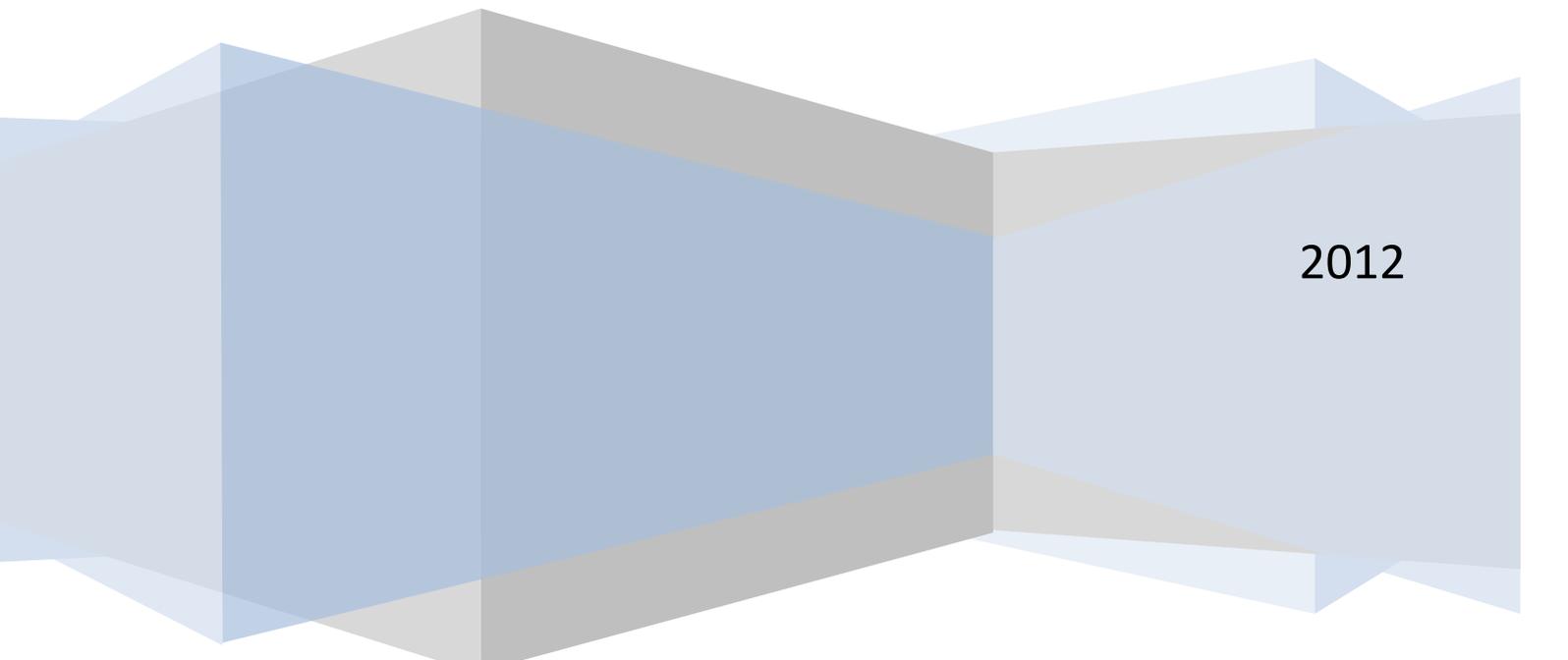


**School of Social Sciences**

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**Libya in the Modern Orientalist World-System: A Critical Analysis of English  
Language Acquisition (ELA) as a Factor in Libya's New Developmental  
Strategy**

**Rabia Saad Gewider**



2012

## **Dedication**

To spirit of my father who always believed in me, and who from a distance was my  
Inspiration and strength. I'm always proud to be his daughter.

## **Acknowledgements**

My first thanks go to my research supervisor Dr. Peter Wilkin. He has been very supportive and enthusiastic in the breadth of his intellectual curiosity, guidance and encouragement. I am very fortunate for having known him.

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My debt is not confined to one single country. In Libya thanks go to all members of my family, who are the most important reason for my being able to study in Britain. I'll never be able to thank them enough for helping me, especially my youngest sister Nagwa. Of course I do express my gratitude to the previous Higher education minister in Libya and all those who took part in my field work.

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## **Libya in the Modern Orientalist World-System: A Critical Analysis of English Language Acquisition (ELA) as a Factor in Libya's New Developmental Strategy**

### **Abstract**

This thesis is a critical examination of the 'new vision' strategies that the Libyan government undertook in order to promote the deeper integration of the Libyan economy into the global economy of the Modern Orientalist World-System (MOWS). This process has been taking place since the lifting of the trade embargo on Libya by President Bush in April 2004. A crucial part of this new vision strategy was the promotion of human capital development amongst the Libyan population and with a particular emphasis upon English Language Acquisition (ELA). The argument, derived from neo-liberal thought, is that for Libya to transform itself it must embrace neo-liberal ideas that will see the government adopt the role of the enabling state, preparing Libyans for employment in a newly established private sector. ELA, the learning of what is called 'global English', is the central part of the new vision human capital development goals. The assumption here is that by developing the English language skills of Libyans it will enhance their job prospects with foreign firms arriving in Libya. This strategy is being pursued in the aftermath of a state directed ban on the learning of English that was first decreed in 1986 and the consequences of which placed a significant obstacle in the way of the immediate employment prospects of a generation of young Libyan graduates. If the state developmental strategy now embraced by the Libyan government is to be successful then it must promote the rapid improvement in the second language skills of its young people (specifically 'global English') if they are to take advantage of the opportunities offered by a newly opened economy. However, this strategy is fraught with dangers for the government as liberalising the Libyan economy weakens the control of the state over society. Thus the thesis addresses a number of key questions regarding the relationship between human capital (language skills) and the sociology of development; of human capital as a concept in the 'modern Orientalist world-system'; and the changing nature of state-society relations in Libya as the government attempts to integrate it more firmly into the MOWS. To what extent can the Libyan government transform its economy and society in a way that enhances its position in the MOWS rather than simply rendering it more dependent upon the power of the core?

## **Chapter 1: Introduction**

### **1.1 Background**

Languages are often seen as symbols of a nation's identity and it is a commonly held view that each nation has the right to maintain its identity, however problematic this has become in practice. One strong version of this thesis says that "there is one national language which is spoken by everyone with the same national identity" (Byram, 2006:03). Arabic holds a distinct place in world languages in that it connects a cultural group (the Arabs) and a series of distinct nation-states. Hence, Arabic is the most important language for Arabs regardless of their nation-state and has become a unifying symbol of both their national and cultural identity, a point recognised by writers such as Fanon (1965; 2006a). Having said that it is also the case that the era of Western colonialism which followed the collapse of the Ottoman Empire saw colonial languages like French and English become dominant in many Arab societies throughout the Arab Maghreb. As a consequence of this many Arab people, particularly writers, intellectuals and politicians, have now come to view colonial languages such as English and French as a threat towards their culture and a problematic legacy of colonialism. This is a major reversal of many intellectual positions held in the Arab world in the late C19 and early C20 when many Arab intellectuals accepted and interpreted European power over the Arab world as a reflection of its cultural superiority. This, in turn, as Massad notes, saw Arab intellectuals portraying Arab culture in the Orientalist terms of their colonial rulers (Massad, 2008: 39). Indeed, this theme of the relationship between language, power and identity has animated the work of important figures such as Fanon and Said, and more recently Wallerstein, and been central to the rise of Postcolonial Theory.

Since independence in 1951 Libyan governments have been resistant to the lure of colonial languages such as Italian or English on the grounds that they might undermine the national culture. In the early days of the revolution Fanon was a major influence on the Gaddafi led government but over time his warnings about the limitations and complexities of national culture and consciousness for the colonised became replaced by a much stronger commitment to national culture (Fanon, 2006b). However, this essentialising of language in the construction of cultural identity has also raised problems that critics of post colonialism have emphasised in that it exaggerates the importance of a unifying national language in the construction of newly independent nation-states and fails to recognise the diversity of languages throughout the region and in Libya too (Ahmed, 2008; Ayubi, 2001;

Kumaraswamy, 2006). The first chapter of the thesis will set out and expand upon the framework of the MOWS and its usefulness as a way of understanding Libya's new vision policies. It will also examine the nature of Libya's dependent relationship with the core of the MOWS as well as how Libya's history relate to the 'Developmental State' literature. In the second chapter of this thesis concentrates on examining the place that language has played in Libya during and since colonialism as part of its process of resistance to colonialism and of nation-building. It does this because it helps to contextualise the role that language came to play as a factor in Libyan government strategies after the confrontation with the USA in the 1980s. For the Libyan government and people language became a site of resistance to Western power.

Libya's adoption of a policy of resistance to the languages of colonialism was part and parcel of a number of policy decisions that whilst helping to preserve the Arabic language also served to deepen the countries isolation, economically, culturally and politically. The key factors in this process of Libyan retreat from the world-system were primarily: First the decision made by the Libyan government to stop the teaching of foreign languages including English in 1986 as a reaction to the US attack on Tripoli; second, the international sanctions against Libya in 1993 which followed on from the Lockerbie bombing where the country was greatly affected in terms of its international communications economically, socially, politically, and culturally. During this period of international sanctions more than two generations of Libyan graduates have been affected in terms of their capacity to travel and study abroad and develop their communication skills. This lack of skills and knowledge has in turn affected these groups (graduates) and their job opportunities today. It has also undermined the possibility of social change within Libya as the state failed to utilise the resources it had available to it, most crucially what is often described in the developmental literature as its 'human capital'. The 'New Vision' strategy adopted in 2004 has been an attempt to overcome this problem with a view to reintegrating Libya into what has recently been described as the 'Modern Orientalist World-System' (MOWS) (Samman and Al-Zo'by, 2008). In policy terms this is described as attempting to overcome a great 'skills gap' amongst those graduates with regard to what is required today by the Libyan and international job market. Skills and knowledge (more broadly, education) are seen as the central aspects of human capital development and this is a view now shared by the Libyan government (OECD, 2006).

In order to assess this transformation in Libyan state strategy chapter's four to six examine recent Libyan educational strategies relating to English language skills, as well as the role of the state and the private sector regarding this matter. As the global language (Global English) the acquisition of English has been an important developmental policy goal for many countries in recent decades (Nunan, 2003). Since the lifting of the sanctions on Libya in 2004 the Libyan government has sought to re-introduce English language as a priority for social and economic change. Ultimately this has meant that since 2004 the Libyan government has chosen to pursue economic policies that aim to develop new trade links with the EU and the USA (Zoubir, 2002). Accordingly and pragmatically the English language is no longer seen as a colonial language by the Libyan government, but instead as a tool that can be embraced as part of its new vision developmental goals of enhancing its human capital. The English language has moved from being a language of colonial domination to simply an instrument for social and economic transformation of Libyan society. However, the question now facing this human capital centred strategy of English language acquisition (ELA) is the extent to which it can succeed in strengthening the Libyan economy and society? If many states in periphery and semi-periphery of the MOWS are pursuing such strategies how useful will it prove to be to Libyan development? To what extent is the exclusive knowledge of English language part of its utility for developing countries? Indeed, how should we make sense of 'human capital' as a concept as part of the MOWS? Further, how effective are the means by which the Libyan state is promoting ELA amongst Libyan university students? Chapter's four, five and six will examine these issues and develop the argument that despite the constraints of the MOWS that Libya faces, in particular its overwhelming dependency on its oil industry and exports to Italy, Germany, France and Spain, that its petroleum resources remain an important strength which might enable it to invest strategically in its population in a way that will enable it to diversify and strengthen its economy and society. As part of this potential diversification the development of human capital skills such as English language have an important role to play. The MOWS offers important structural constraints (ideological and material) on the Libyan government policies. At the same time it also has some room for manoeuvre, the decisions that it makes are not irrelevant to the future development of Libya. In short, the MOWS both constrains and enables Libya in its integration into the world-system. Crucially, its oil resources give it a relative advantage over many developing countries that are reliant on less valuable resources to aid their economy and society.

## **1.2 The Methodological Framework: Research Methodology**

This section provides a rationale and description of the research methods developed and employed in light of the investigation's aims, the review of contributions in relevant literatures and the social and policy contexts of the study. Accordingly, this study tends to shed light on complex, evolving and sometimes contradictory policies and attitudes with regard to the relationship between the acquisition of English language, human capital and the job prospects of Libyan graduates as the Libyan government pursues policies to fully integrate it into the MOWS. Therefore, the research design is exploratory in nature and qualitatively oriented in order, in part, to measure the interpretations, perceptions and motivations of key actors in this field. Methods employed were as follows:

1. Ten focus groups with each containing 6 to 8 people
2. Seven individual 'elite' interviews with representatives from the state and private sector.

