dynamics in-depth, offering a comprehensive understanding of the factors leading to the rise of the armed groups in Libya (Klare, 2020).

My analysis of Libya's intricate socio-political terrain employs the frameworks of new institutionalism. This theoretical lens is crucial in dissecting the nuances of Libya, characterized by its rentier economy with a heavy reliance on oil revenue. Economic reliance has been instrumental in erasing institutional

robustness, significantly contributing to the state's eventual failure. The fragility of these institutions has, consequently, provided a conducive environment for the rise and endurance of armed factions within the country. New Institutionalism Theory in Libya represents the long-lasting institutions that remained strong even after the fall of Gaddafi, particularly tribes and militarization. Using this theory in my thesis, I aim to understand the current Libyan context comprehensively. The persistence of tribal and militarized structures illustrates the enduring impact of Gaddafi's rule, while the collapse of weaker institutions explains the subsequent state failure. This approach helps elucidate the emergence of armed groups and the ongoing governance challenges in Libya.

Furthermore, the inability of the Libyan government to maintain law and order, ensure justice, and provide a consistent legal framework further compounds the challenges faced by the state. This deficiency in governance has led Libyan citizens to often rely on their tribal affiliations for dispute resolution. Such reliance on tribal justice and armed groups' revenge, rather than formal state structures, underscores the profound institutional weaknesses and the fragmented nature of authority in Libya (Al-Shadeedi & Ezzeddine, 2019).

This chapter will utilize New Institutionalism Theory to comprehensively understand the emergence and growth of armed groups in Libya. New institutionalism theory will be employed to illustrate how long-lasting institutions, such as tribes and militarization, have remained strong even after the fall of Gaddafi. By examining the applicability of the theory within the Libyan context, the study aims to analyze the principal factors driving the emergence and expansion of armed groups in the country. This approach provides a thorough understanding of Libya's governance challenges, highlighting the enduring impact of Gaddafi's rule and the subsequent that facilitated the rise of armed groups.

### **2.1.1 The Persistence of Power: Analyzing Libya's Enduring Tribal and Militarized Institutions Through New Institutionalism Theory**

New institutionalism theory provides valuable insights into Libya's situation, even after Gaddafi's regime's collapse. Despite the regime's downfall, the militarization and tribal structures that were deeply embedded during Gaddafi's rule have persisted. This is because the government institutions were already weak and ineffective, as they were centralized and controlled by the regime. The erosion of state institutions under Gaddafi's autocratic rule was a precursor to state failure, evidenced by the breakdown of the state's central authority, its inability to provide basic services, and its failure to enforce the rule of law (Rotberg, 2004).

New Institutionalism Theory, a fundamental theoretical framework, delves into how institutions influence societal behavior and governance. It emphasizes that institutions encompass formal rules, informal norms, and shared understandings, permeating all aspects of social life (Faundez, 2016). Pioneered by Peter Berger and Douglass North, the theory focuses on how institutions become established and embedded in societies, providing the rules and norms that shape behavior and enable social order. Weak or absent institutions, as seen in state failure scenarios, can lead to instability and the rise of alternative power structures (Faundez, 2016).

A crucial aspect of the theory is the role of institutions in shaping societal behavior and maintaining social order. Institutions provide the rules, norms, and procedures that guide individuals' actions and interactions, as highlighted in Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann's work on the social construction of reality (Berger & Luckmann, 1966). Additionally, Douglass North's insights underscore the importance of well-functioning institutions for overall societal stability and development (North, 1990).

Fundamentally, new institutionalism theory suggests that institutions gain legitimacy and power gradually, establishing formalized rules, procedures, and organizational structures within societies or organizations. Over time, these

constructs deeply influence individuals' behavior and attitudes, shaping broader societal dynamics (North, 1990).

In the context of Libya, the militarization and tribal structures that were deeply embedded during Gaddafi's rule have persisted even after his regime's collapse. This is because the government institutions were already weak and ineffective, as they were centralized and controlled by the regime. The erosion of state institutions under Gaddafi's autocratic rule was a precursor to state failure, evidenced by the breakdown of the state's central authority, its inability to provide basic services, and its failure to enforce the rule of law (Rotberg, 2004).

The mandatory military training in Libyan schools, which began in the early 1970s, blurred the lines between civilian and military roles, normalizing the use of force and eroding the state's monopoly on violence (Dawton, 1981). This policy contributed to the erosion of state institutions by prioritizing military indoctrination over the development of critical thinking and civic engagement among students.

Moreover, Gaddafi's regime deliberately weakened state institutions by co-opting tribal leaders, bypassing formal structures, and fostering a culture of patronage (McQuinn, 2017). This undermined the development of a strong and unified state apparatus, leaving Libya ill-prepared to handle the governance and security challenges following the regime's downfall (Dinicu, 2020).

The inability of the Libyan government to maintain law and order, ensure justice, and provide a consistent legal framework has led citizens to often rely on their tribal affiliations for dispute resolution (Al-Shadeedi & Ezzeddine, 2019). This reliance on tribal justice and armed groups' revenge, rather than formal state structures, underscores the profound institutional weaknesses and the fragmented nature of authority in Libya.

By applying new institutionalism theory to the Libyan context, we can better understand how the militarization and tribal structures that were deeply embedded during Gaddafi's rule have persisted even after his regime's collapse. The weak and ineffective government institutions, which were centralized and

controlled by the regime, have contributed to the erosion of state institutions and the subsequent state failure. This analysis highlights the importance of well-functioning institutions for maintaining social order and stability, and the challenges faced by countries transitioning from authoritarian regimes to more democratic forms of governance.

### **2.1.1.1 Definitions of New Institutionalism**

New Institutionalism is defined as the process of establishing something as a norm or standard in an organizational or cultural system. Here are definitions from the provided context with their respective citations:

"New Institutionalism involves the formalization and stabilization of norms, practices, and organizational structures within a given social context. This process engenders enduring patterns of behavior and institutional arrangements, exerting a lasting influence on societal dynamics and governance systems." (Faundez, 2016)

"New Institutionalism manifests in diverse forms, each imbued with unique implications for societal cohesion and governance: Social Institutions, Organizational Behavior, Cultural Practices, Policy, and Governance." (Berger & Luckmann, 1966; North, 1990) "The theory focuses on how institutions become established and embedded in societies, providing the rules and norms that shape behavior and enable social order." (North, 1990) These definitions collectively highlight the multifaceted nature of new institutionalism, encompassing the development and reinforcement of formal and informal rules, norms, and behaviors that shape and stabilize social order and governance. In essence, new institutionalism involves the formalization and stabilization of norms, practices, and organizational structures within a given social context. This process engenders enduring patterns of behavior and institutional arrangements, exerting a lasting influence on societal dynamics and governance systems.

The theory can be applied to analyze how policy-making processes become institutionalized, how policy actors interact within established

institutional frameworks, and how institutions shape policy implementation and evaluation. It helps us understand the role of interest groups, bureaucracies, and other actors in the policy process.

### **2.1.1.2 Militarization in Libya's Education System**

The militarization of Libya's education system under Gaddafi's regime provides a compelling case study of new institutionalism in practice. By integrating military training into secondary school curricula, the regime sought to instil militaristic ideologies and foster a sense of national unity predicated on armed preparedness (Fadhli, 2006). This deliberate institutionalization of militaristic values not only blurred the boundaries between civilian and military spheres but also perpetuated a dual identity among Libyan citizens. The slogan "The armed people cannot be defeated" epitomized the ethos cultivated by this educational paradigm, reinforcing the belief that a well-armed populace is indispensable for safeguarding national interests (Al-Teer, 2014).

However, this institutionalization of militarism had far-reaching implications for Libya's societal fabric and governance structures. By forcing military indoctrination, the regime perpetuated a culture of authoritarianism and undermined the development of critical thinking skills and civic engagement among the populace. Moreover, the militarization of education contributed to the erosion of institutional legitimacy and the consolidation of power within the hands of the ruling elite, exacerbating social tensions and inhibiting democratic progress (fadhli,2006).

In light of these complexities, the case of Libya's militarized education system underscores the profound influence of institutionalization on societal norms, values, and governance dynamics. Scholars can glean valuable insights into the mechanisms driving social change and political transformation by unpacking the intricate interplay between formal institutions and societal practices. The absence of robust institutions poses a significant challenge for countries transitioning to a democratic system, which is evident in Libya's case. Over a period of four decades, the Libyan state lacked genuinely effective

institutions. Competence and professionalism were disregarded, and those in leadership positions were chosen based on their unwavering loyalty to the ruler, rather than their qualifications or capabilities (Faundez, 2016).

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **3. METHODOLOGY**

This study adopts a mixed-methods approach to scrutinize the rise of armed groups in Libya post-Gaddafi, aiming to offer a comprehensive insight into the intricate dynamics that fueled this phenomenon. The study seeks to encapsulate the full spectrum of socio-political elements involved by integrating quantitative survey analysis with qualitative historical research.

The quantitative component of this study utilizes data from the World Values Survey's Wave 6 (2010-2014). The World Values Survey is an established and widely respected source of longitudinal data on public attitudes and values across numerous countries, including Libya. The choice of this dataset is particularly pertinent due to its comprehensive coverage of the period surrounding the fall of Gaddafi, a time marked by significant upheaval and transformation within Libyan society. The survey includes questions on political trust, governance, societal concerns, and values, essential for identifying trends and correlations that illuminate the broader impacts of Gaddafi's governance legacy and the factors contributing to the rise of armed groups. The reliability and scope of the World Values Survey ensure that the quantitative analysis is grounded in robust and comparable data, making it an invaluable resource for this study.

Complementing the quantitative data, the qualitative component includes an in-depth analysis of reports from Amnesty International, specifically their 2021 report on Libya. Amnesty International is a globally recognized and highly respected human rights organization, known for its meticulous documentation and reporting of human rights abuses. The inclusion of this report is crucial as it provides detailed accounts of the operational dynamics of militias and the pervasive human rights abuses occurring in post-Gaddafi Libya. The qualitative

insights gleaned from this report offer a rich contextual backdrop that enhances the understanding of the quantitative findings. They provide real-world implications and nuanced perspectives that are critical for a comprehensive analysis of the socio-political environment in Libya during the transitional period.

Furthermore, the study incorporates primary sources such as ID photos, transcripts, and exams from military training schools during Gaddafi's era. These documents serve as direct evidence of the militarization embedded within Libya's educational system. The ID photos and transcripts reveal the extent of military indoctrination among students, while the exams highlight the emphasis placed on military skills and ideology. These primary sources are indispensable for establishing a clear and tangible connection between Gaddafi's educational policies and the subsequent rise of armed groups. They provide unique insights into the personal experiences of individuals who were part of this system, offering a depth of understanding that secondary data alone cannot achieve.

Additionally, the study leverages the Chatham House document, "The Libyan Arab Armed Forces" by Tim Eaton (2021). This document provides an in-depth historical analysis of the Libyan armed forces and the proliferation of armed groups following the fall of Gaddafi. It offers critical insights into the historical and structural aspects of military training under Gaddafi's regime and how these practices have influenced the current military landscape in Libya. The inclusion of this document is pivotal for understanding the long-term impacts of Gaddafi's militarization policies and their role in the emergence and persistence of armed groups.

The integration of these diverse data sources through a mixed-methods approach ensures a robust and nuanced analysis. The quantitative data from the World Values Survey provides a broad overview of public attitudes and societal concerns, identifying key trends and correlations. The qualitative data from Amnesty International offers in-depth context and detailed accounts, highlighting the human rights abuses and operational dynamics of militias.

Meanwhile, the primary sources from military training schools add a critical layer of direct evidence, illustrating the impact of Gaddafi's militarized education policies on the populace. Finally, the historical analysis from the Chatham House document enriches the study by providing a detailed background on the military and structural aspects of the Libyan armed forces.

This comprehensive approach enriches the explanation of the data, providing results with greater range and depth. It allows for a thorough understanding of the factors leading to the rise of armed groups in Libya, by capturing both the macro-level trends and the micro-level personal experiences that shaped the current socio-political landscape. By justifying the selection of these sources, the study underscores its commitment to a multi-faceted and deeply informed analysis, ultimately offering a holistic perspective on the emergence and persistence of armed groups in post-Gaddafi Libya.

### **3.1 RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

The study aims to answer the main research question:

**Q.** How did the militarization of education under Gaddafi's regime contribute to the emergence and persistence of armed groups in post-Gaddafi Libya?

The main research question is divided into the following sub-questions, including:

What were the underlying socio-political conditions in Libya that created a conducive environment for the emergence of armed groups?

Did mandatory military training in Gaddafi-era Libyan schools contribute to the proliferation of armed groups through the militarization of society and the fostering of a culture of violence?

Main arguments:

The militarization of education under Gaddafi's regime significantly contributed to the emergence and persistence of armed groups in post-Gaddafi Libya by fostering a culture of violence and militarization.

Sub-arguments:

1: Mandatory military training in Gaddafi-era Libyan schools led to the

normalization of violence and militaristic attitudes among the youth, contributing to the formation of armed groups.

2: The lack of trust in governmental and political institutions post-Gaddafi heightened the public's propensity to support or join armed groups.

To answer my main question, I am using mixed methods, combining a qualitative and quantitative approach with a historical analysis of several significant events. Both approaches complement each other and enrich the explanation of the data by providing results with greater range and depth.

### **3.2 ANALYSIS OF SOME ASPECTS OF WORLD VALUES SURVEY RESULTS, FOCUSING ON WAVE 6, COVERING 2010-2014.**

This section provides a quantitative analysis of WVS on Libya, using descriptive and correlational analysis to examine public attitudes towards the government and military. The World Values Survey's Wave 6 data, encompassing the period from 2010 to 2014, offers a critical lens through which to scrutinize the socio-political landscape of Libya during a significant period of upheaval and transition.

The survey results reveal a populace grappling with the aftermath of Gaddafi's fall, marked by a pervasive lack of trust in governmental and political institutions, concerns over human rights violations, and a heightened sense of vulnerability to terrorism and civil unrest.

#### **Key Findings:**

##### **Lack of Confidence in Government:**

A staggering 69.4% of respondents exhibited little to no confidence in the government, underscoring a profound disillusionment with the state's ability to govern effectively and maintain order.

This lack of confidence in governmental institutions directly connected to the arguments (2) that the lack of trust in governmental and political institutions post-Gaddafi heightened the public's propensity to support or join armed groups. The data illustrates the weakened state structures and the fertile ground for armed groups to emerge as alternative power centers.

- Distrust in Political Parties:

A majority of 60.7% expressed an absence of trust in political parties, indicating a deep-seated skepticism towards the nascent democratic processes and the political actors within them.

This finding reinforces the argument that socio-political conditions such as weakened institutions and political instability during and after Gaddafi's regime created a favorable environment for armed groups to emerge. The distrust in political parties further exemplifies the fragmented political landscape and the challenges in establishing a cohesive democratic governance.

- Concerns Over Human Rights:

The survey highlights a significant public concern regarding respect for human rights, with 63.2% perceiving them as being minimally respected or outright disregarded.

This supports the need for a robust human rights framework to counter the normalization of armed groups and the oppression they perpetuate, as proposed in the thesis. It aligns with the argument that the educational curriculum that included military training failed to instill democratic values and civic responsibility, thereby undermining long-term socio-political stability in Libya.

The World Values Survey results from Libya during this pivotal historical moment reflect a society in transition, fraught with distrust in political and governmental institutions, concerns over human rights, and a complex relationship with the justice system. These findings underscore the multifaceted challenges faced by Libya in its post-Gaddafi era and highlight the need for a concerted effort to rebuild trust in institutions, ensure the protection of human rights, and prevent the further emergence and entrenchment of armed groups.

By integrating the quantitative data from the World Values Survey with qualitative historical analysis, this study provides a comprehensive understanding of the socio-political factors that facilitated the rise of armed groups in post-Gaddafi Libya. The findings illustrate the profound impact of Gaddafi's regime on public trust and societal stability, highlighting the critical

areas for reform to prevent further entrenchment of armed factions and promote a stable, democratic society

### **3.3 HISTORICAL ANALYSIS**

Historical analysis is particularly well-suited to my arguments and research question because it provides a comprehensive understanding of the socio-political and economic dynamics that shaped Libya's history. By examining primary sources from the Gaddafi era, such as archival documents, photographs, and official records, historical analysis allows a nuanced exploration of the effect of mandatory military training in Gaddafi-era Libyan schools and its contribution to the emergence of armed groups. This longitudinal approach enables me to trace the evolution of these factors over time and assess their impact on the emergence of armed groups in Libya. Additionally, historical analysis facilitates comparative analysis with other historical periods or regions, enabling me to identify patterns and draw broader conclusions about the underlying causes and dynamics of armed group emergence. Historical analysis offers a rigorous framework for investigating the complex processes underlying my arguments and research question.

In Muammar Gaddafi's Libya, the educational system was anything but ordinary. It was not just about hitting the books; mandatory military training was as fundamental as learning the ABCs. This unique blend of civilian and military education did not just churn out scholars; it moulded citizens with distinct skills. However, here is where it gets intriguing: this emphasis on military readiness might have inadvertently fueled the rise of armed groups, creating a society where every student knew how to handle a rifle as well as a textbook. It is like a recipe for trouble, especially when the state cannot keep its grip on power. When the government crumbled, those individuals trained for defense suddenly found themselves with the tools and know-how to form armed groups. It is almost as if the education system inadvertently groomed a generation with a knack for conflict.

Eaton's (2021) detailed analysis in "The Libyan Arab Armed Forces" provides critical insights into how these military training practices under Gaddafi laid the groundwork for such developments. His historical analysis underscores the long-term impacts of Gaddafi's policies, showing how the systematic integration of military training in schools normalized the use of force and fostered a culture of militarization. This historical context is crucial for understanding the persistence of armed groups in the post-Gaddafi era.

Furthermore, Amnesty International's (2021) report offers a contemporary perspective on the repercussions of these historical practices. The report documents the human rights abuses and operational dynamics of militias in post-Gaddafi Libya, highlighting how the lack of accountability and continued violence are legacies of Gaddafi's militarized education system. This aligns with the argument that mandatory military training in Gaddafi-era schools contributed to the proliferation of armed groups by fostering a culture of violence and militarization.

The education system, with its focus on military training, inadvertently churned out graduates with a predisposition for strife. The question is: Did this compulsory military training play a pivotal role in the chaos after the state collapsed? This investigation aims to uncover that. Using historical analysis, we will delve into how society's militarization paved the way for the breakdown of authority.

While mandatory military training may have instilled a sense of preparedness and national unity in citizens, it also carried significant risks of perpetuating violence, stifling dissent, and diverting resources away from critical aspects of education. These potential negative consequences underscore the importance of critically evaluating the role of militarism within educational systems and Libyan society in general.

Recognizing that mandatory military training could be a contributing factor, it's essential to understand that it is not the sole cause of state failure and the emergence of armed groups in Libya. However, it underscores the significance of addressing the militarization of society as a potential element in

this complex issue. Alongside other socio-political, economic, and historical factors, the militarization of society has undoubtedly shaped the situation in Libya.

By integrating the insights from Eaton's historical analysis and Amnesty International's contemporary report, this study provides a comprehensive understanding of how Gaddafi's militarized education policies contributed to the emergence and persistence of armed groups in post-Gaddafi Libya. This approach offers a nuanced view of the socio-political and historical dynamics at play.

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **4. ANALYSIS**

To analyze the phenomena of the emergence of armed groups in Libya, light will be shed on the main factors that led to this phenomenon by analyzing the historical background of Libya, starting from Libya's transformation to the post-independence monarchy era. Gaddafi's rule, in response to the chaos that arose after the regime's collapse, emphasized the environmental and historical conditions that fostered the formation of armed groups. begin by briefly highlighting the period of monarchical rule after independence, which laid the initial groundwork for Libya's political, economic, and social structures. This era, often overshadowed by subsequent events, is crucial for understanding the roots of the lack of mature institutions. Then, navigate in more detail the Gaddafi era, where the combination of military indoctrination in schools and the weakening of institutions sowed the seeds of state failure that later facilitated the armed factions. By dissecting these pivotal stages, aiming to provide a comprehensive understanding of the factors that contributed to the rise of armed groups in post-Gaddafi Libya.

This chapter will explore the intricate factors and historical antecedents that have contributed to the proliferation of armed groups during the post-Gaddafi era. Examining the events and circumstances preceding this era aims to shed light on the underlying causes that set the stage for the rise of these armed groups and will cover the period from 2011 (the beginning of the uprising in Libya) to 2014 (the first civil war). Through in-depth analysis, we can understand the complex web of influences and historical developments that have played a significant role in shaping the landscape of armed groups in the aftermath of Gaddafi's reign.

Delving into the textile of Libya's political, economic, and social landscape is an imperative voyage to unravel the roots of the formation of armed groups

following the Gaddafi era. This chapter will consider how the rise of armed groups in the post-Gaddafi era has its roots in prior history. To analyze the phenomena of the emergence of armed groups in Libya, light will be shed on the main factors that led to this phenomenon by analyzing the historical background of Libya, starting from Libya's transformation to the post-independence monarchy era must rewind the clock and embrace the historical intricacies that shaped Libya to embark on this journey. The land has witnessed the ebb and flow of numerous influences, leaving an indelible imprint on Libyan society.

After Gaddafi's overthrow, Libya's newfound sovereignty faced the hard task of establishing a stable political framework. The fall of a long-standing dictatorship brought hope, but this did not last for long. Soon, the state was drowned into chaos due to the power vacuum, and myriad factions emerged, each competing for control and representation. The armed groups found fertile ground to stake their claim and exert influence within this volatile scene.

The study concentrates on the period between 2011 and 2014 to explain the rise of armed groups in Libya. The year 2011 marked the February Revolution and the assassination of Muammar Gaddafi, the former Libyan leader, and the year 2014 marked the onset of the initial civil war that exposed the influence of armed groups and their dominance over the Libyan landscape. The roots of the spread of armed groups extend beyond mere power struggles after the end of the previous regime. Libya's intricate socioeconomic fabric, intricately woven with disparities and grievances, fostered an environment ripe for the proliferation of armed groups. Economic disparities and tribal divisions created fertile ground for disenchantment, leading some to embrace alternative paths to power and security (Dinicu, 2020).

However, the narrative does not end there. Libya's geostrategic significance and abundant resources added another layer of complexity to the equation. The continued extensive corruption, political fragmentation, influence of armed factions over oil resources, and clandestine transactions happening beyond the state's oversight have jeopardized the oil reserves. This situation has

attracted external parties with differing agendas, intensifying the strength of these armed groups (Dinicu, 2020). Moreover, proxy conflicts and geopolitical maneuvering intertwined with local dynamics blurred the lines between internal and external motivations (Harchaoui & Lazib, 2019). Military training in the educational system, where students were indoctrinated and trained to bear arms, contributed significantly to the formation of these groups. The students of yesteryears, once subjected to military training, ascended to become leaders of armed factions, unyielding in their refusal to submit to the state's authority (Hajjar, 1980).

This chapter is structured into four sections, each providing a crucial insight into Libya's evolution. We start with "Libya During Monarchy," examining the governance challenges under King Idris Alsnowsy. Next, "Libya During Gaddafi" elaborates on Muammar Gaddafi's authoritarian rule and its impact on Libyan society. Then, we delve into the uprising in Libya, then "Libya After the Fall of Gaddafi," exploring the aftermath of his regime's collapse. Finally, we analyze the "Formation of the Armed Groups," investigating the factors behind their emergence in post-Gaddafi Libya. Together, these sections offer a comprehensive overview of Libya's complex history to understand the factors that led to the formation of the armed groups in Libya.

#### **4.1. THE MONARCHICAL PERIOD (1951-1969):**

We will briefly discuss the period covering Libya's history from its independence in 1951 until the overthrow of the monarchy in 1969. King Idris Alsnowsy led the country as a monarchy, establishing the foundational political structures of the newly independent state. Governance during this time was characterized by traditional institutions and a gradual development of the nation's oil wealth.

#### **4.1.1 Political landscape:**

To comprehend the political landscape in Libya, it is crucial to delve into the period following its independence when the country was under monarchy rule led by King Idris Alsnowsy from 1951 to 1969. Compared to other Arab states, Libya's democratic governance was relatively underdeveloped. Personal connections influenced the initial parliamentary election, and the formation of political parties was prohibited, raising doubts that the voting process may have been manipulated (Dunne, 2011).

Geoff Simons, in his book "Libya: The Struggle for Survival," explained how Libyans lacked political experience after independence, political associations were forbidden during the monarchy (1951-1969), and the press operated under government control (Simons, 1993). In addition, tribal affiliations played a significant role in securing official positions, and attempts to engage in political activities were suppressed by the police and intelligence agencies (Ben Lamma, 2017).

#### **4.1.2 Overview of Institutional Dynamics:**

Libya's history before the monarchy era is marked by a continuous struggle against various foreign occupiers, which has significantly shaped the country's sociopolitical landscape. This legacy of resistance can be traced back to the Ottoman era and intensified during the Italian colonial period, where Libyans engaged in prolonged and fierce resistance efforts. The Sanusi Order, a religious and political movement, played a pivotal role in organizing and leading these resistance efforts against Italian colonization in the early 20th century (Britannica, 2023).

This entrenched culture of resistance laid the groundwork for a society where military and tribal loyalties were paramount. During the monarchy, these tribal affiliations were crucial in securing official positions, as the weak institutional framework heavily relied on tribal networks. The discovery of oil in the late 1950s brought significant economic changes, leading to rapid

urbanization and societal shifts. However, the nascent institutions were ill-equipped to handle these changes, and the reliance on tribal loyalties over merit-based governance compromised the state's ability to manage its newfound wealth effectively (Waddams, 2023; Ben Lamma, 2017).

The absence of robust political institutions exacerbated the political instability during the monarchical regime in Libya. The monarchy's policies often failed to address the population's needs, leading to further instability. The external influence on Libya's foreign policy also contributed to internal instability, as the government's actions were often driven by external pressures rather than domestic needs (First, 1957). After gaining independence in 1951, Libya's fragmented governance structure could not adequately manage the state's affairs, setting the stage for future challenges (Issaev & Zakharov, 2020).

The legacy of military and tribal institutions in Libya has had a long-lasting impact, contributing significantly to the emergence of armed groups in the post-Gaddafi era. The historical context of resistance against occupiers fostered a society where armed struggle was seen as a legitimate means of political expression and resistance. The fall of Gaddafi in 2011 created a power vacuum, and the long-standing military and tribal affiliations re-emerged as the primary means of organizing and asserting control. This led to the proliferation of armed groups, each rooted in the historical dynamics of military and tribal institutions that have defined Libyan society for decades (Britannica, 2023; Waddams, 2023).

In summary, the weak and underdeveloped institutional framework during the monarchical era, combined with the historical legacy of resistance and the influence of external forces, created an unstable political environment. This instability, coupled with rapid economic transformations and the neglect of traditional sectors, laid the groundwork for the emergence of armed groups. The enduring influence of military and tribal institutions has profoundly shaped Libya's political and social dynamics, contributing to the ongoing conflict and fragmentation in the country).

## **4.2 THE GADDAFI ERA (1969-2011)**

### **4.2.1 Political landscape**

#### **4.2.1.1 Domestic political sphere**

In 1969, Muammar Gaddafi and his military comrades seized power through a bloodless coup, drawing inspiration from the character of the Egyptian leader Gamal Abdel Nasser and calling themselves the "free officers." This marked the establishment of the new Libyan Arab Republic, with Gaddafi declaring himself the Brother Leader of the Revolution (St John, 2011). He claimed to introduce a unique political regime known as the Jamahiriya or "State of Masses," derived from his philosophies outlined in the "Green Book."<sup>1</sup> Under this system, Gaddafi ensured that no institution could challenge his authority, consolidating power solely in his hands (Dunne, 2011).

Muammar Gaddafi's rise to power marked a significant shift in Libya's domestic political landscape. His regime, characterized by its unique blend of ideological fervor and authoritarian control, heavily influenced the country's tribal and militarized structure. Gaddafi's strategy involved a complex manipulation of tribal affiliations and the establishment of a highly centralized, militarized state apparatus to maintain his grip on power.