I will begin with a brief comment on the epistemological positioning of the research and then summarise the research design. The discussion then moves on to justify the choice of focus groups and interviews as research methods. This is followed by an explication of the sampling strategy and choice of research participants in the investigation. An indication of the thematic prompts used in the conduct of the focus groups and interviews is also provided. The section then turns to the issue of data capture, translation, transcription and approaches to analysis before considering the relevant ethical issues.

## **1.3 The Epistemological Location of the Research**

Positivist assumptions about social research view properly conducted investigations as a means to access objective, verifiable, facts about research participants and their social situations/backgrounds. Obviously, participants can lie or be mistaken in the course of research, but this is seen, from a positivist perspective, as distortion or bias that masks the facts. Similarly, researchers themselves are seen as a potential distorting factor. Accordingly, the emphasis is very much upon standard questions, a drilling of interviewees and a willingness to discount data that appears to have arisen in response to leading questions. And considerable emphasis is also placed upon the verifiability of research data - can the data represent the real situation and can it be corroborated or "triangulated" by other means?

Conversely, interpretive research is not necessarily concerned with ascertaining objective facts, but more with understanding the personal perceptions and interpretations of research participants with regard to the nature of the topic. Hence, the emphasis is on uncovering these perspectives so that they can illuminate a particular issue without, necessarily, providing us with a specific quantification or solution (Bryman 2008).

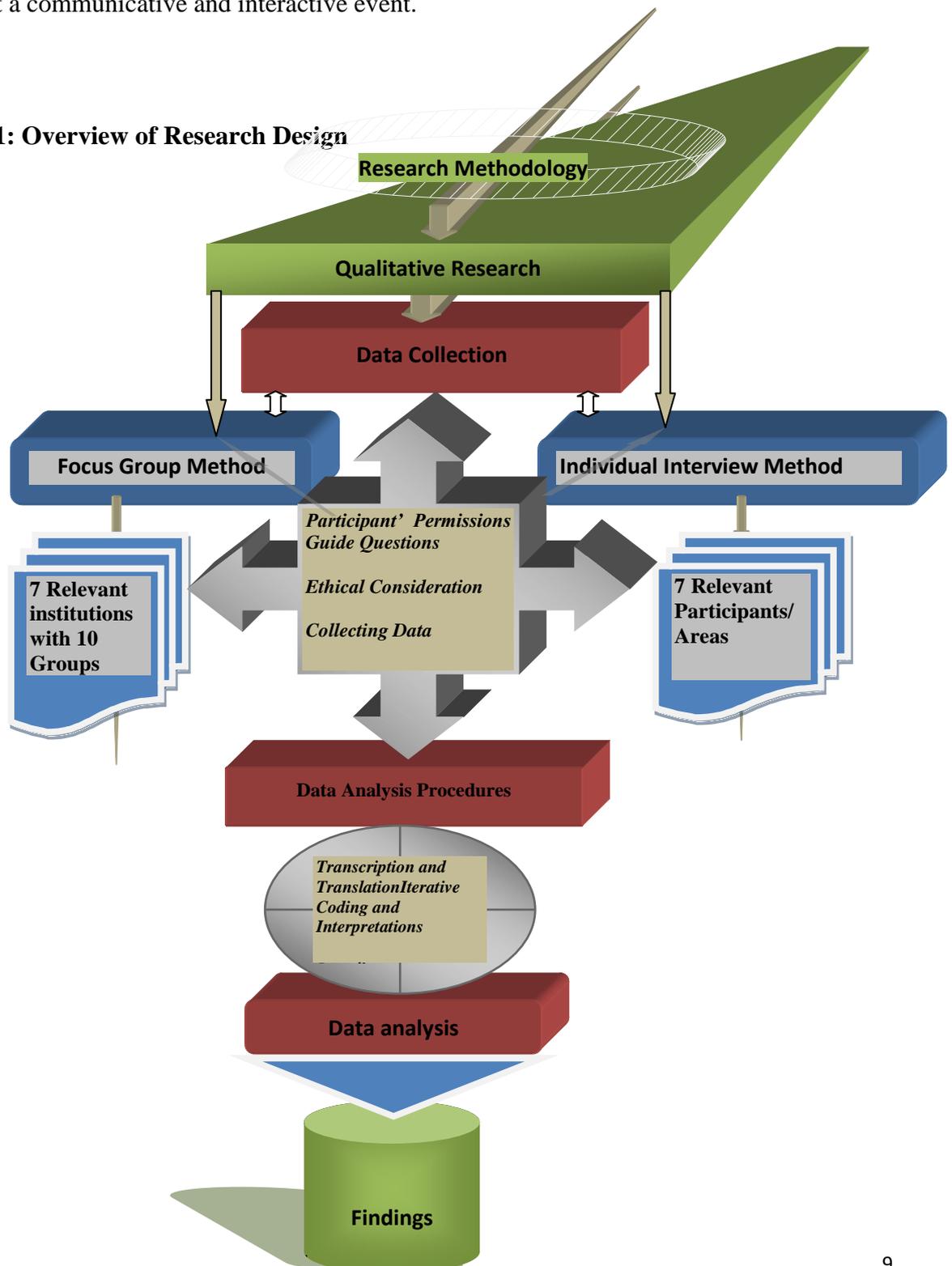
So, it might thus be useful to think of different approaches to social research in terms of a continuum. At one end of the continuum, the positivist position, investigation is concerned solely with the extraction of accounts or discrete responses from the research participants. The researcher constructs the questions and directs the discussion in such a way that he or she asks all the questions and the research participant provides the answers - answers that are then used by the researcher to help construct an account of objective reality as far as is possible. At the other end of the continuum, a wholly interpretive approach is concerned solely with a situation as the informant sees it. The focus is on the interpretations and meanings of the informant rather than any absolute account of an objective reality. My research, however, sat between these two extremes. In rejecting the assumptions of positivist methodology I nonetheless tried to remain objective in the sense of providing as true an account as I could, recognising that my own claims are always fallible. In this respect I strove to be as objective and non-directive as possible in the course of the investigation but this was done within the parameters of the broad aims of the research. In this context as much emphasis as possible was given to allowing research participants to speak for themselves. Accordingly considerable emphasis was placed on the development of research instruments for qualitative research oriented towards contextualised description of “reality”, the recording of data gathering and transparency in the analysis phase of the investigation. The specific methods chosen in this respect were focus groups and interviews, but Figure-1 provides an introductory overview of the research design.

### **1.3.1 Focus Groups as a Research Method**

Oppenheim (2005) observes that focus groups offer a number of advantages to the researcher. Such groups can gather a wide variety of data on the subject under consideration (rather than limiting the interviewee to fixed responses); can explore hypotheses (by trying out lines of enquiry); can test the appropriateness of questions and what form or line they should take and allow the development of direct observation and examination of participants' knowledge and

ideas within a given context. Focus groups, although they can be time-consuming to set-up and although the process of data analysis can be prolonged, also offer relatively quick access to groups of informants (Rabiee 2004). In addition, this method of investigation encourages the exploration of how opinions are constructed and modified through interaction between participants. More specifically, Hyden and Bulow (2003) suggested this method as an important means for gaining access to participants' experiences, attitudes and views, rather than just a communicative and interactive event.

**Figure 1: Overview of Research Design**



But, Hyden and Bulow (2003) also point to an important issue in the design of focus groups – should “*participants represent various groups outside the focus group, like professional or social groups; or do they just represent themselves as individuals; or do they act as members of focus group*” (Hyden and Bulow cited in Lehoux, 2003:308). In other words, does a researcher need to represent the outside groups of the specific society by those who have been interviewed, or to only represent specific groups as individuals? In an attempt to respond to this question, Rabiee (2004:655) has quoted Lederman (cited in Thomas et al, 1995) that a focus group is “*A technique involving the use of in-depth group interviews in which participants are selected because they are a purposive, although not necessarily representative sampling of a subject population, this group being focused on a given topic*”. The issue of the lack of English language capabilities among Libyan graduates is commonly discussed among Libyan university students. Hence, my choice of focus group participants was essentially purposive, but also oriented towards the inclusion of diverse stakeholders.

In terms of size, Krueger and Casey suggest that small focus groups of not more than six to ten participants allows for greater direction and control on the part of the researcher (Krueger and Casey, 2000 cited in Rabiee, 2004:656). They add that “*the number generally suggested as being manageable is between 6 to 10 participants; large enough to gain a variety of perspectives and small enough not to become disorderly or fragmented*”. The capability of the researcher (moderator) is also a vital element that should not be underestimated. Madriz (2000) argues that one advantage of the interaction encouraged by his focus groups is that the role of the moderator decreases while that of participant’s increases. In addition Madriz, (2000), notes that there is an important distinction to be made between horizontal and vertical interactions. Madriz claimed that both vertical and horizontal aspects of discussions may help interaction, and thereby aid the researcher in gathering information (Madriz, 2000 & cited in Al-Yousef, 2006). It is very important that the researcher shows his/her ability and skills in terms of discussion management by breaking the ice and fostering an atmosphere of open dialogue. Further, as moderator, attention should be paid to allowing participants to lead but not dominate discussions (FAO 1990). Therefore, the role that the researcher plays not only depends on whether he/she exhibits strong or weak guidance but may also require an ability to deal with unexpected problems or participant behaviour.

Indeed, Stewart and Shamdasani (2006) highlight the need for all researchers to be aware of potential problems arising from the ebb and flow in the power and social relations within a focus group (Stewart and Shamdasani cited in Al-Yousef, 2006). According to Al-Yousef social relations could cause problems between the group members, if not managed/handled appropriately (Al-Yousef, 2006). Such factors could have an impact on the processes and outcomes of focus groups. During this study however, problems were not experienced since the topic of the study was one of recent and ongoing public debate in Libyan society (especially, among employees and university graduates). In view of that, the participants were selected on the basis that they would probably have something to say about the topic because of their knowledge and experience.

The ten focus groups were stratified to create homogeneity within each forum in order to preclude interaction and data that might be “*obscured by the presence of participants who differ widely from each other*” (Gall, Borg, and Gall, 2003 cited in Lim, 2004:94). Indeed Krueger (1994 cited in Rabiee, 2004:656) suggests that “*Participants should share similar characteristic: gender group, age-range, ethnic and social class background*”. Account was thus taken of education, gender and professional background. But on the subject of gender groups in particular, Libyan customs and traditions were respected in that female participants were largely separated from men when required.

### **1.3.2 Interviews as a Research Method**

Individual interviews were used as the second significant method during this research. As intimated, a wholly positivist interview of any length that deals with ideas, attitudes or emotions is necessarily compromised simply by the fact that the notion of an objective reality is without doubt filtered and shaped by the nature and limits of human perception and interpretation (Silverman 2001). But, a wholly interpretive approach is not possible either. This would involve interviewees just speaking without any intervention, guidance or prompting by the interviewer or anyone else. The only issue is thus where an interviewer sits between the two extremes and to which end - the positivist or interpretivist pole - the interviewer is trying to push the dialogue. Given that my research was governed by an overall aim and pre-determined issues of interest drawn from the literature and the context, the interviews conducted reflected a clear degree of thematic structure and purpose.

These interviews were used mainly in relation to senior individuals who were unable or unwilling to meet within groups. Such individuals included informants from the United Nations Information Centre, British Council, the Curricula Department and the Libyan Foreign Investment Co (see Table-1.3.1). These individual interviews did however complement the focus groups by offering more specific (and perhaps less inhibited) perspectives plus a degree of triangulation (Pope et al, 2000; Rabiee 2004).