The monarchy constitution was abolished, and institutions, including the Military, were dismantled, particularly in response to multiple failed coup

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<sup>1</sup> The Jamahiriya, also known as the "State of Masses," is a unique political regime derived from the philosophies outlined in Muammar Gaddafi's Green Book. The term "Jamahiriya" comes from the Arabic word "Jamaah," meaning "masses" or "people," and "Huriya," meaning "freedom." Gaddafi proposed a system of direct democracy, where political power would be decentralized and vested in the hands of the people themselves, eliminating traditional representative institutions like parliaments and political parties. According to Gaddafi's vision, the Jamahiriya aimed to establish a society where decision-making would be directly carried out by the people through local-level committees and popular congresses. These bodies would allow citizens to participate actively in the political process and make decisions that would directly affect their lives. Gaddafi believed that this form of governance would prevent corruption, exploitation, and the concentration of power in the hands of a few elites, ultimately leading to a fairer and more egalitarian society. The Jamahiriya sought to challenge traditional notions of governance, emphasizing people's direct involvement and participation as the foundation of a truly democratic and just political system.

attempts against Gaddafi. In addition, he deliberately weakened the Military, driven by a lack of trust and the desire to prevent future betrayals (Mattes, 2008). As a result, a repressive regime emerged, concentrating power and granting limited authority to close associates who demonstrated unwavering loyalty. Gaddafi implemented strict measures, such as banning political parties, censoring the press, and suppressing civil society (International Crisis Group, 2011).

The strategic use of tribal politics marked Gaddafi's rule. By promoting certain tribes, such as his own Qadhadhfa tribe, the Warfalla, and the Magarha, while marginalizing others, he ensured a system of divide and rule. This created a hierarchy where favored tribes had significant access to power and resources, leading to long-term tribal grievances among those sidelined (Libya Tribune, 2023).

Gaddafi's distrust of the traditional military led him to establish revolutionary committees and people's militias. These entities were designed to enforce his ideological vision and maintain control over the population, bypassing the conventional military hierarchy which he perceived as a threat due to multiple coups attempts against him (Chatham House, 2014; USIP, 2016). This militarization permeated Libyan society, embedding a culture of armed resistance and loyalty to tribal rather than a centralized state authority (Washington Institute, 2014).

He justified these actions by asserting that the Jamahiriya granted direct authority to all individuals. Throughout Gaddafi's 42-year rule, a wide-ranging campaign was carried out to eliminate his opponents within Libya and abroad. Public hangings conducted in squares and universities instigated fear among the citizens (Vandewalle, 1999).

#### **4.2.1.2 Libyan External Politics:**

Gaddafi's foreign policy was marked by his backing of opposition and rebel movements globally, fueled by his anti-Western stance and revolutionary beliefs. In the 1980s and 1990s, Libya under Gaddafi supported groups like

Nelson Mandela's African National Congress, Yasser Arafat's Palestine Liberation Organization, and the Irish Republican Army. This support aimed to enhance Gaddafi's revolutionary image, expand his global influence, and forge alliances against Western foes (Libya Tribune, 2023; Guber, 2018).

However, this international support had unforeseen effects that later shaped the rise of armed groups within Libya. Gaddafi's strategy of arming and training foreign militants left a legacy of militarization that lingered after his regime's end. The skills, networks, and resources built through these global connections were later turned inward as various factions and armed groups competed to fill the power void left by Gaddafi's downfall (Chatham House, 2014).

During the 1990s, Libya faced sanctions due to allegations of terrorism. This isolation had a profound impact on Gaddafi's external and internal policies. The Libya Sanctions Act severely limited Libya's international engagement, deepening its economic and political isolation. This isolation strengthened Gaddafi's reliance on internal control and support for foreign opposition groups to maintain power and influence (Iran and Libya Sanctions Act of 1996).

The sanctions and isolation tightened Gaddafi's authoritarian rule. With restricted external economic ties, Gaddafi focused on controlling internal resources and suppressing dissent through militarization. The lack of a constitution and clear governance framework added to the challenges in the post-Gaddafi period (Tschentscher, 2020). This absence of legal and institutional structures meant there were no mechanisms to guide the transition or ensure stability after Gaddafi's regime fell (Larémont, 2013).

Following Gaddafi's fall, the power vacuum led to a scramble for control among various factions, armed groups, and regional players, resulting in a fragmented and conflict-ridden political scene. The legacy of Gaddafi's militarization, along with the tribal divisions he intensified, paved the way for the rise of armed groups that continue to threaten Libya's unity and governance (USIP, 2016).

In the early 2000s, Libya's stance towards its neighbors, the West, and even the United States, which Gaddafi once considered his main enemy, shifted towards normalization. Gaddafi then focused on Africa, offering financial support to African leaders with the ambition of becoming the continent's dominant figure and even proclaiming himself the "king of kings" of Africa (Guber, 2018).

Despite these shifts, Libya still lacked a comprehensive constitution and clear governance framework (Tschentscher, 2020), which complicated the post-Gaddafi transition. The absence of legal and institutional foundations left a governance vacuum that various factions, armed groups, and regional powers exploited to vie for control and influence (Larémont, 2013).

#### **4.2.1.3 Impact of Compulsory Military Training on Libyan Education and Society:**

The discovery of oil in Libya profoundly transformed the country from a poor nation into a rentier state heavily reliant on oil revenues. This transformation had significant implications for its education system. The government provided free education to students but imposed compulsory conscription for the first time in 1974. This policy targeted young people between the ages of 15 and 18 who were still attending high school and university, aiming to create what Gaddafi referred to as "armed citizens" (Al-Teer, 2014).

The regime allocated substantial funds to procure weapons and military equipment to support militarization efforts. Schools were converted into military barracks, where students endured severe psychological and physical treatment. This harsh training regimen led to student deaths, exemplified by the incident at Tikbali camp (Fadhli, 2006).

The violent nature of the training instilled fear, persecution, and humiliation among students. Many girls discontinued their education due to parental objections to their involvement in military training, especially since instructors were predominantly male soldiers. This created a sense of enmity

between the military and educational sectors, with armed forces intruding upon and interfering in school affairs (Fadhli, 2006).

In response to student resistance, the regime established military courts to try those who refused to comply. On April 7, 1976, in Benghazi, the regime executed a group of students who defied the training program, hanging them within university premises and imprisoning others. While other nations celebrated scientific achievements, Libya publicly executed rebellious students (Fadhli, 2006).

The regime further entrenched military presence within educational institutions by establishing military coordination offices, intelligence units, and revolutionary committees in every college, school, and institute. Students were compelled to wear military uniforms, and those who resisted were confined to camps and detention centers, subjected to military laws, courts, and prisons. This blurred the distinction between civil education and military indoctrination, resulting in a loss of individual identity among students and tarnishing the reputation of education (Hajjar, 1980).

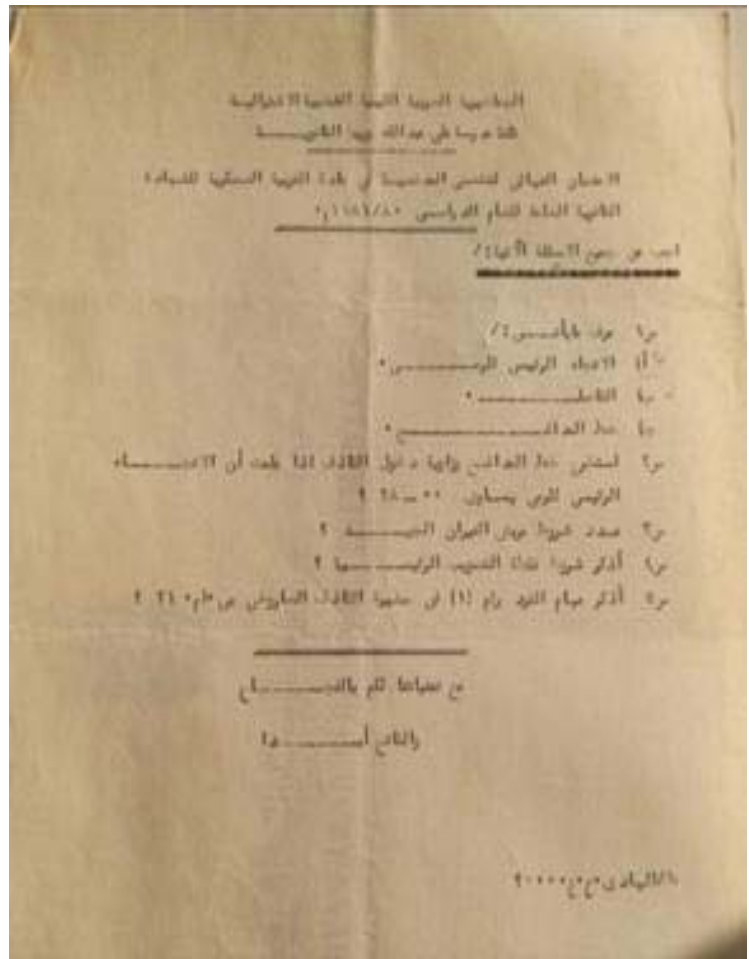
This troubling phenomenon blurred the lines between civil education and military indoctrination, ensnaring students' minds in a bewildering conundrum. The erosion of individual autonomy dealt a devastating blow to the reputation of education. Underage students were unwillingly thrust into the theatre of war, particularly during Libya's conflict with Chad, struggling against the merciless desert terrain and brutal battlegrounds, leading to tragic deaths (Simon, 1993).

In my thesis, I shed light on a poorly explored aspect of Libyan history by introducing fresh evidence, specifically focusing on the impact of compulsory military training in schools. This training was a key factor in the formation of armed groups post-Gaddafi. The foundations of this turbulent period were laid in an earlier era when students, once mandated to receive military training, rose to lead these factions. Nurtured by the state apparatus, these individuals now defy its legitimacy and conventional forces, fostering deep-rooted resentment towards the system that once encompassed them. Abandoning concepts of law

and order in favor of turmoil and vengeance, they reject the state's rules, forging a dangerous trajectory guided by a skewed interpretation of justice.

#### **4.2.1.4 The Militarization of Education: A Case Study of Libyan Schools Under Gaddafi**

During the Gaddafi regime, military training was a compulsory part of the curriculum in Libyan schools. This case study explores the extent of this militarization through various types of evidence, including photographs, school certificates, and official documents. It also examines the impact of such training on students and the broader Libyan society, particularly about the emergence of armed groups post-Gaddafi. Photographs from the Gaddafi era vividly depict students engaged in military drills, dressed in uniforms, and handling weapons. These images provide tangible evidence of the state's effort to instill militaristic values and skills within the youth population. Official documents, including school certificates and student identification cards, further confirm that these training programs are mandatory; these documents highlight the integration of military training into the formal education system, emphasizing its role in shaping the youth.



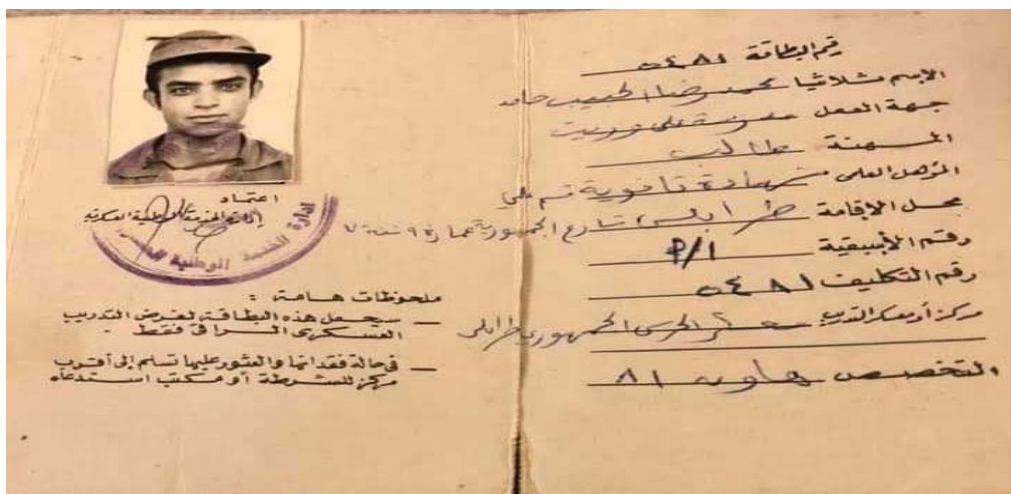
**Figure 4. 1** Examination Questions For The military Subject. ( Military Examination Questions Document, 1981).



**Figure 4.2** Students' Identification Cards (Military ID, 1982). The card displays the pupil's names and military. Rank (student), blood group, and issuance date. On the reverse side, it indicates that the Armed Forces issued the card member of the Missile Battalion, affiliated with a specific second.

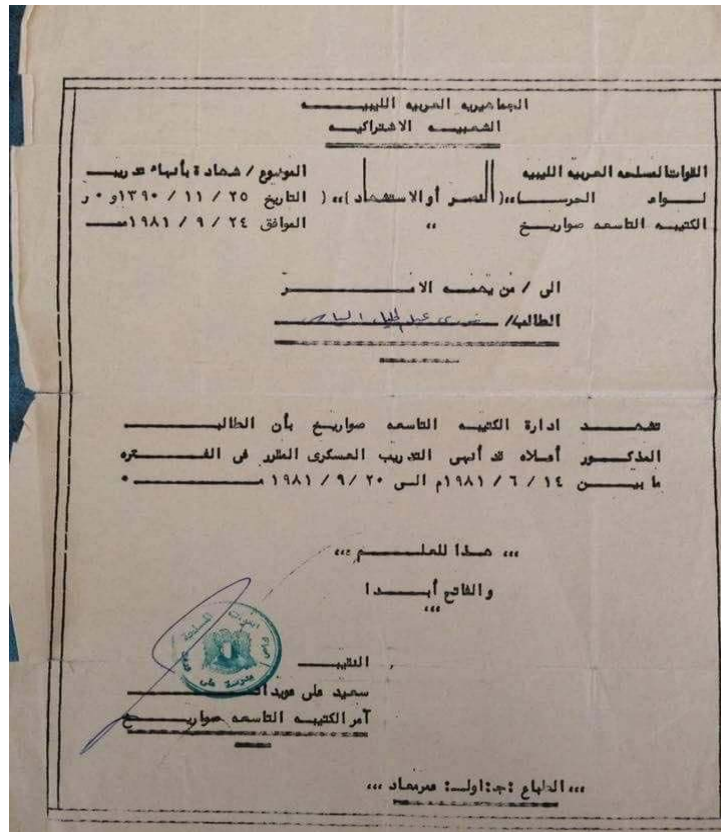


**Figure 4.3** Another Student ID (Military ID, 1985) showing the rank of the cardholder as a student

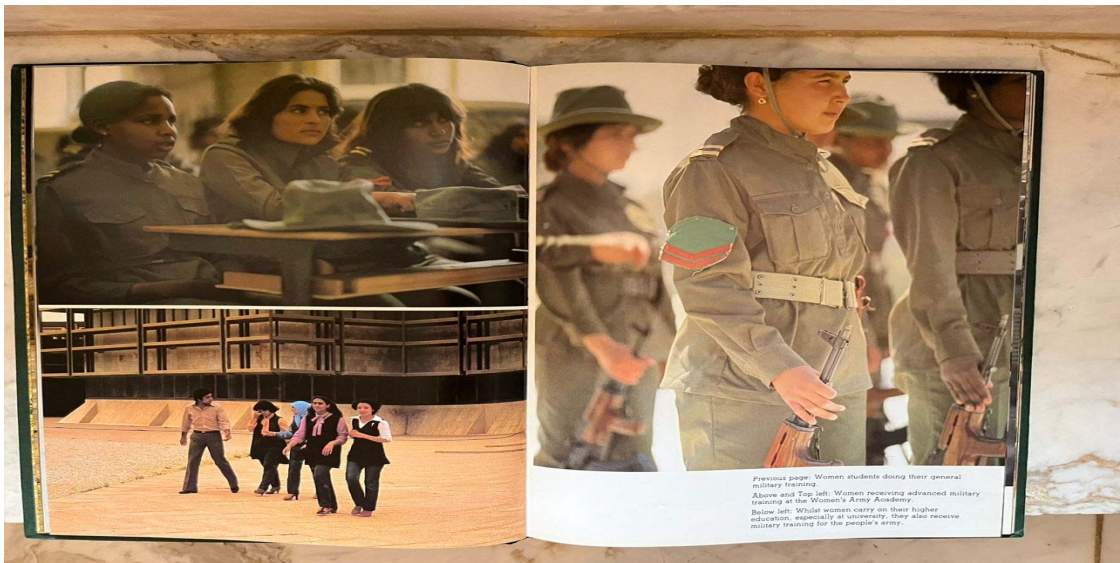


**Figure 4.4** A Military Card For a High School Diploma Student specializing in mortar artillery (Military ID, 1984)





**Figure 4.6** Official Certification Confirming the Completion of Military Training. This document is an Official Certification Confirming the Completion of Military Training by the mentioned student (Military Official Certification, 1981).



**Figure 4.7** Photos Showing Female Students During Military Training (Dawton, 1981).

#### **4.2.1.5 Analysis of the Impact of Mandatory Military Training:**

The compulsory military training in Libyan schools likely had a profound impact on students' mindsets and capabilities. Exposure to militaristic ideology and training at a young age could have fostered a culture of violence and conflict resolution through force. Moreover, the normalization of military activities within educational settings may have desensitized individuals to the consequences of armed conflict, contributing to a readiness to resort to violence in times of political upheaval.

**Normalization of Violence:** By integrating military training into the education system, the regime normalized the use of force and violence as a means of problem-solving. This normalization may have desensitized individuals to the consequences and moral implications of violence, potentially leading to a culture where resorting to force becomes more acceptable.

**Militarization of Society:** The mandatory military training could have contributed to the militarization of society, wherein military values, hierarchy, and structures permeate civilian life. This militarization can lead to a society where military solutions are prioritized over diplomatic or peaceful resolutions to conflicts. Additionally, it may foster a culture where obedience to authority and conformity to violence norms are highly valued.

**Psychological Impact:** For many individuals, undergoing military training at a young age could imprint a sense of discipline, duty, and allegiance to the state. However, it may also induce psychological stress, especially for those who do not naturally conform to the rigid structures of military life. Moreover, exposure to weapons and combat training at a young age could potentially desensitize individuals to violence, diminishing empathy and increasing the likelihood of aggressive behavior in the future.

While mandatory military training may have instilled a sense of preparedness and national unity in citizens, it also carried significant risks of perpetuating violence, stifling dissent, and diverting resources away from critical aspects of education. These potential negative consequences underscore the

importance of critically evaluating the role of militarism within educational systems and Libyan society in general.

Recognizing that mandatory military training could be a contributing factor, it's essential to understand that it is not the sole cause of the emergence of armed groups in Libya. However, it underscores the significance of addressing the militarization of society as a potential element in this complex issue. Alongside other socio-political, economic, and historical factors, the militarization of society has undoubtedly shaped the situation in Libya.

#### **4.2.1.6. Connection to the Emergence of Armed Groups:**

Historical evidence suggests that individuals who underwent military training during their formative years were more likely to participate in armed resistance movements following the collapse of the Gaddafi regime. Former students of these programs often formed the core of insurgent groups, drawing upon their training and indoctrination to challenge the post-revolutionary order.

According to Eaton, Alageli, Badi, and Eljarh (2020), the legacy of mandatory military training during the Gaddafi era significantly influenced the development of armed groups post-2011. The military skills and hierarchical structures ingrained in the students provided a ready pool of trained individuals who could be mobilized for various armed factions. This militarization was further fueled by community dynamics and economic interests that evolved in the post-Gaddafi power vacuum (Eaton et al., 2020).

After Gaddafi's fall, Libya experienced significant fragmentation. The lack of solid and unifying institutions and numerous armed groups led to a complex and volatile situation. The trained individuals from Gaddafi's era, accustomed to military discipline and operations, found themselves in an environment where their skills were in high demand, either to support or oppose various factions.

Eaton et al. (2020) describe how economic factors, such as control over oil resources and smuggling routes, further complicated the landscape. The interplay between economic interests and the existing militarization of society

created a fertile ground for the proliferation of armed groups, each vying for power and resources in the fragmented state (Eaton et al., 2020).

This historical analysis provides compelling evidence supporting the hypothesis that mandatory military training in Gaddafi-era Libyan schools contributed to state failure through the emergence of armed groups. By militarizing society and fostering a culture of violence, these training programs laid the groundwork for the proliferation of armed actors in the post-revolutionary period. Addressing the legacy of militarization is thus crucial for promoting stability and peacebuilding efforts in Libya's transitional context.

#### **4.2.2 Overview of Institutional Dynamics:**

The intricate interplay of political and economic forces within Libya's post-oil era has profoundly shaped the nation's socio-political landscape trajectory. A significant facet of this intricate web lies in how the configuration of economic resources, particularly the reliance on petroleum revenues, directly impacted the consolidation and militarization of Muammar Gaddafi's regime. With oil revenues at its disposal, the regime embarked on a path that not only shaped the country's economy but also significantly influenced its political and social institutions. The vast influx of oil wealth empowered the Gaddafi regime, allowing it to bolster its military capabilities and exert greater control over the state apparatus (Larémont,2013).

Former Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi neglected the institutional infrastructure and exploited this newfound wealth by channeling funds towards supporting terrorist groups. In addition, Gaddafi utilized oil revenues to promote his ideology outside Libya and sponsor subversive and terrorist activities. As a result, the United Nations imposed sanctions on the country after Gaddafi refused to cooperate with investigations into various bombings, including the Lockerbie bombing of 1988, the bombing of the French UTA flight 772 over Niger in 1989, and a discotheque bombing in Berlin. (Gaub, 2013)

The UN sanctions, implemented in 1992, included restrictions on military sales, air communications, and certain types of equipment. As mentioned earlier,

these sanctions isolated Gaddafi politically and economically following the attacks. However, the sanctions were lifted in 1999 when the Libyan government accepted responsibility for the bombings and agreed to compensate the victims. The complete lifting of sanctions occurred only in 2003 when the Libyan suspects were finally brought to trial (Merrills, 2005).

As a rentier state heavily reliant on oil revenue, Libya's economy relied solely on this resource, with minimal industrial infrastructure (Harris, 2022). With trade restrictions enforced and the seizure of property and assets of merchants under Gaddafi's implementation of the Third Universal Theory, influenced by socialist ideology, the concentration of wealth and power in the hands of the ruling elite became pronounced (Hajjar, 1980).

Gaddafi's regime further solidified its control through the recruitment of security forces from loyal tribes, prioritizing the safeguarding of his rule. The deliberate hindrance of robust state institutions meant that Gaddafi relied on patronage networks, such as the Popular Social Leadership, to co-opt influential local figures instead of relying on official institutions (Mattes, 2008; Ouannes, 2009).

This system of patronage, fueled by oil revenues, led to inefficient political and economic institutions prone to corruption, where access to resources and opportunities was heavily contingent on loyalty to the regime. As a result, specific segments of society experienced a sense of exclusion and marginalization, intensifying grievances and discontent.

Scholars have recognized the role of abundant natural resources as a significant factor in the onset and persistence of conflict, as they represent the coveted "prize" for state or territorial control. This raises the risk of conflicts driven by avarice, providing armed groups with the means to acquire military hardware (Le Billon, 2001). Consequently, understanding the influence of oil on conflict dynamics is crucial for shedding light on the developments that followed the downfall of the Qadhafi administration (Klare et al., 2020).

The death of Gaddafi had far-reaching consequences for Libya, as it gave rise to a power vacuum that was aggravated by the absence of well-established

institutional organizations and a clear framework for effective governance (Govern, 2012) Gaddafi's rule was characterized by a highly centralized system where power was concentrated in his hands, and his demise left a void in the country's leadership and decision-making structures (Gruber, 2018).

One of the key factors that exacerbated the power vacuum was the lack of institutionalized organizations, particularly within the Military, that could continue to function effectively without Gaddafi's presence. (Barany, 2011) During his rule, Gaddafi had tightly controlled the military and relied heavily on his network of loyalists. However, he failed to establish strong and independent military institutions that could maintain stability and order in his absence (Mattes, 2008). As a result, the disintegration of the military and the absence of a capable security force created a fertile ground for the emergence of armed groups.

However, Tribal institutions and militarization have remained long-lasting features of Libyan society even after Gaddafi's fall. Gaddafi's strategic reliance on tribal loyalties and militarization created deep-rooted structures that persisted beyond his regime. Tribal affiliations became crucial for political and social organization, with tribes playing a significant role in local governance and community dynamics (Al-Shadeedi & Ezzeddine, 2019).

The militarization of society, initiated through mandatory military training in schools, instilled military values and skills in the youth. These trained individuals formed the backbone of various armed groups post-Gaddafi. The tribal and military structures, which were instrumental in maintaining Gaddafi's control, became the foundation for the formation and sustenance of armed groups in the power vacuum that followed his death (Eaton, Alageli, Badi, & Eljarh, 2020).

Economic factors, such as control over oil resources and smuggling routes, further complicated the landscape. The interplay between economic interests and the existing militarization of society created a fertile ground for the proliferation of armed groups, each vying for power and resources in the fragmented state. The legacy of Gaddafi's militarization policies thus significantly influenced the

development and persistence of these groups (Eaton, Alageli, Badi, & Eljarh, 2020).

### **4.3 THE LIBYAN UPRISING (2011)**

In the early months of 2011, a wave of democratic fervor swept through the Arab world, marking a period of significant change and hope. It all began with the spark of revolution in Tunisia in December 2010, igniting a flame that Egypt quickly embraced. Within weeks, Libya joined this transformative wave, culminating in what would be known as the Arab Spring a complex and intricate process encompassing political, social, and economic transformations (Al-Ajmi, 2012).

However, Libya's journey was distinct from its neighboring nations. The challenge of confronting Gaddafi, the entrenched leader, proved to be a formidable and exceedingly complex task. Unlike the relatively swift transitions witnessed in nearby countries like Tunisia and Egypt, Libya faced a different reality. Gaddafi stood as an enduring force resistant to outside pressure and change with his immense arsenal and was notorious for his ruthlessness towards his adversaries. Consequently, the path to democratic transition in Libya was much more elusive compared to its counterparts due to the enduring rule of Muammar Gaddafi, a controversial figure who held the reins of the state with an iron fist for over four decades, orchestrating a reign marked by both might and malevolence (Ronen, 2008).

Scholars studied the degrees of the failure of democratic transition in the Arab world and attribute this to different elements such as colonial legacy, oil wealth, tribal factors, weakness of institutions, and ineffective political parties; all of these are sufficient factors, but they could not illustrate the obstacles in each of the Arab countries (Anderson, 2011). Compared to Tunisia and Egypt, neighboring countries of Libya, Libya has witnessed a significantly elevated level of authoritarianism, providing a breeding ground for the rise of armed groups within its borders. While demonstrators in Tunis and Cairo managed to

overthrow their respective leaders successfully, the situation in Libya unfolded quite differently, plunging into a protracted civil war.

The extended strife following the uprising can be credited to Gaddafi's authoritarian governance, characterized by patronage-based administration favoring family and clan associates. Moreover, Gaddafi exacerbated the situation by granting access to the extensive weapon reserves he had amassed for decades, allowing anyone interested to participate in the conflict against the rebels. Additionally, he freed inmates (excluding political detainees), further escalating the level of disorder. It is worth noting that before the uprising, Libyan citizens were already trained on how to use these weapons, contributing to the intensity and complexity of the conflict. (Ben Lamma, 2017).

Gaddafi's regime deliberately induced scarcity across various essential sectors, breeding widespread corruption. Moreover, the capricious and brutal nature of his rule instilled deep-rooted suspicion among the Libyan populace. As trust in the government and fellow citizens eroded, people sought solace within their tribes and families, resulting in a fractured society. Unlike Tunisia and Egypt, Libya lacked a structured political alliance system, economic networks, or any form of national organization. Consequently, what initially started as nonviolent protests, similar to those witnessed in Tunisia and Egypt, rapidly escalated into a complete state disintegration, giving rise to multiple secessionist movements due to the higher level of authoritarianism (Anderson, 2011).

Reflecting remnants of Italian fascism from its colonial history, Libya under Gaddafi displayed extravagance, ideological dogmatism, and brutality. In the guise of a "permanent revolution," Gaddafi curtailed private ownership and retail trade, suppressed the free press, and subverted the civil service and military leadership. The absence of a functional public-sector bureaucracy, including a reliable police force, led people to rely on kinship networks for safety, security, and access to essential goods and services. Consequently, as the regime's ability to divide and rule began to unravel during the initial protests, Libyan society fractured along these kinship networks, further illustrating the heightened authoritarianism that set Libya apart from Tunisia and Egypt (Anderson, 2011).