### **1.3.3 Sampling and Research Participants**

The sampling rationale for the focus groups and interviews was purposive and was informed by two strands of investigation. First, secondary data that was collected by reviewing relevant academic literature and policies e.g. books, articles in journals and online. The academic literature provided insights around the themes of human capital and ELA, but was limited in terms of relating these topics directly to contemporary Libyan society. An appreciation of evolving and current policies within Libya did however point to a number of specific organisations and fields that appeared to encompass key stakeholders. These organisations and fields initially included:

1. The Libyan Ministry of Education
2. Al-Fateh University in Tripoli
3. Al-Saba Min April University in Al-Zawia
4. Libyan Foreign Investment Board
5. United Nations Information Centre
6. The British Council
7. National Oil Corporation
8. The curricula department in Libya
9. Academy of graduate studies in Janzour
10. The Labor Power Institution (Workforce)

As Pennycook (cited in Lessner and Escobar and Portillo, 2003) observed, prior to interview, it is important to ‘get to know’ potential participants so that more introverted individuals can be encouraged, with sensitivity, to participate as fully as possible (Lessner and Escobar and

Portillo, 2003). Accordingly, in August 2008 permission<sup>1</sup> was obtained to interview selected individuals and representatives of several organisations within Libya. As Krueger (1994, cited in Rabiee, 2004:656) notes, “*Rich data can only be generated if individuals in the group are prepared to engage fully in the discussion and, for this reason advocates the use of a homogenous group*”. This process of selection was sometimes vitiated by potential participants becoming unavailable is summarised below.

**Table 1.1: Organisational Fields from which Participants were secured**

Libyan Foreign Investment Broad	Cancelled and Replaced by	The Libyan Foreign Investments Company
Al-Saba April University in Al-Zawia	Cancelled and Replaced by	The Libyan Participatory of Higher Education
Libyan air Lines	Added	
Libyan Arab Foreign Bank	Added	
Private investment companies Al-Manar	Added	
The Language Centre at Al-Fateh University	Added	
The Libyan Participatory Education	Added	
The Libyan Employees at the UK	Added	

#### 1.3.4 Focus Group Participants

The study was conducted in Libya. The participants were all from Libya, but they were different in terms of background. They reflected three categories - university graduates, employees and decision makers. The main criteria for inclusion were their knowledge regarding the topic of study. Ten focus groups, each composed of between five and eight participants, were conducted in 2009-10 (the organisational fields of the participants and the location and timing of each focus group is described in Table 2). Each focus group lasted between one and two hours.

<sup>1</sup> The trip to Libya was made in summer 2008<sup>1</sup>. The purpose of this visit was mainly to obtain permissions for interviews as it has been mentioned above with the relevant people and institutions for second year 2009, of my thesis.

**Table 1.2: Focus Groups, 2009-10**

<b>The Name of the Institution</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>No and who<sup>2</sup></b>
Al-Fateh University in Tripoli	Language centre	1pm-2pm	12/04/2009	6 M H student
Libyan Arab Foreign Bank	In the same place	10am-12am	14/04/2009	6 members
Academy of graduate studies	In the same place	1 pm-2 pm	17/04/2009	8 F H students
Academy of graduate studies	In the same place	3 pm-4 pm	17/04/2009	8 M H students
Al-Fateh University in Tripoli	Language centre	1pm-3 pm	21/04/2009	6 F H students
National oil institution	HR branch	10am-12am	22/04/2009	8 members
Libyan air Lines	In the same place	11am-1pm	23/04/2009	6 members
Al-Fateh University in Tripoli	Language centre	3pm-5pm	04/05/2009	6 F assistances
Libyan Ministry of Education	In the same place	10am-12am	10/05/2009	5 members
The Libyan employees at the finance institutions in the UK	Costa café	5pm-7pm	25/01/2010	5 members

### 1.3.5 Interviewees

In 2009-2010, seven interviews involving nine informants were conducted in Libya. Most of these individuals were Libyan decision-makers, but some were managers in the private sector (see Table 2.1). The interviews were also used to obtain additional relevant documentation regarding the recent situation of Libyan strategies towards the acquisition of English language skills, the Libyan higher education system and the job market. Each interview lasted between one and two hours and, cumulatively, did not point to any obvious omissions in terms of potential interviewees.

**Table 1.3: Interviews, 2009/2010**

<sup>2</sup> (FH) female higher education students and (MH) male higher education student

<b>The name of the institution</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>No and who</b>
Private investment companies	In the same place	<b>12pm-1pm</b>	<b>24/03/2009</b>	<b>1 Manager</b>
The curricula department	In the same place	<b>12pm-2pm</b>	<b>25/03/2009</b>	<b>1 Administrator</b>
UN information centre	In the same place	<b>12pm- 2pm</b>	<b>31/03/2009</b>	<b>L formal speaker</b>
British council	In the same place	<b>10am-12pm</b>	<b>21/04/2009</b>	<b>2 administrators</b>
The Labor Power Institution	In the same place	<b>3pm-5pm</b>	<b>02/05/2009</b>	<b>1 Administrator</b>
Libyan Foreign Investment Co	In the same place	<b>9am-10am</b>	<b>12/05/2009</b>	<b>1 Minister</b>
The Languages Centre	In the same place	<b>11am-12pm</b>	<b>00/03/2010</b>	<b>1 Manager</b>

#### **1.4 Guiding Questions**

Preparation for the interview and focus groups involved the creation of themes and prompts to guide (but not “script”) the conversations. The overarching theme concerned the extent to which English language was seen to enhance the job prospects of Libyan graduates but a conscious effort was also made to allow the research participants to raise and expound upon issues not foreseen by the questions relating to problems in the Libyan educational system and the significance of the ‘new vision’ policies introduced after 2004. With that caveat in mind, preliminary lines of questioning centred upon:

1. The difficulties experienced by Libyan graduates due to their lack of English language skills and the perceived benefits/advantages among university students in relation to speaking English.
2. Factors that impact on learning English such as the international sanctions against Libya, Libyan education policy and the age at which graduates began or recommenced study of English
3. The quality of Libyan higher education programmes for of the teaching of English.
4. Human capital investment and job market requirements in terms of English language skills.

5. The fields in which English language can be used in Libya, such as foreign investors/companies and the Libyan private sector. The significance of foreign investment for the Libyan economy and job market.
6. The Libyan government and its recent policies/strategies towards the economy and ELA (and to what extent do the policies of the Libyan state respond to the idea that human capital might be a part of an Orientalist discourse about development?).

#### **1.4.1 Data Capture**

Interview data were recorded largely via audio-recordings. Focus group data were captured by audio-recording and selective video-recording combined with a digital audio-recorder. The relatively low capacity of the memory card of the digital-recorder used was an unexpected problem in some cases, but recourse to the recording facility in a mobile telephone overcame this obstacle.

#### **1.4.2 Data Analysis**

Tentative data organisation and analysis began during the data collection process (Oppenheim, 2005; Rabiee, 2004). This was oriented towards an “*iterative testing and retesting of theoretical ideas using the data*” (Pope et al 2000:115). For example, an early theme addressed was one of disagreement over the importance of ELA. Most of the participants from the Libyan universities believed in the importance of English language skills as an added value in terms of their human capital. But participants from the education ministry appeared to be less convinced in that regard. Indeed, as we will see in chapters three and four some of the Libyan decision-makers considered ELA as a threat to Libyan culture. A flexible approach to the use of guiding questions thus provided an insight into the diversity of the participants’ perspectives and enabled early synthesis of emerging ideas with regard to the findings and wider literature. In more formal terms this allowed for the iterative development of an interpretive framework, a process described in more detail below.

#### **1.4.3 Translation and Transcription**

The process of transferring data from audio to written form not only involved transcription, but initial thoughts on translation. Transcription of the data into Arabic took between three and five hours per interview and focus group. This provided an initial overview but also stimulated thoughts on the most appropriate translations into English. But translation still took between one and three days for each recorded session.

#### **1.4.4 Coding**

Initially, tapes and accompanying transcripts and contemporaneous notes were reviewed in detail several times in order to begin familiarising myself with the data (Rabiee 2004). But as Robson (1993, cited in Rabiee, 2004: 657) notes, “*a central aim of data analysis is to reduce data*” (or to at least reconfigure it to a more manageable and comprehensible form). Thus, after the familiarisation stage I started coding the data with a view to more focused interpretations. Preliminary coding of themes started at a broad level and then moved to more detailed categories and iterations. At the most basic level each emergent broad theme was colour-coded. The educational system and policies category - for example – was coded brown; the government’s developmental strategies category in green; the human capital category in yellow and so on. Subsequently, the themes of the same colour were cut and pasted together in new digital files designed to facilitate the interpretation and further coding. The limited size of the data set and ongoing familiarisation rendered use of qualitative software largely superfluous in this respect (though notes were made of key decisions in the coding process).

#### **1.5 Ethical Considerations**

Informed consent was obtained orally and in written form from all research participants in using a *pro forma* in Arabic. I also explained in detail the research objectives, the precise purpose of the interviews and focus groups and the intended use of the data. Participants were also invited to ask for clarification at any stage of the research process. Permission was sought for the use of audio and/or video recording devices in all cases is only being for ethical academic purposes. Some participants preferred audio recording rather than use of a video and their requests were met.

## **1.6 General Interpretations**

### **1.6.1 English and Identity/Culture:**

Some issues regarding the topic's ideas and concerns were handled to some extent ambiguously by the participants. For instance, in answer to the question '*to what extent do you think that the acquisition of English language enhances the job prospects of Libyan graduates in the Libyan job market?*', some participants were quite determined to link English acquisition with a threat to their culture, values and identity and they suggest a deterministic relationship, while the others suggest a substantial independence. The issue here for interviewees is the apparent contradiction between, on the one hand, the idea that learning English alongside Arabic as a language of knowledge/development is acceptable and helpful in terms of job prospects, whilst on the other hand English language is seen as it is also seen as an expression of power and inequality in the world-system.

### **1.6.2 English and Employment:**

The participants confirmed that establishing this relationship between ELA and employment in the Libyan job market is crucial in terms of both reducing the unemployment rate among the university graduates which is about 30% and its historical over-reliance on the hydrocarbon industry for economic growth.

## **1.7 Summary**

This part of the research methodology has described the research rationale and design used in the fieldwork for the investigation. These methods largely reflected the exploratory nature of the research regarding the relationship between the acquisition of English language and the job prospects of Libyan graduates. Focus groups and individual interviews were presented as appropriate methods in this study. With regard to the derivation of findings, the data were analysed in textual form in the creation and development of analytical categories apposite to the research aims. Finally, it is worth mentioning that qualitative research requires a researcher with high analytic skills which during this study the researcher made an effort to develop it.

## **Chapter 2: The Modern Orientalist World-System: The Theoretical Framework of the Thesis**

### **2.1 Introduction: The Modern Orientalist World-System**

The theoretical approach taken in this thesis builds upon developments in world-systems analysis that have taken place over the past decade. In particular it presents the argument that the modern world-system is a modern Orientalist world-system (MOWS). This theme emerged in the work of Khaldoun Samman (2006) and has subsequently been taken up by a number of writers in the field including Immanuel Wallerstein (Abdel-Malek, 2000). In this chapter I will set out the key claims of this theoretical framework and how it applies to Libya before examining it in the context of literature on the idea of a developmental state. The chapter will conclude with an examination of the dependent nature of Libyan development in the MOWS and the ways in which this has constrained its options and choices.

In many respects this (MOWS) is an understandable development in world-systems analysis that brings together the work of three writers whose theoretical ideas have overlapped in a number of ways: Franz Fanon, Edward Said and Immanuel Wallerstein. Fanon had a huge influence on both Said and Wallerstein with his analyses of the impact of colonialism on the psychology and identity of subaltern groups (Fanon, 2006d, Wallerstein, 2009). Fanon's influence on politics was enormous during the period of post-colonial liberation, including in Libya and on Gaddafi himself in the later 1960s. The key concept in Fanon's work is perhaps the psychopathology of colonialism. By this he meant that colonialism was not simply a matter of occupation and coercion but that it literally embeds itself upon the identity of the colonised that accept and normalise their repression in racial terms, something that has been described as 'psychopolitics' (Hook, 2004). As Fanon makes clear, racism is at the heart of the colonial experience and must be fought by subaltern groups if they are to move beyond the constraints of their colonial experience. This view proved to be a powerful influence on the subsequent goals of the post-1969 revolutionary government which shifted Libya from being a conservative state to a radical nationalist one (Fanon: 1991). Fanon's analysis, informed by his intellectual background in phenomenology and Marxism, said that the only way for the colonised to become truly free was for them to physically cast off their oppressors, the colonial power. Further, and importantly, he made the point that if all that colonial liberation amounts to is the replacing of European ruling bourgeois elites with national ones then the revolutions will end in failure.