To compare Libya with Tunisia and Egypt, the transition in both states was less violent. Although hundreds of citizens were killed, Tunisian and Egyptian armies protected the protestors. They did not allow the presidents Ben Ali and Mubarak to use the army to suppress the demonstrations (Blakemore, 2021). On the contrary, in Libya, the transition was more violent; thousands were killed, and the UN interfered to protect the civilians from the leader's cruel actions (Martin, 2022)

#### **4.3.1 Military Influence and the Emergence of Armed Groups: A Comparative Analysis of Libya, Tunisia, and Egypt during the Arab Spring**

During the Arab Spring, the military institution played a significant role in shaping the outcomes of the uprisings. The military's support or at least acquiescence was pivotal to the success of the revolutions, although the transition to democracy required a confluence of social, economic, and political conditions. To comprehend the contrast between Libya and its neighboring countries and the emergence of armed groups specifically in Libya as opposed to Egypt and Tunisia, it is crucial to delve into the events that unfolded during the uprisings in these three nations.

##### **Tunisia**

The uprising in Tunisia, which began on December 17, 2010, highlighted the independence and institutionalization of the Tunisian military. During the revolution, President Zinedine Ben Ali deployed troops, including the presidential guards and gangs of thugs, to suppress the protests forcefully (Sofi, 2021). However, despite these measures, the Tunisian people persisted in their mission to overthrow the dictator. When tensions escalated, Ben Ali ordered the army to intervene. In a pivotal moment, Army Chief of Staff Rachid Ammar defied this order and directed the army to protect the protesters instead. This defiance led to Ben Ali's exile, exemplifying the institutionalization and professionalism of the Tunisian military, which had been cultivated since the era of Habib Bourguiba (1957-1987). Bourguiba had prohibited soldiers from

engaging in political activities and ensured that military officers received professional training in Europe and the United States, contributing to the military's professionalism compared to other Arab armies (Ware, 1985).

## **Egypt**

Egypt followed Tunisia's revolution within weeks. President Hosni Mubarak also ordered his police and armed forces to repress the demonstrations. Initially, the Egyptian generals did not support the protesters, and their reaction was not as apparent as their counterparts in Tunisia. The military elites were reluctant to lose their privileged position in Mubarak's regime, so they instructed their army units to act to end the chaos (Harb, 2003). Protesters were assaulted and abused, but they persisted in demonstrating in Tahrir Square, even when security agents used violence against them. A few weeks later, the army generals, aware that rising violence and disorder would ruin the state and damage the military's legitimacy, stood by the Egyptian people. Consequently, the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces assumed control of the country and persuaded Mubarak to step down (Blakemore, 2021). The Egyptian military, deeply entrenched in the country's political and economic life since Jamal Abdul Nasser's revolution in 1952, played a crucial role in stabilizing the state and preventing it from sliding into chaos (Khan, 2013; Tschirgi et al., 2013).

## **Libya**

In stark contrast, Libya's military was fragmented, with factions aligned either for or against Gaddafi. The ineffective military organization at the time led to the emergence of diverse armed groups, profoundly influencing the dynamics of power and governance as Libya navigated a complex political evolution (Gaub, 2013). Libya endured a tumultuous period of forty-two years under the dictatorship of Muammar Gaddafi, during which the nation's resources and wealth were squandered to serve the leader's ambitions. However, driven by a desperate yearning for a brighter future, the Libyan people swiftly embraced the opportunity for change when it finally presented itself (Sawani, 2011).

Tensions soared, particularly among the younger population who viewed revolution as the avenue to address their grievances. Inspired by the successful uprisings in Tunisia and Egypt, Libya plunged into protests initially marked by a peaceful tone as demonstrators voiced their demands for fundamental rights and social justice. However, Gaddafi's forces responded with brutal repression, triggering a vicious cycle of bloodshed and conflict. Compounding the situation was the widespread training of citizens in weapon use, which swiftly escalated the turmoil, resulting in widespread violence and instability (Anderson, 2011).

Amidst this turmoil, the youth, disillusioned by the oppressive regime and buoyed by the triumphs of neighboring uprisings, found themselves in a delicate predicament, torn between their yearning for change and the grim realities of armed strife. Despite immense challenges and violence, the determined protesters did not succumb to defeat. Instead, they courageously fought against Gaddafi's forces, leading to a revolution marred by continuous bloodshed from its earliest days. Unlike Tunisia and Egypt, where the military played a crucial role in protecting civilian protesters and exerting pressure on their respective leaders to step down, the Libyan military failed to fulfill this duty. Instead, Gaddafi purposefully weakened all state institutions over several decades to ensure that no entity could threaten his authority, especially the military, which suffered from corruption, inefficiency, and internal divisions (Anderson, 2011; Carboni, 2013).

The Libyan military, lacking the necessary professionalism and discipline, proved incapable of safeguarding the lives of civilians during the revolution. Moreover, the split within the army, with some forces turning against Gaddafi, eventually led to his demise. This fragmentation stemmed from the structural and operational dynamics within the Libyan military. The army's foundation was grounded in loyalties rooted in tribal affiliations, rampant corruption, and nepotism. Gaddafi's leadership further exacerbated this divide by neglecting the development of a cohesive and impartial military institution. Instead, he prioritized the creation of special forces dedicated to safeguarding himself and his family. Consequently, when conflicts arose, the army was incapable of acting

impartially, becoming starkly divided with factions aligning either as staunch supporters of the regime or as individuals desperately seeking to overthrow Gaddafi (Bruce, 2017).

The Libyan military shared power with other influential players, such as the well-trained and more numerous Gaddafi special forces. Additionally, unofficial entities like the revolutionary committees and the Free Officers' Movement controlled vital aspects of the state. School students and recent graduates, both male and female, were also subjected to compulsory military training and deployed to battle when required (Vandewalle, 1999). Importantly, as seen in Egypt and Tunisia, the Libyan armed forces did not enjoy broad public backing. The disintegration of Libya's military during the revolution can be attributed to the strong tribal culture, particularly prevalent within the armed forces. Powerful tribes had representation, and many Libyans exhibited loyalty primarily to their tribe rather than the state. Gaddafi deliberately favored certain tribes by giving them influential positions in the military and government while excluding others, intending to maintain absolute control over the entire state (Northam, 2011).

As a result, the army was divided into two factions during the revolution: one loyal to Gaddafi's orders and responsible for firing on the protesters, and another faction comprising individuals ranging from junior soldiers to senior commanders. This latter group opposed Gaddafi's policies and brutal treatment of dissenters, choosing to reject his directives by either fleeing with their weapons or aligning themselves with the demonstrators (Gaub, 2013).

As the violence escalated, the people's discontent and the demand for the regime's fall, not just reforms, grew. The United Nations intervened under the pretext of protecting civilians and authorized NATO to support the rebels, rapidly transforming Libya into a war zone (Pattison, 2011). Airstrikes were conducted by NATO on strategic sites controlled by the regime while various countries supplied weapons to bolster the resistance (Martin, 2022). The fierce conflict endured for six months, destroying already deteriorated infrastructure and causing significant loss of life and mass displacement. After implementing

a no-fly zone in March 2011, anti-Gaddafi cities survived, forming brigades that remained loyal to their respective regions rather than the National Transitional Council (NTC).

This resulted in a highly fragmented security structure of dispersed and independent armed units, each with its chain of command, military background, and revolutionary narrative. Certain towns and cities in western Libya emerged as strongholds of the revolution, while neighboring areas hosted government forces and organized volunteer fighters. The military organizations continued to operate locally in regions where widespread support for the revolution, such as the western Nafusa Mountains, existed (Lacher & Labnouj, 2015). Each town maintained its own local and military councils to coordinate its revolutionary brigades. Following Gaddafi's death, the cities and tribes that emerged victorious seized power and clashed with cities and tribes that remained loyal to the regime (Lacher, 2013).

#### **4.4 LIBYA'S POST-GADDAFI EPOCH (2011-2014)**

##### **4.4.1 Political landscape:**

The death of Gaddafi had far-reaching consequences for Libya, as it gave rise to a power vacuum that was exacerbated by the absence of well-established institutional organizations and a clear framework for effective governance (Govern, 2012). Gaddafi's rule was characterized by a highly centralized system where power was concentrated in his hands, and his demise left a void in the country's leadership and decision-making structures (Gruber, 2018). One of the key factors that exacerbated the power vacuum was the lack of institutionalized organizations, particularly within the military, that could continue to function effectively without Gaddafi's presence (Barany, 2011). During his rule, Gaddafi had tightly controlled the military and relied heavily on his network of loyalists. However, he failed to establish strong and independent military institutions that could maintain stability and order in his absence (Mattes, 2008).

As a result, the disintegration of the military and the absence of a capable security force created fertile ground for the emergence of armed groups. Furthermore, Libya lacked a comprehensive constitution or a clearly defined governance framework (Tschentscher, 2020), compounding the challenges faced in the post-Gaddafi era. The absence of a legal and institutional foundation for decision-making and governance meant no established mechanisms to guide the transition and provide stability. This void in governance allowed different factions, armed groups, and regional powerbrokers to vie for control and influence, seeking to exploit the power vacuum for their interests (Larémont, 2013).

In the ensuing chaos, ordinary Libyans, who had been trained in the use of weapons due to Gaddafi's policy of military training for civilians, found themselves as *de facto* armed forces (Vandewalle, 1999). This widespread familiarity with arms among the populace meant that when the central authority collapsed, these individuals were equipped not only with military skills but also with the means to assert their power. As a result, local militias and extremist organizations emerged, each seeking to establish dominance over territories and resources (Carboni, 2013).

In the aftermath of Muammar Gaddafi's death, Libya found itself in a state of chaos and uncertainty. With no unified and legitimate central authority to fill the void, the country became a breeding ground for various armed groups, each with its ambitions and visions for Libya's future. From local militias to extremist organizations, these groups emerged from the shadows, seeking to establish their dominance and control over territories and valuable resources (Carboni, 2013). This situation became even more alarming because of the absence of a strong and unified military institution that could provide security and enforce the rule of law. With no one to maintain order, these armed groups stepped in, filling the power vacuum and further fueling the flames of instability. Their competition for power and influence turned Libya into a battleground, where violence and conflict became the norm (Willcoxon, 2016).

The proliferation of armed groups was not merely a consequence of Gaddafi's demise; it was a direct result of the underlying weaknesses in Libya's institutional and governance structures. The lack of a well-established military and a clear framework for effective governance left a void that these armed groups were all too eager to exploit. Without a strong central authority to rein them in, they operated with impunity, wreaking havoc and exacerbating the already fragile situation (Zoltan, 2011).

The consequences of this power struggle were devastating for Libya and its people. Violence escalated, communities were torn apart, and the country descended into a state of lawlessness. The dreams of a stable and prosperous post-Gaddafi era seemed to fade away as the armed groups fought for control, leaving ordinary Libyans caught in the crossfire (Gaub, 2013). Libya's challenges after Gaddafi's death were not only political but also deeply rooted in the absence of institutionalized organizations and a strong and unified military. The lack of these essential pillars of governance allowed armed groups to flourish, further complicating the already complex task of rebuilding the nation.

#### **4.4.2 Overview of Institutional Dynamics:**

The fragile institutions that depended entirely on Gaddafi's influence became evident in the aftermath of his fall from power. The pillars of the state weakened, leaving a power vacuum and a fragmented security landscape. This shift, combined with historical grievances and ethno-tribal divisions exacerbated by economic disparities, fostered a conducive environment for the proliferation of armed groups in an environment lacking strong institutional infrastructure (Govern, 2012).

During the post-Gaddafi epoch, armed factions swiftly proliferated, strategically leveraging the vulnerabilities stemming from weakened state institutions, territorial fragmentation, and an abundance of surplus weaponry. This intricate interplay between economic downturn, political transformation, and the ensuing militarization highlights a multifaceted network of elements shaping Libya's dynamic geopolitical landscape. A comprehensive grasp of this

complex relationship is indispensable for comprehending the origins and dynamics behind the formation of armed groups in Libya (Larémont, 2013).

In Libya, where oil played a dominant role in the economy and patronage networks enabled the concentration of wealth and power, the emergence of armed groups can be seen as a consequence of these dynamics. The lack of strong institutions and the chaos that facilitated access to resources and opportunities, coupled with a sense of marginalization and discontent among certain segments of society, contributed to the militarization and fragmentation of the post-Gaddafi era.

The emergence of armed groups in Libya can be partly attributed to various dynamics, including the lack of economic diversification and a rentier system that concentrated power and resources. These groups often operated outside the central government's control, seeking to protect their interests, gain access to resources, or challenge the existing power structure. Some armed groups were remnants of Gaddafi's security forces, while others emerged as regional or tribal militias vying for control and influence (Carboni, 2013).

The proliferation of armed groups in Libya further complicated the country's transition after the regime change. They contributed to the fragmentation of power and authority, leading to instability, violence, and the erosion of state institutions. Moreover, the presence of these armed factions hindered the establishment of a unified and effective government as they pursued their agendas and competed for control over territory and resources (Chivvis et al., 2012).

To understand the role of tribes and militarization as long-lasting institutions in this context, it is crucial to consider how tribal affiliations and military training under Gaddafi's regime continued to influence the socio-political landscape. Tribes, as enduring social structures, provided a foundation for loyalty and mobilization, often filling the void left by the state's collapse. Similarly, the militarization ingrained in Libyan society through Gaddafi's policies facilitated the rapid formation of armed groups, as individuals with

military training and access to weapons sought to assert their power and protect their interests.

Using quantitative analysis to address the lack of institutionalization in Libya, we can draw more direct connections between public perception and the emergence of armed groups post-Gaddafi. Survey data on public trust in government, perceptions of security, and attitudes towards militias can illuminate the extent to which institutional weaknesses and societal militarization have shaped the current instability. This approach provides a nuanced understanding of how long-standing tribal and militaristic structures have persisted and adapted in the post-Gaddafi era, continuing to influence Libya's political and security dynamics.

#### **4.4.2.1 Quantitative Analysis: World Values Survey wave 6 Results and Supplementary Data from Eaton (2021) and Amnesty International (2021)**

This analysis leverages data from the World Values Survey (WVS) Wave 6 (2010-2014) to examine the socio-political landscape of Libya during a critical period of transformation. The survey provides insights into public perceptions of governance, political institutions, and social issues. Supplementing this data with findings from Eaton (2021) on the Libyan Arab Armed Forces and Amnesty International's (2021) reports on human rights abuses, we aim to explore how long-lasting tribal influences and the legacy of militarization have contributed to the emergence and persistence of armed groups in Libya.

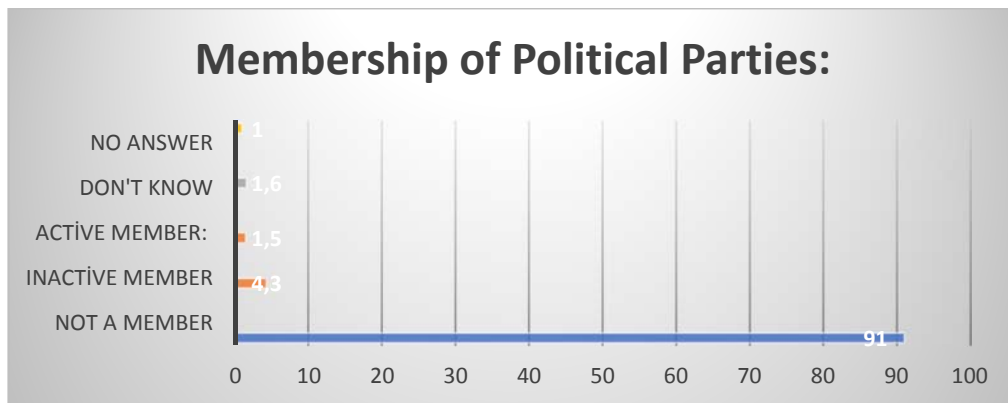
#### **Active/Inactive membership of political party**

The graph indicates that 91.5% of the participants are not affiliated with any political parties. This suggests that the concept of a democratic system is relatively novel in Libya, a consequence of Gaddafi's legacy after decades of authoritarianism. Due to this historical context, many individuals do not envision themselves as active participants in the political process. This could also imply a general mistrust or skepticism towards the newly established democratic

system, reflecting a hesitancy to engage with political institutions that previously did not exist.

The overwhelming lack of political party membership highlights a significant disengagement from formal political processes, suggesting a disconnect between the public and political institutions. This disengagement can be linked to a legacy of authoritarian rule where political participation was neither encouraged nor trusted.

**Table 4.1** Membership of Political Parties



Eaton (2021) emphasizes, "The historical legacy of authoritarianism under Gaddafi has left a profound impact on Libyan society. The lack of experience with democratic processes and the entrenched mistrust of political institutions have contributed to the widespread disengagement from political parties" (Eaton, 2021).

Amnesty International (2021) supports this view by stating, "The transition to democracy in Libya has been marred by a deep-seated skepticism towards political institutions. The absence of a robust political culture has allowed armed groups to fill the void, further complicating efforts to establish a stable democratic system" (Amnesty International, 2021).

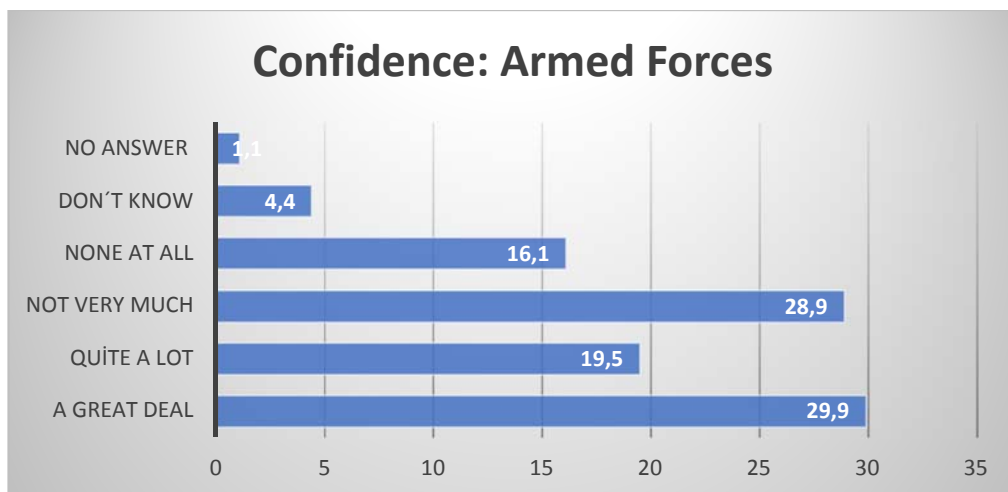
### Confidence in armed forces

The survey results indicate that 29.9% of participants have high trust, 19.5% have moderate trust, 28.9% have little trust, and 16.1% have no trust in Libya's armed forces. This data reveals a complex perspective on the public's confidence in Libya's military entities. A significant part of the population has minimal or no trust in the armed forces.

This evidence is particularly relevant given Libya's emerging armed groups. These groups often gain momentum in settings where the formal military and governance systems are seen as inadequate; illegal groups could fill the gap by offering security and justice where the state fails.

Therefore, the survey findings reveal public perceptions of the armed forces and highlight key challenges in post-Gaddafi Libya, especially in building robust military institutions. The correlation between public trust and the efficiency of these institutions is crucial in understanding Libya's political and security landscape, including the emergence and authority of armed groups.

**Table 4.2** Confidence: Armed Forces



Eaton (2021) underscores this by stating, "The erosion of trust in the formal military has paved the way for various armed groups to establish themselves as alternative sources of security and governance. The fragmentation

of military authority has severely undermined efforts to build a unified and effective national army" (Eaton, 2021, p. 18).

Amnesty International (2021) further supports this observation: "The lack of public confidence in the armed forces is a significant barrier to stabilizing Libya. Armed groups have exploited this distrust, positioning themselves as protectors in a landscape where the state's military presence is perceived as ineffective or absent" (Amnesty International, 2021).

### **Confidence in The Government:**

To link the results of the confidence in the government survey with the emergence of armed groups in Libya, 69.4% of respondents have little to no confidence in the government, which suggests a general dissatisfaction or mistrust among the surveyed population.

The high percentage of respondents indicating low or no confidence in the government could reflect public sentiment on the government's ability to maintain order and provide security, which are critical aspects often challenged in regions with active armed groups.

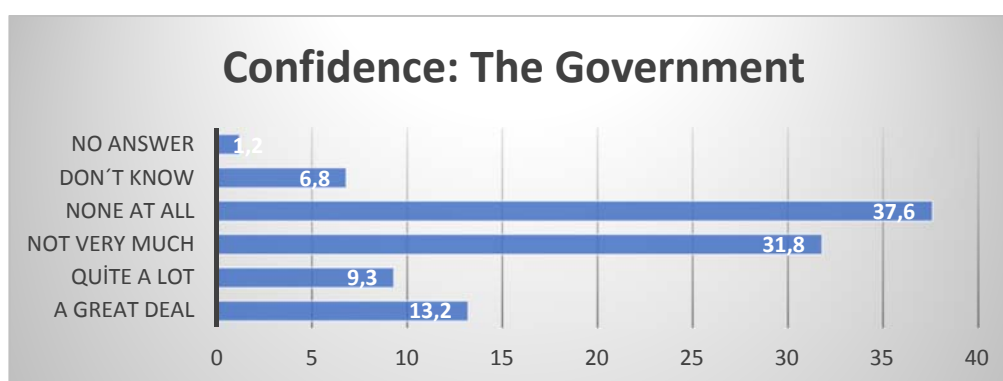
The large proportion of respondents indicating "Not very much" or "None at all" confidence in the government could be symptomatic of the instability caused by these armed groups. Their presence can weaken state institutions, exacerbate corruption, and lead to a breakdown in law and order, all of which erode public trust.

Furthermore, the "Don't know" and "No answer" responses could signify a disconnect or fear among the population, potentially due to the uncertainty and danger that come with the presence of armed groups. When personal security is at risk, citizens may be less informed or willing to express an opinion about government performance.

These sentiments of discontent and disconnection from the government could be closely linked to the historical context of Libya post-Gaddafi. When Gaddafi was deposed, he left a country devoid of robust and effective organizations, creating a power vacuum and a lack of order, which in turn

allowed armed groups to emerge and persist. The formation and continuance of these armed groups have likely contributed to the erosion of trust in the government's ability to maintain stability and security, a crucial aspect of governance.

**Table 4.3** Confidence: The Government



This lack of confidence is corroborated by Eaton (2021), who states, "The persistent failure of successive governments to establish effective governance structures has perpetuated a cycle of distrust and disenfranchisement among the populace" (Eaton, 2021, p. 23).

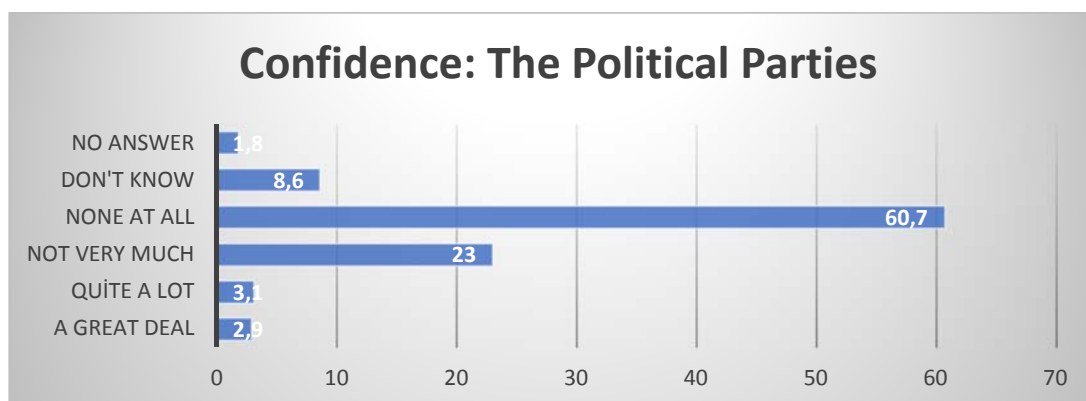
Amnesty International (2021) further notes, "The inability of the government to assert control and provide basic services has led to widespread disillusionment, which armed groups have exploited to gain legitimacy and support among local populations" (Amnesty International, 2021, p. 20).

**Confidence: The Political Parties:**

The data from the World Values Survey reveals that Libyan citizens' trust in political parties mirrors their trust in the government, highlighting the challenges and complexities inherent in the transition to democracy. A substantial majority, 60.7%, of respondents reported having no trust whatsoever in political parties. This pervasive mistrust results from prolonged exposure to an autocratic regime, leading to significant uncertainty and disaffection towards

the political system. Such deep-seated distrust within the political framework has inadvertently paved the way for the expansion of armed groups, as these entities fill the void left by ineffective political institutions.

**Table 4.4** Confidence: The Political Parties



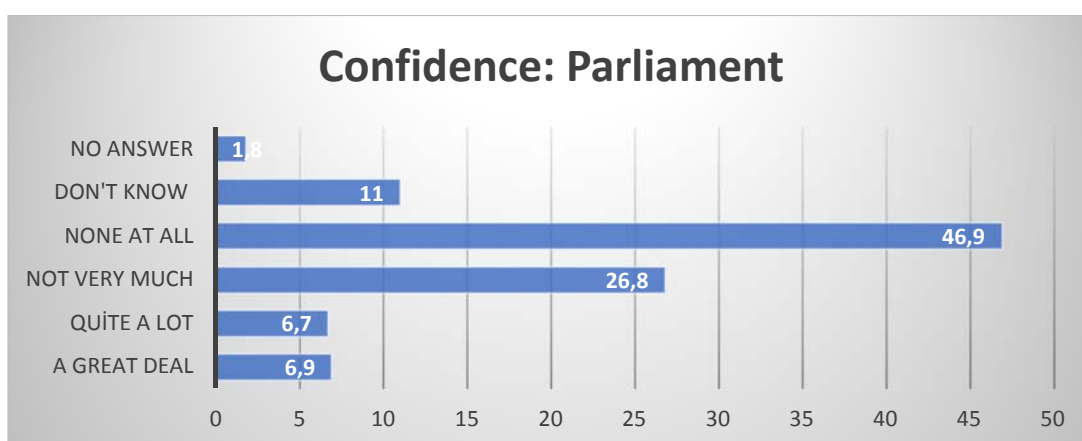
Eaton (2021) emphasizes this issue by noting, "The persistent mistrust in political parties and the broader political system has left a power vacuum that armed groups have been quick to exploit. The lack of effective political entities has created a fertile ground for these groups to assert their influence and control" (Eaton, 2021).

Amnesty International (2021) further supports these findings by documenting how the failure of political parties to establish credible and inclusive governance structures has contributed to the proliferation of militias. "The vacuum left by ineffective political parties has been filled by armed groups, which often provide services and security in the absence of the state, entrenching their power and undermining efforts to build a cohesive national government" (Amnesty International, 2021).

### Confidence: Parliament:

The survey results indicate a markedly low level of public confidence in the parliament, mirroring the equally diminished trust in the government and political parties. This trend is a significant indicator of the deep-rooted skepticism prevailing among citizens, a doubt shaped by years of exposure to a non-democratic regime. The lack of trust in these key political institutions has created a substantial gap in the political landscape. This gap not only reflects the challenges in transitioning to a democratic system but also offers fertilized ground for the rise of alternative power structures, such as armed groups, which thrive in the absence of effective political governance.

**Table 4.5** Confidence: Parliament



Eaton (2021) underscores this point, stating, "The deep-rooted mistrust in parliamentary institutions reflects the broader issues of governance in Libya. The failure to establish a credible and functioning parliament has left a void that armed groups have exploited to gain influence and control" (Eaton, 2021, p. 31).

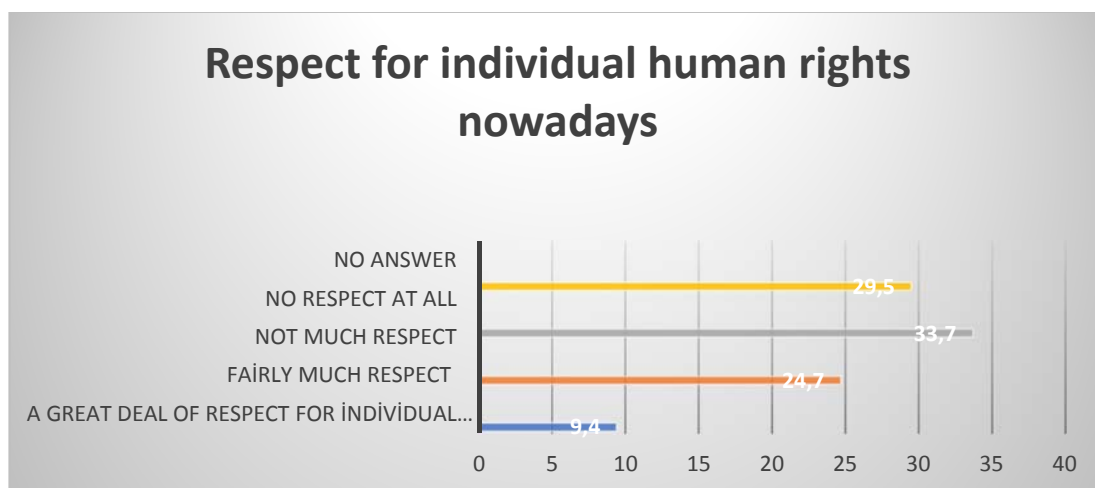
Amnesty International (2021) adds, "The inability of the parliament to provide effective governance and uphold the rule of law has directly contributed to the proliferation of militias. These groups have filled the governance void,

often providing security and services in areas where the state has failed" (Amnesty International, 2021).