For Said, Fanon is a hugely important figure whose ideas prefigure his own work on Orientalism and also, perhaps even more importantly, on the plight of the Palestinian people. Said is important to this thesis and the emergence of the work on MOWS because his analysis of colonialism shows how cultural forms underpinned and were central to the colonial enterprise, providing the rationale, the art, the moral justification, the philosophy and scholarship that legitimised European brutality towards their colonised territories (Said, 1978). What he takes from Foucault is the idea of Orientalism as a discourse that configures the Occident and the Orient as a binary dualism with each defining the others qualities in opposition to each other (rational/irrational, modern/pre-modern, civilised/barbarian, science/superstition). This is an important account of the ways in which the production of forms of knowledge are in fact forms of power that serve to support the violence and domination of the colonial powers. Said is often viewed as the founder of post colonial theory and associated with post modern social theory but in fact this is a largely a mis-reading of Said's work. As Selby notes, Said was influenced by two intellectual figures during his life, Michel Foucault and Noam Chomsky (Selby, 2006). But in interview Said makes clear that ultimately he drew closer to Chomsky's work and rejected what he saw as the elitism and problematic politics inherent in Foucault's theoretical approach to language and power. As Said says in response to the suggestion that Foucault and Chomsky are the two big influences upon his work '...in the final analysis one has to choose between them, but I've always felt in fact that one could incorporate both of them. In the end, I think that Chomsky's is the more consistently honourable and admirable position, though it may not be the most emulatable position. It's certainly a less cynical position than Foucault's' (Said, 2005: 77). More pointedly and in sharp contrast with the politics of postmodern social theory, Said said that politically he felt closest to anarcho-syndicalism, echoing Chomsky, with its emphasis on working class solidarity, mutual aid, workers control of industry and internationalism, embodied in groups like the Industrial Workers of the World (I. W. W.) (Said, 2005: 28-29). Said's life exemplified a practical and theoretical commitment far removed from the normal academic career.

The third part of the theoretical framework of the MOWS comes from the founder of world-systems analysis, Immanuel Wallerstein. Wallerstein concedes in an essay the importance of Fanon for his approach to the study of the world-system and in particular the way in which colonial power manifested itself both during and after the colonial period (Wallerstein, 2009). Wallerstein's early work focussed on the underdevelopment of Africa and he moved towards

the work of dependency theorists to explain the way in which the structure of the world-system controlled and rendered dependent the development of economies in the periphery and the semi-periphery on the economic power of the states in the core zone of the world-system (Wallerstein: 2006a). Unhappy with dependency theory and its limitations Wallerstein, however, moved to the study of the modern world-system that provided a model of the emergence and rise of a system that was based on the expansion of European power and capital from the period that he describes as the long C16 onwards (Wallerstein, 1974). Early critics of world-systems analysis tended to view it as economistic and determinist in its approach, lacking a theory of the state or of class, and most famously the division arose between orthodox Marxists such as Brenner who argue that underdevelopment in the third world is due to a lack of capitalism while for world-systems analysts it is due to having already been a part of the capitalist world-system (Aston and Philpin: 1978).

In fact as has become clear over the past 45 years the model of the modern world-system that Wallerstein set out opened up the way for an approach to the study of the social world that, in rejecting the classic C19 social science intellectual divisions of labour, brought together scholars from a wide array of fields in their analyses of both the modern world-system and earlier ones as is clear from the on-line *Journal of World-System Research* (Hall, 2000). Thus as a fully-fledged field of research world-systems analysis, focusing upon the world-system as single unit of study and rejecting the methodological nationalism of the social sciences, has stimulated research in a wide range of areas including: archaeology, art history, international relations, computer systems, world history, development studies and feminism. Wallerstein's own work has deepened and widened over the years to embrace a wide array of subjects including the relationship between knowledge and power that so preoccupied both Fanon and Said (Wallerstein: 1998, 2001, and 2004). Thus it is no surprise that Said and Wallerstein praised each other's work and drew upon it in their own studies. For Said world-systems analysis was an example of a non-Eurocentric approach to the study of social life and therefore a challenge to the presumptions of Orientalist writers (Said, 2001: 65). So the fact that out of the overlapping ideas and activities of these three figures has emerged the idea of the modern Orientalist world-system is hardly surprising. But what exactly does the term mean?

## 2.2 Putting the Orient in World-Systems Analysis

According to Samman 'I'd like to identify this global order as the Modern *Orientalist* World-System to describe a world which is politically, economically, and culturally stratified, with race constituting the very epicentre of the stratification with the "West" and "whiteness" ranked as the superior race/civilization, signifying all those qualities and characteristics in a manner exactly opposite to the Orient (Said 1979). In this conception, the racialization of the binaries constructed by the MOWS produces the opportunity for a sector of the racialized groups (the constructed Orientals) to racially reconstruct themselves from one side of the dichotomy (the Orient) to the other side (the Occident).' So what Samman makes clear is that the cultural logic of this system has been fundamentally racist and that in so doing it has produced racist categories as a way of sustaining the system that are integral to its functioning, not mere superstructure, as some of the more Marxist inclined scholars working in the field might argue. Thus on this reading of the MOWS all ideas of civilisation (Western, Islamic, and so on) are fundamentally the product of one modernity that both unifies and differentiates people into categories that have racist assumptions at their core, once biological and now increasingly but not exclusively, cultural. Thus the commonly held assumption that the Islamic world is somehow pre-modern or outside of modernity makes no sense on this reading. Rather, the Islamic world has been fundamentally shaped and structured, economically, politically and culturally, by its incorporation into the MOWS, but the myth remains that the Islamic world is pre-modern and must transform itself to emulate the advanced modern states found in the core of the world-system. Thus MOWS does not just see the states of the core zone as taking resources from or physically colonising the periphery and the semi-periphery, it fundamentally restructures those societies including, crucially, the forms of knowledge and identity that they come to accept about themselves and their place in the world-system. In this way the work of Wallerstein connects and synthesises with that of Fanon and Said in producing the MOWS. So how does this system work and how should we understand the model of the modern Orientalist world-system?

The MOWS builds upon and develops the idea of the modern world-system first put forward by Wallerstein in 1974. It does so in a number of ways that both extend and widen the scope of the model of the world-system to incorporate cultural power and ideology as a fundamental mechanism of power sustaining the system; most crucially it argues that racism is as fundamental to the logic of the MOWS as any other form of power. As is well recognised world-systems analysis abandons the traditional methodological nationalism of

the social sciences whereby discrete nation-states and the relations that pertain within and between them are seen as the main object of study (Wallerstein, 2001 and 2004b). Rather world-systems analysis argues that in order to understand the nature of the world-system what was required was:

1. To take the world-system as a single unit, its history, structure and development, as the basic unit of analysis. This does not, of course, mean that it is simply an exercise in macro sociology. In fact the macro-micro distinction is unhelpful here. The world-system unifies populations into a single structure but at the same time it differentiates people into nation-states, fragments and divides experiences, culture, politics and history, and pitches people against each other on grounds of race, gender, nationalism and sexuality.
2. The world-system is fundamentally structured through an international division of labour that connects people over time and space.
3. The world-system is structured into spatial and temporal zones called the core, periphery and the semi-periphery. The core refers to the zone within which are found nation-states that are the main capitalist powers of any given period and at various times there emerges a hegemonic state that acts as the dominant force to maintain the order of the system. There have been three hegemon's since the emergence of the modern world-system in the C16: the Netherlands in the C17, The UK (early to late C19) and the USA (1945 to 1971).
4. The world-system has a capitalist logic that sees the accumulation of capital as being fundamental to the way in which operates. This means, in practice, that the core zone dominates capital accumulation and exerts its power over the periphery and semi-periphery through a variety of mechanisms from colonialism and the restructuring of their economies, states and societies; domination of the advanced capitalist industries (computers, biotechnology etc); domination of the financial industries (banking, investment, insurance) and the flow of capital in the world-system always in search of profit maximisation and increasingly over the past 30 years driven by speculation rather than investment in production in the core (Wallerstein, 2004b)).
5. The core is defined by a number of properties: it concentrates on the most advanced forms of capitalist activity; it tends to have forms of representative democratic government; it tends to dominate the use of violence within the system. The states in the core have effectively built the modern world-system, written its rules, and defined

its norms of behaviour, primarily in their own interests and in particular in the interests of the ruling classes (Wallerstein, 2004b).

6. The periphery is the most exploited area of the world-system and usually comprises those countries that went through colonialism or else were admitted later in the evolution of the system. The periphery is defined by a number of qualities: extreme poverty, large populations, lack of democratic government or welfare, regular use of violence by ruling elites against their own population in order to subjugate them and the production of raw materials or a few primary commodities whose prices are largely controlled in markets found in the core. The consequences for the colonised countries were to see the destruction of their own industries and the transformation of their economies and societies so that they became providers of raw materials for the core and consumers of the goods and services of the core. Thus the periphery became dependent for its growth upon the actions of states and population in the core (investment and consumption of goods and services in the periphery). This is a structural relationship that cannot be broken in the sense that there will always be a core and a periphery in the modern world-system as it is inherent to the logic of how capital accumulation works. However, it is always possible that states can move between zones of the world-system, in either direction. Witness the decline of Portugal versus the rise of India or Brazil, for example. It is this movement in the world-system that helps to generate the conflicts and war between states who wish to either avoid decline or to gain power, what has come to be called geopolitics (Wallerstein, 1991).
7. The semi-periphery is a category to describe those countries found between the core and periphery that have an important role to play in sustaining the world-system. The semi-periphery represents the *possibility* of development and growth for the exploited majority in the world-system. States in the semi-periphery zone of the world-system are defined by such qualities as: a mixture of advanced industries (those passed down from the core as costs became too high, such as ship-building, for example) and primary commodities; a movement between democratic and authoritarian government; often large populations and land mass (Brazil, Russia, China and India); a growing middle class whose role in the world-system as consumers of goods from the core has become increasingly important. Over time the power of the four major states in the semi-periphery (Brazil, Russia, India and China) has grown and seen the production of energy supplies, goods and services shift towards them (Wallerstein,

2011). It is likely that any or all of these states will move into the core zone of the world-system over the C21, displacing states that can still be found there such as the Netherlands and Italy. The current global financial crisis has revealed starkly the skewed and unstable balance of power in the world-system with a highly productive semi-periphery and a highly indebted core.

8. However, there are also states found in the semi-periphery who possess different qualities to those mentioned above and whose position is to do with particular geo-political or economic factors. The East Asian states or Asian Tigers, for example, (South Korea, Taiwan Hong Kong and Singapore) have developed rapidly since WW2, largely, so Amsden argues, by defying the liberal capitalist ideology that currently dominates the outlook of the world-systems major national and international financial institutions: by having a strong state, protected trade and preferential trade agreements with the core after WW2 that arose in part to deflect the appeals of national communist movements in the region (Amsden, 1992)
9. In addition there are those states known as rentier states that can be found in the semi-periphery and Libya falls into this category. Rentier states possess crucial natural resources, almost invariably oil, which are essential to the way of life found in the core and that generate vast wealth for these rentier states (Schwarz, 2004; Schwarz, 2008; Amin and Kenz, 2005). Thus since WW2 rentier states have generated vast flows of capital into the state treasury without the need to develop an economic or social infrastructure or to produce goods in the way that, say, Britain did in the C19. And crucially, they do not need to tax their citizens in order to raise revenue, which for some writers is part of the explanation for the lack of democracy in such states (Ross, 2001; Moore, 2004). These countries have attempted, more or less successfully, to preserve their relative wealth and power through forming a cartel, but in practice they remain reliant on the core to consume their resources (Smith, 2004). In addition the ruling elites in these countries, as elsewhere in the semi-periphery and the periphery, have tended to establish strong military, political and cultural ties with elites in the core, sharing their outlook and ideology and with a great distance between themselves and their own populations (Delacroix, 1980; Schwarz, 2008; Amin, 2000). When popular protest emerges in countries in the semi and periphery it has tended to be brutally suppressed with the use of police or military trained and armed by the dominant states in the core. In this sense it is in the interests of the ruling classes in the core to develop these relations of convenience with elites in the

periphery and semi-periphery. As we will see, though, as a rentier state Libya has been quite different to most others, certainly since the 1969 revolution, embracing an ideology and pursuing goals that are very different even from its near neighbouring rentier states such as Algeria and Iran under the Shah.