### Respect for individual human rights:

The analysis of the data reveals a reality in Libya that profound deficit in human rights respect. A majority, 63.2%, perceive human rights as being either minimally respected or completely disregarded. This overwhelming sentiment not only reflects deep-rooted human rights issues but also suggests a dire need for meaningful reforms and action. The notably small fraction of the population that believes human rights are greatly respected further emphasizes the critical nature of these concerns. Significantly, this pervasive disregard for human rights has fostered an environment where the emergence and normalization of armed groups, especially where stronger factions oppress weaker ones, seems almost inevitable. In a society where human rights are largely overlooked, the formation of such groups appears as a distressing but expected consequence.

**Table 4.6** Respect for Individual Human Rights Nowadays



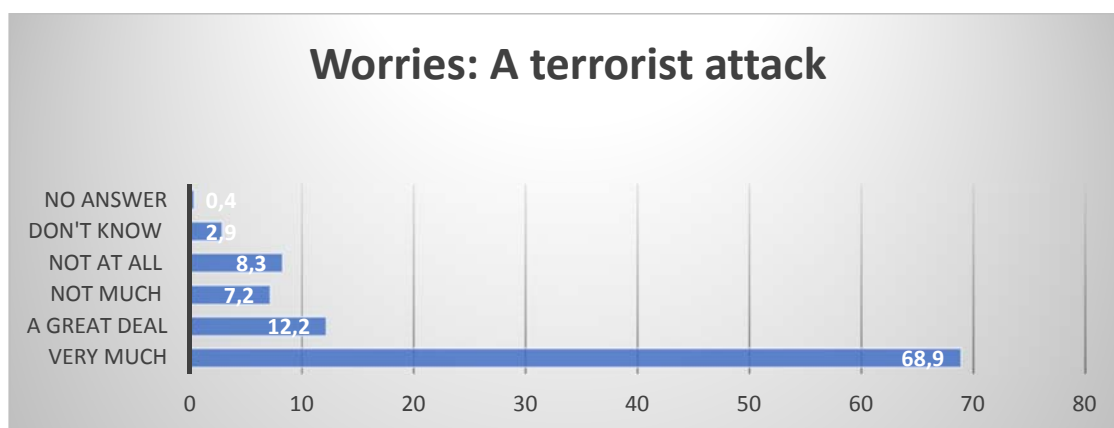
Amnesty International (2021) highlights that "the continued presence and activities of militias have led to widespread human rights abuses, including

arbitrary detention, torture, and extrajudicial killings, further eroding public trust in the state's ability to protect its citizens" (Amnesty International, 2021, p. 12).

### **Worries: A terrorist attacks**

The survey findings indicate that a significant portion of the participants, 69%, are deeply concerned about the possibility of terrorist attacks in their country. This high level of anxiety underscores a pervasive sense of vulnerability and a lack of safety and stability among the populace. Furthermore, these concerns are likely exacerbated by the situation in Libya, where the formation of various armed groups has contributed to regional instability. This situation can lead to heightened fears and a perception that the risks of terrorism are increasing, even if not directly linked to the specific context of the surveyed population.

**Table 4.7** Worries: A Terrorist Attack



Eaton (2021) explains, "The fragmented security environment in Libya, marked by the presence of numerous armed groups, has significantly heightened public fears of terrorism. These groups often engage in violent activities that contribute to a pervasive sense of insecurity" (Eaton, 2021, p. 39).

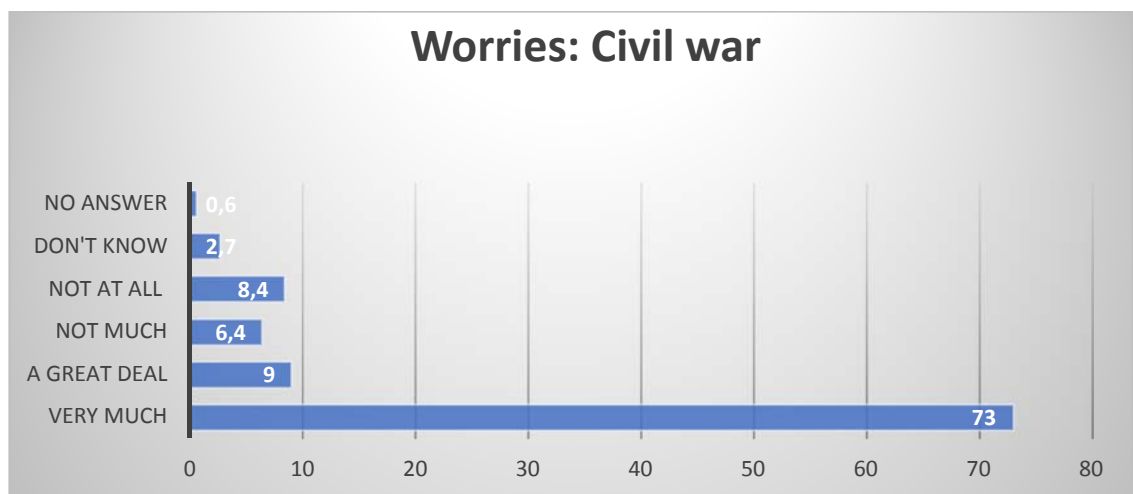
Amnesty International (2021) supports this by noting, "The ongoing conflicts and the presence of armed militias in Libya have created a breeding

ground for terrorism. The lack of a stable security framework has left the population vulnerable and fearful of terrorist activities" (Amnesty International, 2021, p. 22).

### **Worries: civil war**

The survey results indicate that a considerable majority, approximately 70%, of the respondents express profound concern regarding the potential outbreak of a civil war. This heightened anxiety can be partly attributed to the situation in Libya, where the emergence of various armed factions has significantly destabilized the region. The presence and activities of these groups not only raise alarms about the possibility of direct conflict but also contribute to a broader atmosphere of uncertainty and fear. The situation in Libya, with its complex web of armed groups, serves as a stark reminder of how quickly tensions can escalate into widespread violence. This, in turn, influences public perception, leading to increased worries about the likelihood of similar conflicts emerging in their regions. The formation of these armed groups in Libya acts as a catalyst, exacerbating fears about civil strife and underscoring the fragile nature of the country.

**Table 4.8** Worries: Civil War



Eaton (2021) emphasizes, "The potential for civil war is a constant fear among Libyans, driven by the fragmented nature of the country's security landscape and the frequent clashes between various armed groups. This fear is not unfounded, as the presence of these groups increases the likelihood of widespread conflict" (Eaton, 2021, p. 45).

Amnesty International (2021) adds, "The pervasive fear of civil war is a direct consequence of the ongoing instability and the activities of armed militias. The inability of the state to control these groups has left the population in a state of perpetual anxiety, fearing that any local conflict could escalate into a full-blown civil war" (Amnesty International, 2021, p. 26).

### **Tribal influences and militarization:**

Eaton (2021) emphasizes the role of tribal affiliations in shaping Libya's security landscape: "Tribal loyalties continue to play a pivotal role in the organization and allegiance of armed groups, often superseding national loyalty and complicating efforts to unify the country's military forces" (Eaton, 2021, p. 30).

Another significant factor is Gaddafi's militarization of education. As Eaton (2021) notes, "Gaddafi's policies of militarizing education have left a legacy of violence and mistrust, which are deeply ingrained in Libyan society and continue to influence the dynamics of armed groups today" (Eaton, 2021, p. 35).

### **Data resources:**

Conducting research on Libya posed significant challenges due to the lack of comprehensive international databases. To address these challenges, I utilized data from the World Values Survey (WVS), particularly emphasizing Wave 6, which spans from 2010 to 2014. This period is significant as it encompasses the Arab Spring, the overthrow of Gaddafi, and the rise and dominance of armed groups in Libya. To enhance the analysis, I also integrated data from Eaton's (2021) analysis of the Libyan Arab Armed Forces and Amnesty International's

(2021) reports on human rights abuses. My research aimed to test the hypothesis that long-lasting institutions, particularly tribes and militarization, have significantly contributed to the emergence and persistence of armed groups in Libya.

### **Key findings:**

**Lack of Trust in Political Institutions:** The WVS data revealed a pervasive lack of trust in political institutions, with 69.4% of respondents exhibiting little to no confidence in the government. This profound disillusionment with the state's ability to govern effectively and maintain order is further echoed in the political sphere, where a majority of 60.7% expressed an absence of trust in political parties. This deep-seated skepticism towards the nascent democratic processes and political actors indicates significant challenges in transitioning to a stable democratic system.

These findings are intrinsically linked to the historical context of Libya, where long-lasting tribal structures and the legacy of militarization under Gaddafi's regime have played crucial roles. Gaddafi's centralized and authoritarian governance left Libya devoid of robust political institutions. Instead, power was often mediated through tribal affiliations and military loyalty, undermining the development of a cohesive and effective state apparatus. This historical reliance on tribes and militarized structures has created a vacuum where modern political institutions struggle to gain legitimacy and trust.

Eaton (2021) supports these findings, stating, "The persistent failure of successive governments to establish effective governance structures has perpetuated a cycle of distrust and disenfranchisement among the populace" (p. 23). The absence of credible political institutions has allowed armed groups to exploit the void, positioning themselves as alternative sources of authority and governance, often rooted in tribal and militarized networks.

Amnesty International (2021) adds that the lack of trust in political institutions is further exacerbated by widespread human rights abuses committed

by various militias. These abuses have undermined the credibility and legitimacy of the state, as "the ongoing violations of human rights by armed groups have significantly contributed to the erosion of public confidence in the government's ability to provide security and uphold the rule of law" (p. 15). The entrenchment of armed groups, often aligned with tribal loyalties and remnants of militarized factions, continues to destabilize efforts to establish a unified and democratic governance framework in Libya.

**Confidence in the Armed Forces:** The survey results indicated mixed confidence levels in the armed forces, with only 29.9% expressing high trust. The presence of multiple armed factions and the formal military's perceived inadequacies have fostered environments where illegal armed groups thrive. This erosion of trust in the formal military has paved the way for various armed groups to establish themselves as alternative sources of security and governance.

Eaton (2021) underscores this by noting, "The fragmentation of military power and the proliferation of militias have eroded the public's trust in the armed forces, as these groups often operate with impunity and outside the bounds of formal state control" (p. 18). The deep-rooted militarization in Libyan society, a legacy of Gaddafi's policies, has significantly contributed to this fragmented security environment.

Amnesty International (2021) further supports this finding, documenting how the ongoing conflicts and the presence of armed militias have led to widespread human rights abuses. These abuses have not only exacerbated public fears but also diminished trust in the state's ability to provide security and enforce the rule of law. "The pervasive influence of armed groups has undermined the credibility of formal military and police forces, leading communities to rely on militias for protection and justice" (Amnesty International, 2021, p. 15). This reliance on militias further entrenches their power and complicates efforts to build a unified national security apparatus.

**Human Rights Concerns:** 63.2% of respondents perceive human rights as being minimally respected or outright disregarded. Amnesty International (2021) documents how the activities of various militias have led to widespread

human rights abuses, further eroding public trust in the state's ability to protect its citizens. This pervasive disregard for human rights has fostered an environment where the emergence and normalization of armed groups seem almost inevitable.

Amnesty International (2021) highlights, "The ongoing conflicts and the presence of armed militias in Libya have created a breeding ground for human rights violations, undermining public confidence in state institutions and exacerbating societal instability" (p. 12). This human rights crisis is intrinsically linked to the long-lasting tribal structures and militarization that have shaped Libyan society.

**Public Concerns over Terrorism and Civil War:** The survey also revealed significant public concerns over terrorism and civil war. About 69% of participants are deeply concerned about the possibility of terrorist attacks, and approximately 70% are worried about the potential outbreak of civil war. The fragmented security landscape and the presence of armed factions drive these heightened anxieties.

Eaton (2021) emphasizes, "The fragmented security environment in Libya, marked by the presence of numerous armed groups, has significantly heightened public fears of terrorism and civil war" (p. 45). These fears are compounded by the destabilizing influence of tribal affiliations and the legacy of militarization, which continue to play a significant role in the dynamics of armed groups.

**Impact of Tribes and Militarization:** The data also shows that 91.5% of participants are not affiliated with any political parties, reflecting significant disengagement from formal political processes due to a legacy of authoritarian rule. This disengagement creates a vacuum that armed groups can exploit. The role of tribal affiliations and the legacy of militarization under Gaddafi have continued to influence the dynamics of armed groups today. Tribes, as enduring social structures, provide a foundation for loyalty and mobilization, often filling the void left by the collapse of state institutions. Similarly, the militarization ingrained in Libyan society through Gaddafi's policies facilitated the rapid formation of armed groups.

The World Values Survey's Wave 6 data, covering the period from 2010 to 2014, offers a pivotal perspective on the socio-political terrain of Libya during a time of profound transformation and instability. The survey findings paint a picture of a society struggling in the wake of Gaddafi's collapse, characterized by widespread distrust in government and political entities, anxieties about human rights abuses, and an acute awareness of vulnerability to terrorism and civil strife.

These observations are corroborated by Eaton's (2021) examination, which points to the disintegration of military authority and the ongoing breakdown of governance, as well as Amnesty International's (2021) accounts of human rights violations perpetrated by militias. Collectively, these sources highlight the multifaceted obstacles confronting Libya in the aftermath of Gaddafi's rule.

The data compellingly supports the argument that enduring institutions, notably tribal affiliations and militarization, have played a crucial role in the emergence and endurance of armed groups within Libya. Tackling these challenges necessitates a concerted strategy to rebuild trust, safeguard human rights, and promote inclusive governance mechanisms. Such a comprehensive approach, enriched by historical analysis, is vital for gaining a comprehensive insight into Libya's socio-political dynamics and for averting the further consolidation of armed factions.