This summary of the way in which world-systems analysis views the evolution of the modern world-system is schematic and cannot do justice to the broad and complicated analyses that have emerged within the field of study and across the range of subject matter it now embraces. For a full discussion of this see the *Journal of World-Systems*. However, the distinctive turn that world-systems analysis has taken over the past decade has seen the emergence of the MOWS and this entails a qualitative shift in the focus of the model of the world-system and the way in which power operates within it and that inequality is generated and sustained. These developments can be summarised as follows:

1. Orientalism – The argument that has developed is that racism and the construction of racist categories as a form of power/knowledge (following Said rather than Foucault) is a central component of the construction of the modern world-system (Burke, 1998). The significance of this is important in that Wallerstein's original focus was on the rise of the modern world-system which implied a much broader reading of the evolution of the system than simply a focus upon the capitalist world economy. However, the latter came to dominate certain readings of world-systems analysis that situated it more firmly into a Marxist/Hegelian framework than was originally entailed. The work of many (including Wallerstein) within world-systems analysis has been to expose the limitations of a mono-logic approach to the world-system by bringing in the logics of other factors such as the state form, kinship systems, racism and sexism as well as a focus on the production of knowledge itself as all being constitutive of the way that the modern world-system came into being and has sought to produce and reproduce itself over time and space.
2. In particular the MOWS tells us that the Western states in the core of the system monopolised not just violence, production and wealth but the means by which forms of identity and understanding are established. Thus the construction of categories of 'civilisation' are themselves outcomes of the unfolding of the world-system and the power of the core to define itself in relation to what Fanon and Said called 'the other', in this case the despotic orient. Modern political Islam, as Wallerstein, Mocombe and

Trichur all note (2008), has come to take on this despotic meaning in the MOWS. It has come to represent something anti-modern and outside the world-system.

3. That in the MOWS the undeveloped nations bears the status of potential Europeans if they choose the correct developmental policies.
4. The MOWS, built on racist categories that are themselves the product of modernist thought and scientific claims about the biological differences between the races, is sustained through the ways in which the core European states sought to reorganise the world-system as a social space right down to restructuring the way in which colonised people understood their own history and culture. In this respect Orientalist and racist categories as a discourse persist and evolve over time and space as part of the basic infrastructure of the MOWS (Stremlin, 2008: 93).
5. Thus to understand the modern world-system is to understand it as a system built not just through economic and military power but through the production of forms of knowledge that had a scientific status and which generated racist categories that persist and help structure and impart meaning in the system about different 'racial' groups. As Said made clear, it is the mainstream media that have a fundamental role to play in sustaining orientalist myths about the non-Western world (Said, 1978; Said and Hitchens, 2002)

Thus the theoretical framework aims to build upon and develop the insights from this development in the study of the modern world-system.

### **2.3 Exiting the Periphery? Libya as Developmental State**

How does Libya's developmental history relate to the concept of the developmental state that has dominated much political economy of development literature in recent decades? Ikpe states that:

*“the Developmental State Paradigm has its conceptual origins in the empirical experiences of “developmental States” including Japan, Taiwan and South Korea, which constitute the First Tier developmental States. Increasingly, the newly industrialising economies of Thailand, Malaysia and Indonesia, are also influencing the discourse. However, it is important to note that the term, developmental State, was first used with reference to Latin America” (Ikpe, 2008: 2).*

As a concept it refers to those countries where the state plays the major role in the structural transformation of economy and society, something which the Libyan government has undertaken in the past but appears to be relinquishing now (Ipke, 2008: 5). The importance of the developmental state paradigm is two-fold: it offers an apparent escape route for nation-states in the periphery of the world-system; it does so by arguing for a model of economic development that is aimed at state-building and economic growth and is in direct contrast with the neo-liberal model which posits a commitment to free trade and all that it entails.

Of course, unlike other rentier states (Saudi Arabia, Kuwait) Libya has had a far more independent geo-political and political economic outlook since the 1969 revolution brought Gaddafi to power (Vandewalle, 2006). But this is not necessarily an indication of the Libyan states capacity to act as a developmental state. In the literature the developmental state is characterised by a number of qualities that are said to unite countries as disparate as Japan, South Korea and Malaysia: economic nationalism, by which I mean economic policy that is in part directed towards national goals such as raising educational standards; a large and often unaccountable government bureaucracy; a corporatist model of governance and resistance to a truly neoliberal consumer culture whereby citizens are free to choose in the market place (Amsden 1990; Pirie, 2008; Wade, 2003). Libya may share these qualities to a lesser degree but its political ideological outlook has placed it outside the framework of other developing states in the world-system, a pariah state to be curbed and quarantined by the core (Oakes, 2011). This is an experience well outside that of most of the classic developmental states. The term is often linked with the idea of a strong state and in some respects Libya has been a strong state given the extensive and wide-ranging powers that the post-revolutionary state has exerted over the population (Vandewalle, 2006). But as with other rentier states (states that survive from unearned income or profits in the classical political economic sense) the power of the state in Libya has always been fragile in that it has rested on cronyism and buying support rather than building a modern state apparatus that might help direct the country towards modernising goals (Karl, 1997). A dilemma and contradiction in Libya's policy now of pursuing economic growth and integration into the global capitalist economy is that it is going against the grain of the developmental state model. It is pursuing economic growth rather than state-building, as happened in the East Asian countries. Without a modern state form the Libyan government will struggle to contain the social forces that economic growth and integration will unleash (Pirie, 2009: 63).

In the context of the MOWS the developmental state is to be found in the periphery and the semi-periphery where states have the resources necessary to compete and advance through the tiers of the world-system (Wallerstein, 1984). China and India, for example, have the benefit of being vast territories with huge populations and therefore a significant internal market through which they can develop their economic capacity, just as happened with the USA (Harman, 2006; Merrill, Taylor and Poole, 2008; Panagaryia, 2008). As a consequence they have been able to shed their peripheral status in order to advance towards the core of the world-system, despite carrying a hugely impoverished population along the way. The polarisation of these countries is symptomatic of their advance as developmental states and late entrants to the MOWS.

But what of Libya? By contrast Libya has none of these advantages but instead, has the mixed blessing of oil resources, or the curse of oil as it is sometimes described in the literature (Torvik, 2009; Sachs and Warner, 2001; Sachs and Warner, 1997; Karl, 1997 and 2009). One of the recurring themes in analyses of oil rich countries are that they often suffer from poor levels of economic growth when compared to much poorer resource countries. Sachs and Warner make this clear when they note that:

*“None of the countries with extremely abundant natural resources in 1970 grew rapidly for the next 20 years. This fact holds up using a variety of measures of resource abundance. Moreover, most of the countries that did grow rapidly during this period started as resource poor, not resource rich”* (2001: 3).

Torvik develops this point and says:

*“On average resource abundant countries have had lower growth over the last four decades than their resource poor counterparts. But the most interesting aspect of the paradox of plenty is not the average effect of natural resources – but its variation. For every Nigeria or Venezuela there is a Norway or a Botswana”* (Torvik, 2009: 1).

He goes on to note in a way that seems highly apt for Libya that: *“Nevertheless, it may be reasonable to believe that many countries that export natural resources have a weak protection of property rights, much corruption, and bad quality of the public bureaucracy”* (Torvik, 2009: 4-5). There is, however, no consensus on why this is the case and a variety of

reasons are put forward by those studying this phenomenon (Sachs and Warner, 2001). From a world-system perspective it is important to situate developmental states in the context of their dependent relationship with the core. This dependency is not simply measured in terms of trade relations but in a number of other ways too, such as military aid, training of police to curb internal dissent, cultural dependency by providing education and luxurious lifestyles to the elites from these countries (Wallerstein, 1984; 1991). The flip side of this is that it entraps the poor of these countries in dependent relations of often great violence and poverty.

In the context of the MOWS Libya is something of an aberration. It is a classic rentier state possessing many of the characteristics that we expect to find there but it has also been something different. Despite its economic dependency on the core it has sought to assert a political and cultural autonomy, as far as possible, from the core. This has manifested itself in ambitious if not reckless moves towards pan-Arabism, pan-Africanism and over threats against core countries such as France in support of its allies in the Third World (Sturmin, 2003). But the policies of the developmental state, whether South Korea or Libya, are always contingent and shaped by the dependent relations on the core. And for Libya the weakness of its authoritarian state has been its inflexibility in terms of internal development of society and the modernising and diversification of the economy (another specific problem for rentier states) but also that its antagonistic relations with the core have left it unable to secure the expertise and capital goods that it needs to even begin to develop and modernise its society and economy (Vandewalle, 2009). In short, Libya as a developmental state has asserted autonomy to a degree but has never been able to escape the structurally dependent relationship that is oil production necessitates. Proponents of the developmental state model sometimes make a case for the exceptionalism of states like South Korea as examples that all third world countries can follow in order to develop. But as Chang makes clear, these states did not develop by following free trade principles, and nor did the core (Chang, 2007 and Rogers, 2011). On the contrary, they used strategic state intervention to protect and direct the economy coupled with favourable terms of trade with the USA who had a geopolitical interest in seeing their development as a bulwark against the threat of communism during the Cold war period (e.g. the multi-fibre agreement etc) (Wade, 2003: 91; Cumings, 2002). What they have shared in common with Libya is an authoritarian form of government and there is a strong argument to say that the developmental state model hinges upon just this and a lack of democracy (Khoo, 2007: 20).

For the Libyan government aspects of the developmental state literature have been very influential, not least its emphasis upon developing human capital as a means for promoting economic growth (Ikpe, 2008; Khoo, 2007). The idea here is that by developing the education and health of a population a state can develop the factors needed for successful economic development, almost akin to Rostow's classic stages of growth model of development. But the problem with human capital in the developmental state literature is that it tends to be treated as a form of independent variable, as indeed it is in the human capital literature in general. But this glosses over the fact of the deponent nature of the relations between the developmental state and the core. Thus South Korea was able to develop (as was Taiwan) through a strong state, investing in authoritarian manner in education and human capital but precisely because of its geopolitically important relationship to the USA and the favourable economic terms of trade that this generated (Cumings, 2002). Indeed Pirie notes that:

*“The Korea of the early 1960s was, in many respects, a paradigmatic example of ‘Asian despotism’. The government was corrupt, the economy was underdeveloped, and no bourgeoisie worthy of the name existed. By the end of the decade Korea clearly had a government both capable of and committed to promoting economic growth. While the country was still relatively poor, a wholesale shift in the structure of economic organisation was clearly underway: industrial and export growth averaged 18.4 per cent and 27.75 per cent, respectively, between 1962 and 1970” (Pirie, 2009: 59).*

Without this strong and authoritarian government to direct the economy an investment in human capital might have proven to be insufficient to generate the startling rates of development that ensued. Empirically the developmental state model is persuasive as significant rates of economic growth can be show for some states but theoretically this growth has to be situated in the ebbs and flows of power relations in the MOWS between the core and the periphery. Contrary to what orthodox Marxist-Leninists like Harman have argued, WSA has never made the claim that there can be no development in the periphery because of capitalism (Harman, 2006).

Thus over the course of the C20 Libya's integration into the MOWS has itself moved backward and forwards as colonial states have sought to integrate it into their orbit (Italy, France, the UK) before settling on a post-colonial relationship where control could be exercised through the nominal independence given to the Libyan elites who were themselves

dependent on the core for political legitimacy and military support. It was this model of developmental state that the Libyan revolution dislodged in 1969 meaning that no such relationship as existed between South Korea and the USA would be possible. Since the rapprochement with the EU and the USA in 2003-2004 the Libyan government has sought to situate the Libyan economy in the context of increasing trade and investment with the EU in particular in order to help diversify the economy, largely under the urging of Gaddafi's LSE educated son Saif, and with a view to integrating Libya into the MOWS more fully than in its history (Alafi and Bruijn, 2010). As part of this process the Gaddafi regime has focussed its attention on aspects of the developmental state literature with its emphasis on developing human capital. But at the same time it has rejected its strong commitment to managed and protected trade in order to embrace neo-liberal reforms to economy and society, however tentative these may be, which potentially poses significant threats to the legitimacy of the regime (Al-Kabeer, 2008). If it cannot continue to satisfy its clients who occupy strategic places of power and influence in Libyan state and society as it surrenders state authority to the market, then it may well raise more fundamental questions about the nature of the Libyan state as it has developed since the 1969 revolution. In concluding this section it is important to note that those developing states that have embraced neo-liberal type economic policies since 1970 have, on the whole, fared badly when compared to the strong state model of developmental found in East Asia (Chang, 2007).

#### **2.4 Libya as Dependent State in the MOWS - Human Capital and the Curse of Oil Resources**

Despite its relative independence as a political actor since the 1969 revolution Libya has remained a dependent state in the periphery of the MOWS in a variety of ways. As this is a structural relationship determined by a range of political, economic and cultural factors this is not a relationship that can be overcome by a change of policies or government (Wallerstein, 1984). Libya is crucially dependent upon the core in a number of ways. Economically the core controls the institutions that shape the capitalist world economy (the World Bank, The IMF, The WTO, for example) and also the processes that organise the movement of capital in the MOWS (Banking, investment, currency exchange dominated by the Dollar, and so on) (Arrighi, 2009; Harvey, 2005). Although Libya, like any country in the periphery of the MOWS, has options and degrees of autonomy and manoeuvre fundamentally it is not in a position to challenge these factors by itself. In contrast with other countries from the periphery that have developed significantly over the past 40 years, notably China and India

but also Brazil and Russia, Libya lacks the size, population, resources and internal markets needed to move from the periphery to the core.

Thus Libya is dependent in that it depends upon markets for trade that it cannot control or influence significantly. Thus the price of oil as primary commodity has at best been directed by the OPEC cartel which included Libya but even so there has been major disagreements amongst members of the cartel as to the price of oil, with conservative members such as the Saudi's not wanting to risk disturbing their relationship with the Core state on whom they dependent for military and political support (Karl, 1997; Sachs and Warner, 2001). Only in the mid-70s and in response to the Israeli attacks on Egypt, Lebanon and the Palestinians did OPEC use its collective power as a form of punishment against the core. But even then it has to be born in mind that key parts of the oil industry are themselves under the control of corporations based in the core, so there is a complicated relationship here which does not simply translate into power for rentier states. The military, cultural and political dependence they have on the core clearly limits their ability to act against the interests of the core without incurring grave risks. Libya is also dependent on the core and indeed the semi-periphery for basic things that it needs to keep its oil industry functioning such as capital goods, investment, food, markets to sell their oil in and the like. In the political and military realm the Libyan government has bought the bulk of its arms from France, Germany and the UK (Rogers, 2011).

Libya's dependence on the core is illustrated by the nature of the oil market which has been shaped by massive volatility since the early 1970s, driven by increased and uneven demand in the capitalist world economy with the so-called BRIC states (Brazil, Russia, India and China) increasingly coming to demand oil from Libya and other rentier states (Ciccantell and Bunker, 2004). The weakness of these rentier states has been well documented in the academic literature, often viewing oil as a curse which leads to bloated forms of bureaucracy, political and economic corruption, untrained and under-educated workforces and a general lack of investment in the infrastructure of the country (Sachs and Warner, 2001; Karl, 1997). In short, oil revenues in rentier states produce kleptocratic forms of government, often dominated by families as in Libya, who control and direct the wealth produced from a natural monopoly to preserve their own power first and foremost (Ahmida, 2005). These tendencies can all be seen as part of the Libyan economy and society which has failed to develop in a way that leads it to being a productive state. In short, as with most other rentier

states, Libya cannot diversify its economy as a means of aiding its general development, and it is this factor that has led to the post 2003 policy changes in the Gaddafi government. Investing in human capital is seen by the government as the key to accelerating Libya's growth and integration into the MOWS. The problem with this view, as we will see in the thesis, is laid down by Chang when he argues that there is no significant evidence to suggest that an investment in education alone will lead to enhanced economic performance (Chang, 2010: 214, 239-240). Equally, as Wade suggests, the pursuit of such external integration in the MOWS is often at the expense of internal integration within developing countries that remain polarised in terms of most social indicators, a problem that affects Libya (Wade, 2003: 94). This is a huge dilemma for the Libyan government that it has to find a way around if its transformation to a neo-liberal enabling state is to generate any success. Bluntly, there are no examples of rentier states moving from the periphery to the core through an investment in education. The successful periphery states over the past 50 years have all shared a strong form of state directed and protected capitalism that has been able to use cast resources (human and natural) in order to generate its economic development. And as noted before, these are things that Libya does not possess.

The renewed emphasis on human capital as a means of promoting economic growth in Libya is certainly endorsed by sections of the academic and policy oriented literature but it remains a highly contentious claim ((Ikpe, 2008; Merrill, Taylor and Poole, 2008)). In particular the experiences of the East Asian developmental states (Malaysia, China, Thailand, South Korea, Taiwan) are held up as part of a globalising of the developmental state model (Ipke, 2008) As we will see in the thesis, embracing human capital as a concept is part of Libya's integration into the MOWS and carries with it theoretical assumptions about the ways in which capitalist economies function that are starkly at odds with the arguments of WSA.

Libya's dependency remains central to any account of its recent policy changes which are best understood as an attempt by the government to produce more favourable forms of investment and terms of trade for Libya in the global economy. but a paradox here for the Libyan government is that in doing this it only makes itself more deponent on the core not less. As it integrates its economy, political ties (acting as a partner in the core's 'war on terror, for example) and cultural ties it is intensifying the variety of mechanisms that the core uses as a means of dominating and exploiting the rest of the MOWS and this can only create problems for authoritarian governments such as the Gaddafi regime.

## **2.5 Conclusions**

The theoretical framework used in this thesis aims to develop work that has originated in the world-systems analysis over the past decade. This move towards and understanding to the modern orientalist world-system helps to produce anon-Eurocentric account of the development of Libya and its place in the MOWS as it illustrates, amongst other things, the way in which theoretical knowledge about Libya, political economy and international relations has itself been highly Eurocentric in its assumptions. Even now the power of the core to produce the theoretical knowledge that shapes common sense understandings of political economy is profound as the current embrace of human capital by the Libyan government illustrates. The integration of Libya into the global economy is crucial in the current phase of the MNOWS as the core and in particular the USA as its hegemon need to secure access to the most important source of energy. As Harvey notes, whoever controls the flow of global oil effectively controls the global economy, something which gives an indication of Libya's future relations with the core (Harvey, 2005: 19).

## **Chapter 3: Language and Development in Libya**

### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter will begin with a brief account of the history of language in Libya before examining its development during and after colonialism. It does this in order to provide a context for the debates about the role that language came to play in post-colonial Libya where it was seen as central to the emergence of Libyan national identity. As a consequence it was a political and cultural factor for the revolutionary government under Gaddafi. It will also explain the extent to which the Libyan governmental decision to stop the teaching of foreign languages in Libya in 1986 was in part a response to the problematic and ongoing legacy of colonialism. Thus an argument was made at the time that this decision arose, in part, out of the fear that Libyan Arab culture and language would be diluted by the intrusion of foreign cultures. This view is supported, for example, by Kloss (1969 cited by Rashid, 2000) who argues that second languages always try to displace the natural language both geographically and economically. This struggle over language and identity in colonial and post-colonial Libya is a central feature of the MOWS and the recent new vision policies place this issue at the centre of Libyan politics again. In terms of this relationship to the MOWS, as set out in chapter two, the nature of power in the MOWS is not simply economic. Crucially the ability of the core to dominate the world-system and in particular of the hegemonic state to do so (the UK followed by the USA post WW2) depends upon a range of hierarchical relations and forms of social power. In this instance the cultural power of what is now called ‘global english’ is at the heart of the current phase of the MOWS. As we will see in later chapters this drive towards learning global English as part of an investment in human capital is a tendency that almost all states in the periphery and semi-periphery are undertaking on a colossal scale.

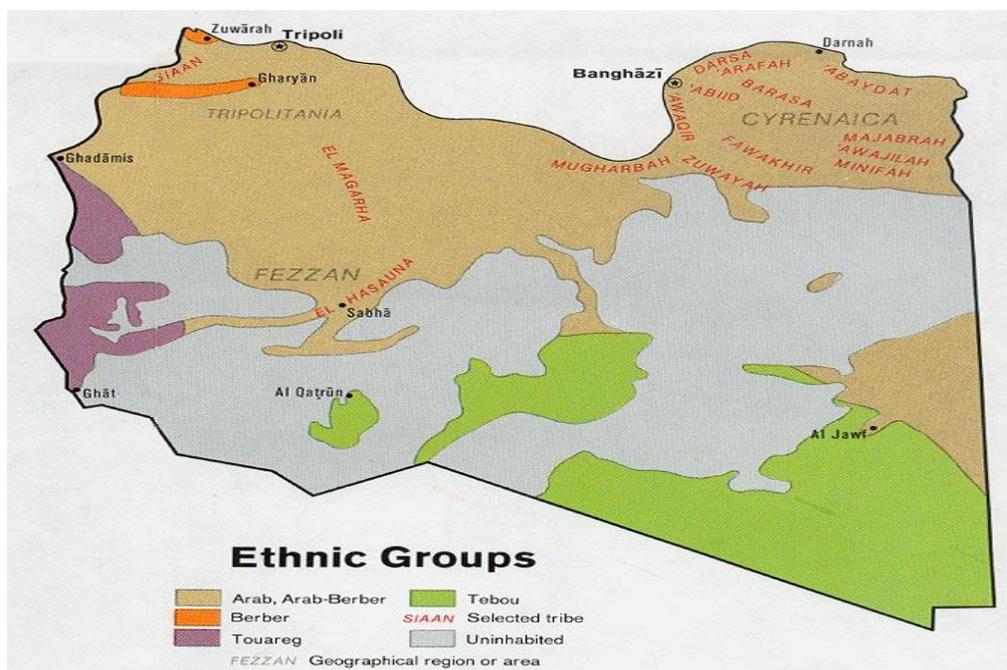
Historically Libya has been occupied by some of the most powerful Western colonial nations such as Italy, France and Britain. Libya has been subject to the usual colonial policy of imposing and spreading the language of the colonial power in order to deepen the occupation culturally as well as economically and politically (Ahmida, 1994; Ahmida, 2005; St. John, 2008; Said, 1987; Fanon, 1976). However, Libya is an example of a nation which tried to keep its identity against colonialism and neo-colonialism by making the Arabic language the sole language in Libyan society. As such, this chapter will present an overview of language in Libya during and since colonialism through addressing the following key questions: what is the history of language acquisition in Libya; what role has colonialism played in this as Libya

has entered the MOWS; in what way has colonialism used language acquisition as a form of power/knowledge (following Said) over the subaltern classes; to what extent does the new vision policy of promoting ELA perpetuate these factors?

### 3.2 Languages in Libya During and since Colonialism

Libya's experience of colonialism shared much in common with that of other countries in the region and the periphery of the world-system but also some important differences. Western colonial rule was quite different to that of the Ottoman period, for example, particularly as Ottoman rule was by Muslims (Vandewalle, 2006). Hence, the Libyan people showed less resistance towards the latter and were more accepting of the legitimacy of Ottoman rule than that of the subsequent western colonialism. There were, however, significant disadvantages resulting from the isolation policies for Libya that were imposed by the Ottoman Empire on their Arab colonies.

**Fig: 3.1 Ethnic Group and Languages of Libya<sup>3</sup>**



Libya is composed of several ethnic groups (see table-1) although the majority of the population is Arabic-speaking whose ancestries are a mix of Arab and Berber. Thus, the main language spoken in Libya is Arabic, which is also the official language (Metz, 2004). The

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.geocities.com/Athens/8744/mylinks1.htm> viewed in 2008

Aamazight Berber language is spoken by Libyan Berbers who live in the Jebel Nafusa region (Tripolitania), the town of Zuwarah on the coast, and the city-oases of Ghadames, Ghat and Awjila. In addition, Tuaregs speak Tamahaq, the only known Northern Tamasheq language. Italian and English are sometimes spoken in the big cities, although Italian speakers are mainly among the older generation. According to the Central Intelligence Agency (“CIA”<sup>4</sup> Year of publication, title), Libyan Berbers and Arabs constitute 97% of the population; the other 3% are from Greek, Maltese, Italian, Egyptian, Afghani, Turk, Indian, and Sub-Saharan African origins.<sup>5</sup>

**Table 3.1: Ethnic Groups and Languages of Libya<sup>6</sup>**

<b>Ethnic Group</b>	<b>Language</b>	<b>Population in Country (est.)</b>
Arabised Berber	Arabic. Moroccan	230,000
Arabized Black	Arabic. Yemeni	98,000
Cyrenaican Arab	Arabic. Libyan	1,400,000
Fezzan Bedouin	Arabic. Hasaaniya	170,000
Ghadames Berber	Ghadames	20,000
Halebi Gypsy (Nawari)	Domari	33,000
Jalo Berber	Arabic. Hasaaniya	34,000
Jofra Berber (Al – jawf)	Tamahaq, Hoggar	22,000
Kufra Bedouin	Arabic. Hasaaniya	22,000
Nefusa Berber (Jemmari)	Jabal Nafusah	170,000
Palestinian Arab	Arabic. Levantine	54,000

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ly.html> last viewed April 20th 2008

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ly.html> last viewed April 20th 2008

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.geocities.com/Athens/8744/mylinks1.htm> Last viewed April 20th 2008.