#### **4.5. FORMATION OF THE ARMED GROUPS**

In sharp contradistinction to the predominantly nonviolent character of the 2011 revolutions in Tunisia and Egypt, the termination of Muammar Gaddafi's rule in October of the same year transpired amidst an armed insurgency and subsequent civil strife. Unlike the largely peaceful and mass-oriented uprisings observed in neighboring jurisdictions, the Gaddafi regime's demise manifested through a formidably armed rebellion, wherein insurgent factions emerged as pivotal agents orchestrating the regime's downfall. These revolutionary developments engendered enduring ramifications, notably

characterized by the persistent and influential presence of armed entities throughout the transitional phases. The dynamics of political power post-Gaddafi remained inextricably intertwined with the trajectories and inclinations of these armed factions, imparting a nuanced dimension to the post-revolutionary socio-political landscape and necessitating detailed academic analysis and investigation (Anderson, 2011).

The nonviolent protests that began on February 15, 2011, quickly escalated as the regime used live ammunition to suppress demonstrations. This led to a transformation from peaceful protests into an armed insurrection, characterized by local uprisings organized city-by-city. Each city formed its military brigades, operating independently even when professing allegiance to the National Transitional Council (NTC) (Lacher, 2015). Citizens were already familiar with using weapons due to the military training embedded in schools under Gaddafi's regime, which further facilitated the rapid formation and operational capability of these brigades (Blakemore, 2021).

Citizens formed autonomous transitional governing and military councils in territories where the regime lost control. The imposition of a no-fly zone in March 2011 allowed anti-Gaddafi cities to survive despite isolation from other rebel structures. The brigades primarily remained loyal to their respective cities and tribes rather than the NTC, resulting in a fragmented security landscape with loosely connected armed groups, each developing its chain of command, military culture, and narrative of the revolution (International Crisis Group, 2011).

The post-Gaddafi security landscape was characterized by a lack of trust and growing competition among the armed groups. The most prominent was the new National Army, headquartered in Benghazi and mainly composed of officers who had defected from the former National Army. Other northeastern brigades, primarily based in Benghazi, al-Bayda, and Darna, included the February 17th Brigade headed by Isma'il al-Sallabi, an Islamist commander close to the Muslim Brotherhood, as well as the Abu Slim Martyrs, Omar al-Mukhtar, and Obaida Ibn al-Jarah Brigades. Fighters from the Tripoli Military Council, headed by former Libyan Islamic Fighting Group member Abdul

Hakim Belhaj, were primarily present in neighborhoods of the capital but with brigades also operating in the east, West, and south. The Western Military Council, whose leadership was dominated by former National Army officers from Zintan, gathered the military councils of approximately 140 localities in the western mountains. The Misrata Military Council, which had grown out of small cells set up by young civilians in that city, was made up of 100 different units in October 2011. (Sawani,2013).

The NTC attempted to unify the numerous political and military entities under its leadership but faced resistance from armed groups. Tensions emerged between rebels and former regime members, highlighted by the assassination of Abdul-Fatah Younis, commander-in-chief of the new National Army. The NTC's core, made up of former regime officials and reformers, lacked the revolutionary legitimacy of many rebel commanders. This legitimacy rift was compounded by regional divisions and differing views on the role of religion in politics, leading to competing narratives of legitimacy (Gaub, 2013).

Following the declaration of the country's liberation, the National Transitional Council (NTC) positioned itself as the new central authority. It sought to unify the various political and military factions that had emerged during the uprising under its banner. However, the NTC encountered fierce opposition from the armed groups. Tensions surfaced between rebels who had been oppressed under Gaddafi's rule and former military officers who had served for years under the old regime. This conflict was exemplified by the assassination of the new National Army's commander, 'Abdul-Fatah Younis, on July 28, 2011, allegedly by members of an Islamist revolutionary brigade (Sawani, 2013). Many of the brigades that had aligned with the NTC viewed this alliance as temporary and felt entitled to recognition for their sacrifices and military achievements. In contrast, the NTC's leadership was composed of former regime officials and long-time reformers, whose legitimacy was easily questioned (Lacher, 2015). Mahmud Jibril, the NTC's leader and a former regime official linked to Saif al-Islam Gaddafi's reform initiatives, lacked the revolutionary credentials that many rebel commanders possessed (International

Crisis Group, 2011). This divide was compounded by regional biases and differing opinions on the role of religion in governance, leading to a clash of legitimacy narratives. Civilian-led brigades rejected orders from senior defectors of the old National Army, and younger fighters pushed for advancement over remnants of the former regime (Gaub, 2013).

The conventional army, significantly weakened and marginalized under Gaddafi, was to be rebuilt— almost from scratch. Many within its ranks who opposed the Jamahiriya leader had melted away at the beginning of the uprising. At the same time, those who supported him fought until the end and consequently could not participate in the new structures. Moreover, the components of the armed forces that had defected in early 2011 had remained stuck on the eastern front and had not taken part in battles elsewhere in the country. As a result, they were perceived as an eastern more than a national force and were not trusted by most civilian brigades, who considered them opportunistic (Gaub,2013).

The rebel brigades quickly filled the vacuum, as the transitional government had no choice but to rely on them to secure the cities and borders. Nevertheless, the armed groups that were still in the streets in early 2012 were not the ones that had fought the war. While some brigade elements that had assumed the brunt of the fighting against Gaddafi's forces were not ready to leave the ground before a new constitution was drafted for fear that their struggle would have been in vain, many civilians who had taken up arms against Gaddafi's went back to their former lives after October 2011. At the same time, many jobless youths, but also adventurers and criminals, realized the many advantages that brigade membership could offer (International Crisis Group, 2012).

Thus, after Gaddafi's death, they joined existing groups or formed hundreds of new military groups. In addition, powerful factions tried to take advantage of the transitional government's inherent weakness to consolidate their positions within the nascent central institutions. Defense Minister al-Jwaili, for instance, gave preferential treatment to his town brigades, such as al-Q'aq'a,

al-Sawa'iq, and al-Madani, by granting their members priority in training abroad and access to equipment.

However, shortly after Gaddafi's death, the Libyans' aspirations of transitioning to democracy were shattered, and peace remained elusive. Moreover, the collapse of central authority and the regime's downfall contributed to the chaos that followed the revolution due to the absence of influential political leaders and an effective civil society capable of filling the power vacuum (Willcoxon, 2016).

As the core regime elite fled into exile or was killed or detained during the conflict, the General National Congress (GNC) exerted additional pressure by enacting the Political Isolation Law, which prohibited individuals who held political positions during the Gaddafi era from participating in the new Libya. The National Transitional Council attempted to unite the revolutionaries under a legitimate umbrella, but this proved unattainable, particularly given the proliferation of weapons and the allegiance of most groups to their regions and tribes rather than to the new authority.

Consequently, armed groups capitalized on the situation, gained power during the transitional period, and established locally organized military formations, which received formal recognition and increased influence. Exploiting the abundance of weapons, these groups formed brigades and armed factions that multiplied and gained influence. They took control of the streets and terrorized citizens, engaging in activities such as kidnapping, extortion, and illegal economic ventures, particularly smuggling goods and people.

The elected government (GNC), which succeeded the NTC in 2012, also needed to stabilize security. Instead, the government attempted to integrate the armed groups into a parallel security sector and provided them with salaries from the state budget to mitigate their discontent. However, this strategy did not succeed in curbing the influence of these armed groups; instead, it hindered the transfer of security control to a state-controlled unit, allowing these groups to gain more power on the ground.

These armed groups engaged in conflicts with each other, resulting in instability and posing a threat to civilians. Over time, these groups experienced a significant increase in their wealth through various illicit activities, including smuggling, kidnapping for ransom, engaging in suspicious deals, and resorting to blackmail. These unlawful ventures proved lucrative, enabling them to accumulate substantial financial resources. Moreover, the groups received funding and privileges from the government, recognizing them as protectors of the revolution. This combination of unlawful gains and official support further bolstered their financial standing and overall influence within the society, amplifying their control and political weight, becoming obstacles to democratic transition and hindrances to the peaceful coexistence of Libyans (Martin, 2022)

Some larger cities, such as Tripoli, Benghazi, and Sabha, became arenas for conflict between local troops. In addition, armed groups' increasingly audacious activities around the state highlighted the complete powerlessness of the government authority. These groups even sabotaged oil fields or ports in early 2013 to press their claims, including those of eastern regional autonomy or secession, causing Libya's oil exports to be almost non-existent by early 2014 (Lacher & Cole, 2014).

Despite aspirations for democracy, the collapse of central authority post-Gaddafi led to ongoing chaos. The absence of influential political leaders and effective civil society left a power vacuum filled by armed groups, who capitalized on the situation, gaining formal recognition and increasing influence through activities such as kidnapping, extortion, and smuggling (Willcoxon, 2016). Amnesty International's data supports this thesis by documenting widespread human rights abuses committed by various militias, which have further undermined public trust in the state's ability to provide security and uphold the rule of law. These violations highlight the severe consequences of the fragmented security landscape and the failure to integrate armed groups into a cohesive national structure. Amnesty's findings underscore the critical need for effective governance and robust institutions to address the human rights crisis and stabilize the country, reinforcing the thesis's argument about the

consequences of Gaddafi's militarization policies and tribal affiliations in fostering the rise of armed groups (Amnesty International, 2021).

Eaton's (2021) findings provide a critical perspective on the Libyan Arab Armed Forces and the broader security dynamics in post-Gaddafi Libya. His analysis underscores several key points essential to understanding the formation and persistence of armed groups in the country:

**Fragmentation of Military Power:** Eaton highlights how the collapse of Gaddafi's regime led to the fragmentation of military power. The Libyan state had relied heavily on personalized networks of loyalty to Gaddafi, and once these networks disintegrated, there was no cohesive national military force to maintain order. This fragmentation allowed various militias and armed groups to fill the power vacuum.

**Proliferation of Militias:** The proliferation of militias was a direct consequence of the power vacuum left by the disintegration of the formal military. These militias, often organized along tribal lines, became the de facto security providers in many regions. Eaton notes that these groups operated with significant autonomy and often had conflicting agendas, further complicating efforts to stabilize the country.

**Competing Legitimacies:** Eaton's analysis points to the issue of competing legitimacies among the various armed groups and the National Transitional Council (NTC). Many of the militias viewed their role in the revolution as giving them a right to influence the new political order. This often put them at odds with the NTC and subsequent governments, which struggled to assert control over these groups.

**Militarization of Society:** Gaddafi's policies had deeply militarized Libyan society, with widespread access to weapons and military training. Eaton emphasizes that this militarization made it easier for armed groups to form and sustain themselves. The cultural acceptance of militarization, ingrained during Gaddafi's rule, meant that many Libyans were ready to take up arms to protect their interests.

Human Rights Abuses and Governance Failures: Eaton highlights the link between the failure of governance and the rise of armed groups. The inability of the post-Gaddafi governments to provide basic services and security led to a reliance on militias. These groups often engaged in human rights abuses, which further eroded public trust in the government and formal institutions. Amnesty International (2021) corroborates this by documenting numerous instances of human rights violations by militias, which undermined the state's legitimacy.

Economic Motivations: Economic factors also played a crucial role. Eaton points out that many militias were motivated by access to resources and economic opportunities. The control of strategic assets like oil fields became a significant point of contention, with various groups vying for control to secure financial gains.

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In synthesizing the extensive research presented in this thesis, we gain a comprehensive understanding of the role of tribes and militarization as enduring institutions in the rise of armed groups in post-Gaddafi Libya. The study's significance lies in its contribution to the academic discourse on institutionalization and the emergence of non-state actors, employing the theoretical framework of New Institutionalism Theory.

Utilizing World Values Survey data, alongside findings from Amnesty International (2021) and Eaton's (2021) analysis, provided a quantitative perspective on public trust in institutions, political engagement, and societal values. The low levels of trust in government and political parties, coupled with high political participation, reveal a populace disillusioned with governance yet actively engaged in shaping the political landscape. These findings, correlated with the emergence of armed groups, underscore the governance vacuum and leadership crisis that followed Gaddafi's downfall.

The thesis demonstrates that the ascent of armed groups in Libya was not an isolated occurrence but a result of systemic failures. The lack of robust state institutions, economic imbalances, and the normalization of military culture created fertile ground for these groups to assume power. In the absence of effective governance, armed factions filled the void, exacerbating divisions and hindering democratic governance.

The historical analysis of Gaddafi's policies, such as the militarization of education, reveals their profound and lasting impacts on societal norms and behaviors. This militarization is crucial in tracing the roots of armed groups back to institutional practices established during Gaddafi's rule, thereby demonstrating the predictive and explanatory power of New Institutionalism Theory.

The research meticulously dissects how Gaddafi's strategic manipulation of tribal loyalties and the weakening of state institutions, particularly the

military, set the stage for national fragmentation and the rise of armed factions as influential power brokers, the absence of effective governance and fragmented authority created a power vacuum that armed groups exploited.

The study shows that the erosion of state institutions under Gaddafi's autocratic rule was a precursor to state failure, evidenced by the breakdown of central authority, inability to provide basic services, and failure to enforce the rule of law. This thesis significantly contributes to understanding Libya's socio-political dynamics, demonstrating how the cultural and social acceptance of militarization, tribal loyalty, and oil dependency have shaped the country's current state of affairs.

By addressing a significant gap in existing scholarship, this thesis contributes fresh empirical evidence focusing on the effects of compulsory military training and the integration challenges of armed groups into security structures. Specifically, it sheds light on the often-overlooked impact of Gaddafi's militarization policies on societal norms and the persistent influence of tribal loyalties. This nuanced analysis interweaves the complexities of Libya's historical, economic, social, and political fabric, offering a more comprehensive understanding of the country's dynamics and the factors driving the emergence of armed groups in the post-Gaddafi era.

In conclusion, this thesis stands as a testament to the intricate scenario in Libya, offering valuable insights into the formation of armed groups and the impact of military instruction on citizens. It critically engages with the complexity of the Libyan situation, avoiding oversimplification and acknowledging the necessity of multiple factors and theoretical frameworks to fully understand the emergence of armed groups in a post-authoritarian state. The findings are crucial for informing strategies for political reconstruction, peacebuilding, and stabilization efforts in Libya and similar contexts, paving the way for a more stable and unified future.

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