Riyah Bedouin	Arabic. Hasaaniya	28,000
Sanusi Bedouin	Arabic. Hasaaniya	510,000
Sirtican Bedouin	Arabic. Hasaaniya	28,000
Sudanese Arab	Arabic. Sudanese	190,000
Teda (Tubu)	Teda	32,000
Tripolitanian Arab	Arabic. Moroccan	1,600,000
Tunisian Arab	Arabic. Tunisian	160,000
Zuara (Zwara, Zuraa)	Zuara	33,000

In order to explore and account for these population distributions, this section will present a brief historical background to the languages in Libya that covers the ancient Libyan, Islamic and Ottoman Empire in Libya, the Italian Colonial Era and Libya under UN Administration.

### **3.3 Ancient Libya**

The history of language in Libya can be traced back to the people who were occupying partly or wholly the area corresponding to modern-day Libya such as the Phoenicians, Carthaginians, Greeks, Romans, Vandals and Byzantines (St John, 2008). Although the Greeks and Romans left ruins at Cyrene, Leptis Magna and Sabratha, little other evidence remains of the other ancient cultures. The Phoenicians founded colonies on the coast of Tripolitania, which were conquered by Carthage in the 6th century BC. The Greeks established settlements in Cyrenaica in the 4th century BC. Under the Greeks the city of Cyrene flourished as a centre of intellectual life and was noted for its schools of medicine and philosophy. Both Tripolitania and Cyrenaica became part of the Roman Empire in the 2nd century BC. For about 500 years, under Roman rule, great advances were made in agriculture, especially with the introduction of irrigation, and in the construction of roads and cities. When Roman emperor Diocletian divided the empire into parts in the late 3rd century ad, Tripolitania remained directly under Roman rule while Cyrenaica was assigned to Greek rule (St John, 2008, and Metz, 2004). The oldest known Berber inscriptions date back to the 4th century B.C., but Berber-speaking people have lived in North Africa since at least 3,000

B.C., and references to them occur frequently in ancient Egyptian, Greek word barbarous "barbarians." It is understandably disliked by many Berbers who prefer the term "Tamazight" which is often used instead, particularly with reference to Northern Berber languages. However, "Tamazight" also refers to a language spoken in the Atlas Mountains region of Morocco, thus creating some terminological confusion. Greek historian Herodotus, writing in the 5th century BC, described the Garamantes people of the Fezzan as sedentary farmers who used horse-drawn chariots in warfare. His account was verified in the 20th century by ancient cave art, discovered in the Jabal Akākus (jabal means “mountains”) of the western Fezzan and the Jabal al ‘Uwaynāt near the Egyptian border (Smith, & Metz, 2004)<sup>7</sup> Societies are never static, of course; cultural traits and social patterns evolve through time. The name "Libya" is an indigenous (i.e. Berber) one, which is attested in ancient Egyptian texts as , R'bw (= Libu), which refers to the tribes of Berber peoples living west of the Nile. As a result, Berber did take root in Libya yet not to extent that Arabic does till this time.

### 3.4 Libya in the Islamic and Ottoman Empires

By the time of the death of the prophet Mohamed in A.D 632, Islam had been carried by its followers from Arabia into North Africa, where Islam came to Libya, by Omar ibn Al-As, in A.D 642. Libya underwent economic, social and cultural flourishing due to its strategic location in North Africa. From North Africa Libya developed successful trade links with countries in Europe, Africa, and Asia (Ahmida, 1994). This trade was especially successful with Arab Moslem countries as the common Arabic language became more widely used. Further Ahmida (1994) said that “*Islam and the Arabic language replaced other religions and languages by the turn of the fourteenth century*” (Ahmida, 1994:17). This affected not only the economies in the Arabian region but, also social and culture life in Libya, through such trends as migration, intermarriage between other Arabic nationals and Libyans and the changes in the labour market especially, since discovery of oil in 1959 (St John, 2008, Ashorax, 1985, & Metz, 2004). This exchange of trade and the successive waves of Arab

<sup>7</sup> [www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ly.html](http://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ly.html) Last viewed April 20th 2008.

migrants helped to spread Islam and the Arabic language. It also helped that Arab cultures intermingled with the other local cultures of the peoples conquered by the Arabs, to produce Islam's fundamental orientations and identities. The Arabic language became a vehicle for the transmission of high culture, and helped facilitate the concept of Pan-Arab cultural unity that came to play such prominence in the post-colonial period (Amin and Kenz, 2005; Ashorax, 1985). Arabism and Islamism were growing rapidly in Libya by the mid twentieth century to the extent that teaching which had previously been limited to the Koran now progressed onto natural and social sciences, as well as studies into the origins of Islam (Arabsheibani & Manfor, 2000-5).

The Banu Hilal invasion of 1049 and succeeding attacks of the Banu Sulaym later in the 11th century, however, brought migrations of large pastoral nomadic tribes from the eastern Arabian Peninsula (Ahmida, 1994, and St John, 2008). According to Metz (1987) the Berbers were the major original inhabitants of Libya, and the region was ruled successively by the Umayyads, Fatimids, and a Berber dynasty. Yet, the situation in Morocco and Algeria for example, and to a lesser extent in Tunisia, was quite different from that experienced in Libya. Arabization and Islamization did not have the same impact where Berbers who had yet to become arabised continued to form a substantial ethnic minority (Harris, 1986; St John, 2008). As a consequence, Arabic remained the dominant Language in Libyan society and in people's daily life as well as in all levels of the Libyan education sector.

By the mid-12th century the Normans of Sicily dominated the Mediterranean region and ruled part of Libya from 1146 to 1158. They soon abandoned it, however, and it passed on to the Berber Almohad dynasty. During the following centuries the control of Libya, or parts thereof, frequently passed through a succession of Arab Muslim leaders. This pattern of the power of the Islamic unity in the Arabic region was the same in Libya and was continued until it was divided in the 16th century by the Ottoman Empire. During the time of 1711-1835 of Ottoman Empire Al-Karamanli family was governed Libya for 124 years mainly by Ahmed Pasha Karamanli (Ahmida, 2005; St John, 2008). During the Ahmed Pasha era Libya to a large extent had enjoyed political stability and economic prosperity where Libya witnessed active progressive foreign and domestic policies. In addition, Ahmed Pasha's rule did see the expansion of commercial and diplomatic relations with Europe. Such a step encouraged the influx of Turks to Tripoli increasing the agriculture productivity for both

Libyans and Turks, and thus enhanced the overall economy (St John, 2008). However, after Ahmed Pasha's death in 1745 the political and economic prosperity of the Ottoman Empire declined, and it came to an end by the Sublime Porte in 1835<sup>8</sup>. According to Ahmida (2005) and St John (2008) after 1835 Libya had become a dynamic area for the improvements with administrative, economic, and educational reforms. For instance, during Mohammed Amin Pasha's rule, 1842-1847, modern primary schools were opened (see fig-2) and were funded by parents to teach the Arabic Language, Turkish Language, Islamic religion, Turkish history, mathematics and geography for three years. He was followed by Ahmed Izzet Pasha in 1857 who was the first to open the military schools which were followed in 1867<sup>9</sup> by the first junior high school in Tripoli (St John, 2008, Ashorax, 1985, & Metz, 2004).

The year 1878 then witnessed the establishment of schools in the main Libyan cities of Tripoli, Benghazi and Fezzan and some villages together with the first junior high school for girls in Tripoli in 1903. In 1910 a private school for teaching French Language was opened in Tripoli<sup>10</sup>.

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<sup>8</sup> 1835 was considered as the second Ottoman occupation over Libya after the Karamanli regime was declined and overthrown by the Sublime Porte.

<sup>9</sup> According to St John (2008:46) During this time of 1860s "*Ottoman administrators began to implement several political and administrative reforms in Libya where new institutional developments included the creation of administrative and village councils, court system, new methods of tax assessment and collection system, the postal system, a telegraph line between Tripoli and Malta, Trative system, and thus Ottoman rule became more centralized and Libya became highly integrated within the authority of the Sublime Porte*".

<sup>10</sup> [http://www.jeel-libya.com/show\\_article.php?id=4124&section=2](http://www.jeel-libya.com/show_article.php?id=4124&section=2)

**Fig: 3.2 some of Libyan/Turkish Schools and Military school.**



The Ottoman Empire made some important reforms in the Arab world, including in the region of Libya, developing roads, hospitals, Mosques, and councils in addition to those educational reforms already mentioned the latter being crucial in the institutionalisation of the learning of Arabic across Libyan society. Thus at this stage Libya was still rooted in the Ottoman Empire which was itself slowly being incorporated into the European constructed and dominated MOWS. By the mid-1880s “the Arab-Ottoman” relations started to be at risk where Italy showed the serious threat to its African territory (Libya). At the same time, disagreement between the leaders of Sanusi Order and the Ottoman government was taking place which led to economic, social, political and military setbacks in Libya, and thus undermined significant development of the early stage of the Ottoman Empire. However, the relationship between Turks and Arabs deteriorated as the Ottoman Empire weakened, ultimately collapsing due to Italian invasion in 1911 (Ashorax 1985). This collapse of the Ottoman Empire saw it finally and fully incorporated in the MOWS, with some areas in the

periphery and others in the semi-periphery. Libya remained firmly rooted in the periphery of the MOWS, however, until the discovery of oil in 1959 saw it begin, like other rentier states, its transition into the semi-periphery because of its natural rather than its productive resources.

### **3.5 The Italian Colonial Era**

Since 1878 Libya has been subject to the power-political bargaining of three countries: France, Britain and Italy. In order to avoid a political clash over Tunisia and the Suez Canal and Egypt, France and Britain urged Italy to occupy Libya as a means of harmonising policy over a militarily weaker people. This policy of harmonization gave Italy a satisfactory share of the Ottoman Empire which by then had become known as “the sick man” of Europe<sup>11</sup> following the 1877-1878 Berlin conference where the major European Powers met to decide its fate and put an end to the Ottoman Empire (Samalot, 1981, & Ashorax, 1985). After the Ottomans renounced their rights over Libya in 1912, the Italians met resistance from Libyans. Italian occupation was confined to certain areas of the Libyan coast until 1922, but by 1932 it had been extended to the entire interior. Libya was eventually made a part of the national territory of Italy under Dictator Benito Mussolini in 1939 (Ahmida, 1994, 2005, and St John, 2008). The Italian colonisation of the Arabic language in Libya was no more successful than that of the Turks under the Ottoman Empire where both introduced their own languages as means of transforming local culture. In contrast with French colonialism in Algeria and British colonialism in Egypt, where both French and English languages have been heavily introduced into those colonies through their educational and cultural institutions, Italy’s colonialism in Libya was mainly military based rather than cultural. However, the Italian government was keen to erase the Arabic language in order to extend their control and occupation of Libya (Ahmida, 2005). Therefore, in 1914 a decree was issued allowing the establishment of Arab schools in Libya but only under the supervision of the Italian education ministry (St John, 2008). In 1917 an additional decree was issued with the following two provisions for the main regions of Tripoli and Burka: Freedom of education for Libyans and compulsory primary education for Libyan boys; Teaching of Arabic language in all classes and teaching of Italian language after the third year. 1922 marked a major turning point in

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<sup>11</sup> It is the name given to the Ottoman Empire then due to its weakness of its strategies towards development in its latest stage.

Libyan history when the Italian Fascist Government came to power in Rome and abandoned traditional Italian colonial practices. Instead the Fascist government rejected the colonial practice (followed since 1911) of collaborating with local Libyan elites, terming it a failure. Like apartheid in South Africa and Aryan supremacy in Nazi Germany, the Italian fascist policy was based on an ideology of racial supremacy. It stressed hierarchy, holding that as a superior race Italians had a duty to colonize inferior races which included in their views Africans. It was Mussolini's plan to settle between ten and fifteen million Italians in Eritrea, Somalia, and Libya to populate what he heralded as "the second Roman Empire" (Ahmida, 2005:41). Italian Fascism has had a deep impact on today's Libyan society where Ahmida (2005:36) described it as '*...not just a case of war accidents, but rather genocide experienced by human beings.*' Moreover, according to Ahmida (2005:41) this situation became worse:

*"Rights accepted before 1922 by the previous government were dismissed. Educational policies changed in accordance with racial supremacy views: while previous colonial officials had moved to Italianize Libyans by broadening education, the fascists barred Italian culture from natives, replaced the Italian language with Arabic in the classroom, and banned education to Libyans after sixth grade".*

After the sixth grade Libyans were not allowed to continue their studies at secondary schools until the year of 1927-1928 where an Italian government passed a resolution that decreed that young Libyans willing to continue their education were allowed to enter Italian secondary school<sup>12</sup>.

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<sup>12</sup> <http://www.libya-alyoum.com/look/article.tp?IdLanguage=17&IdPublication>. Last viewed November 15<sup>th</sup> 2009.

**Fig: 3.3 Establishment of the Primary Girls Schools in 1914, during the Italian Reign.**<sup>13</sup>



This was the main route for introducing the Italian language into Libyan society and to imposing it at all levels of the Libyan schools to “Italianize” Libyans (including Kindergartens).

Historically, then, colonial languages in the MOWS were employed as means of power/knowledge (following Fanon and Said) in order to deepen the influence of colonialism over subject populations. However, the spread of the Italian language via that route was not effective due to the fact that those who joined the Italian schools were only the sons of the “elite” while the majority of the pupils were sons of the poor. The poor students were studying at the Kuttab “informal school” (see fig-3) where their studies were mainly confined to the Koran and other Islamic studies (Arabsheibani & Manfor, 2000-5). This is significant as it is factor in explaining the limits to the cultural transformation of Libyan society under colonialism, compared say, with that of Algeria which was a Department of France

<sup>13</sup> <http://www.libya-alyoum.com/look/article.tpl?IdLanguage=17&IdPublication>. Last viewed November 15<sup>th</sup> 2009.

**Fig: 3.4 the Informal Schools “Kuttab” for the poor people “the majority”**



This situation significantly contributed to the survival of Arabic during the occupation era in Libya, but is also contributed to high rates of illiteracy of more than 90% that persisted into the early post-colonial period. The racist Italian policies had been reflected in the Italian Anthem at that time in which soldiers chanted against the holy Koran and Libya, “don’t you know Mum, that Italy is calling me, to go to Libya and to my happiness, I will shed my blood to eradicate this nation and combat the Islamic religion, I will fight the Koran with all my Strength” (Ashorax; 1985). In the meantime, the Libyan resistance together with the changing international circumstances and the start of the Second World War saw Italy forced to withdraw from Libya in 1943. As the conflict between states in the Core over the direction of the MOWS was played out in WW2 its denouement had huge implications for Libya’s subsequent integration into the system.

### **3.6 Anglo-French Administration**

In 1943 the Italian army was defeated in Libya and thus Libya was placed under an Anglo-French military government. By the peace treaty of 1947 Italy renounced all claims to the territory, and in 1949 the United Nations General Assembly approved a resolution calling for the granting of independence to Libya by January 1, 1952 (Vandewalle, 1998, and St John, 2008). In 1944 an English woman was appointed as an inspector of girls’ schools in Tripoli, with the support of some Egyptian women, under the supervision of the then British administration. In the following year, sixteen Libyan teachers were sent to Egypt for a short

training programme in the area of school management (Samalot, 1981). Although the strategies of the education system at that time in Libya were dependent on the English administration, in 1947, an Arab advisory committee consisting of a number of prominent citizens was formed in order to discuss matters pertaining to education and development. Thus the issue of language and development that is central to this thesis has been a recurring theme in Libyan history since the end of the 2nd World War. This intention to develop the educational system as an opening issue to the Cambridge conference which was to take place in 1948 and which was to focus upon the issue of under-development. The main aim of this conference was to devise policies that would achieve a better life for people who live in so-called under-developed countries (Samalot, 1981, and St John, 2008). A year later (1949), an Institute for the preparation of teachers was formed to tackle the shortage of Arab teachers.

**Fig: 3.5 an Institute for the Preparation of Libyan Teachers in Egypt in the late 1940s**



### 3.7 Libya under Loyal Rule

In the Second World War in 1943 the Libyan people joined the allies after Britain had promised that when the war ended Libya would become independent. After the defeat of Italy, and the fall of Benghazi and Tripoli to British forces, Britain separated two of the main regions granting Burka and Tripoli to England, and Fazan to France. However, on the 1st of June 1949, after many negotiations it was agreed to grant Burka its independence and the Libyans transferred the issue to the United Nations (St John, 2008; Metz, 2004). In the same year 1949, the General Assembly of the United Nation passed Resolution No. 289 granting Libya independence no later than the first of January 1952, and formed a committee to

implement this decision. Moreover, on 12/10/1951 Libya received all the federal government and regional governments' full authority, except with regard to matters of Defence, Foreign Affairs, and Finance. On, 15/12/1951 financial authority passed to the Libyan Government Central, and this was followed by defence and foreign affairs in the same year and in 1963 the Constitution was amended and Libya became a unified state (Vandewalle, 1998)

Simpkins (2008) argues that at the time of independence Libya was one of the world's poorest countries. However, the discovery of oil in Libya in 1959 made it potentially one of the richest nations in the post-colonial world. Having said that, even when oil was produced on a commercial level, political, economic and social development within Libya was slow. This lack of development was in significant part due to the continuing dominance exercised by both Britain and the USA over the Libyan monarchy and economy. In MOWS terms Libyan economy and society (periphery) remained highly dependent upon sections of the core (Britain and the USA) to fund its development through its use and purchase of its primary export material, crude oil. However, in a pattern reflected in other Maghreb countries such as Morocco and Algeria, the resources generated from oil revenues were never used to meet the basic needs of the Libyan people. More specifically, in classic MOWS pattern, most of the wealth from oil revenues fell into the hands of the country's elites and the capitalists from the core that dominated the nascent oil industry (Ahmida, 2005; St John, 2008, Ashorax, 1985). The wealth accumulated by the Libyan elites was used primarily to reinforce their own dominance over the domestic population. The underdevelopment of Libyan society continued. For example in 1963 it is estimated that approximately 81% of the population was illiterate (Arabshehani & Manfor, 2000: 5).

At the same time, Arab nationalism was emerging in Egypt under Nasser who was comprehensively against colonialism, domination and foreign military bases as well, considering them as a threat to Arab nationalism and unity. This situation in Egypt made an impression upon the educated classes in Libya who were increasingly disappointed by King Sanusi and his politics, in particular over his decision to allow more than forty foreign companies to fully control the hydrocarbon industry. Moreover, according to Ashorax (1985), in the Sanusi era, although, Libya became one of the three richest countries in Africa due to its productive capacity in oil, most of the Libyan people remained in poverty, living in huts

and tents in and around most Libyan cities. As a result of this the Libyan people sought to mobilise politically to demand the rights to freedom, security, economic wealth and basic needs. As a result, they were met with repressive measures by the state including the shooting of protesting Libyan students in 1964 (Ashorax, 1985, First, 1974, and Ahmida, 2005). These two situations increased public resistance to neo-colonialism and made people realise that they would have to fight for their rights for a better life, effectively dividing Libyan society and turning many against the ruling regime. According to First (1974) “*Mass politics, though on a limited scale, were initiated within the student movement when students demonstrated in defiance of the police in 1964 schools went on strike, and the authorities had to close universities*” (First, 1974:84). Hence, this resistance was mainly supported by the student population especially (Ashorax, 1985, and First, 1974).

The movement was of a section of Libyan student’s and other Arab students in some European countries and was against the suppression of their colleagues in Libya and aimed for the reopening of the university and the Libyan Student Union (First, 1974). In 1966 the Libyan student movement successfully held its first union conference that was overwhelmingly directed towards issues of Arab nationalism, a solution to the Palestinian problem, to amend the country’s oil policy and to remove the foreign military bases (St John, 2008).

### **3.8 Libya and its Language in the post-colonial period**

Those issues did not, however, prevent the government and education officials from attempting to solve the problems of the then education system where the rate of illiteracy was estimated to be 90% in 1951. Interestingly, in 1968, the Libyan education Minister, Mostafa Baaio, issued a decision to include English in the curriculum and to teach subjects such as mathematics and sciences in both schools and universities in English (Ashorax, 1985). Such a decision had mixed support. Those who supported the decision considered it a key to a “scientific renaissance”. However, some Libyan intellectuals did not welcome the decision and considered it a threat to the Arabic language and identity. These intellectuals believed that Arabic, being the symbol of Arab Islamic nationalism, would be undermined by this decision. This opinion still exists amongst strata of Libya’s educated population and is one of the factors behind some discontent over the new vision policies towards ELA. For example, in interviews conducted regarding the relevant areas of this thesis, some of the participants

explained how by introducing English language or other foreign languages it could harm Libyan culture and identity. Mussa<sup>14</sup> a postgraduate student at the higher education academy stated that:

*“I think that although learning a second language like English has many advantages, it also has other disadvantages such as affecting our culture, as learning a foreign language might cause the loss of our traditional culture, especially if this language was learnt at an early age. And you notice the way that our young generation are thinking, behaving and even communicating with each other, it is all coming from copying Western culture rather than following their own way of life. Thus, we might lose some of our Arabic oriental culture, or worse deviate from our Arabic moral values”*

In response to Mussa’s statement Akrem<sup>15</sup> from the same institution replied:

*“I do not really understand why we still connect learning foreign language such as English with cultural damage, or with the fake idea of western manipulation, which might have been the case in the past, but today no one can take another’s culture unless they are allowed to. We have strong aspirations and pride in our Arabic language, the language of the holy Quran, and our Arabic culture, as it represents our identity. Basically, all we need is communication with others, knowledge exchange and catching up with what is going on around the world, and most important being confident of ourselves, our language, culture, and identity”.*

For Mussa the fear of Libyan dependency remains implicit in the spread of English language amongst Libyan graduates while for Akrem the key is that the Libyan people retain

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<sup>14</sup> Mussa a participant from the higher education Academy, and the focus group method was used in 17/04/2009.

<sup>15</sup> Akerm one of the focus group participants at the higher education academy in Tripoli which was made in 17/04/2009.

confidence and pride in their culture rather than allowing it to be subordinated to Western values and practices. Akrem's view of second language acquisition is an instrumental one: a second language is simply a tool that can be used to one's advantage. In other words, using foreign languages such as English with certain standards and criteria, for commercial, scientific or any particular uses can be beneficial for a society's development. For example, Gaddafi himself was one of those Libyan young students who studied at the British Military Academy at Benghazi whilst in the Libyan army in 1965-66. He also studied in the UK, spending nine months for advanced military training at Beaconsfield, learning English on a tank-training course in Dorset and an infantry signal instructor's course at Hythe (St John, 2008). Thus, Gaddafi viewed the acquisition of English language in instrumental terms, too. It enabled him to pursue his wider strategic goals which included organising the overthrow of the Sanusi regime. English language was, therefore, not seen as a threat to Libyan identity, merely a tool that could be used by Gaddafi and no doubt other Libyans. In this sense English language was used as a foreign language that helped to transform Libyan society rather than it being a second language that threatened the culture of the Libyan people.

### **3.9 The September 1st Revolution**

In 1969, the Revolutionary coup which was led by Colonel Gaddafi took place. Gaddafi subsequently ruled according to what became known as the "Third Universal Theory", a system of governance of his own invention" (Simpkins, 2008:02). The revolution was caused by some of the factors already mentioned: most of the oil wealth was in the hands of the country's elites, the ill-treatment of the Libyan people by the state, the suppression of the Libyan student movement, the existence of foreign military bases and the flourishing of Arab nationalism, all of which combined to lead to the end of King Idris' reign (St John, 2008; Simpkins, 2008; First, 1974). In short these conditions reflected Libya's subordinate and dependent relationship to the core in the MOWS. The social basis of the Third Universal Theory is cited in Gaddafi's *Green Book*. The *Green Book* aims to provide the main solutions to the problems of democracy and socioeconomic development in Libya (Al-Gathafi, 2005). According to St John (2008) Gaddafi's theory has clear goals and policies emphasized on social welfare programs like housing, health care, education, the satisfaction of basic needs. In terms of democracy the *Green Book* establishes the right (in theory) of all Libyan people to participate directly in discussion of their social, political, economic and cultural issues at the

“Basic People’s Congresses” (Simpkins 2008). The Program on governance in the Arab region “POGAR” presents that:

*“Gaddafi developed his vision of the Libyan political system, which meant the construction of a "state of the masses." To achieve this political system meant to establish a decentralized system fully and at all levels to become decision-making process in the hands of citizens themselves through direct democracy. Gaddafi shows in a series of articles collected in the "Green Book" vision of what he called "Third Way", or alternative to capitalism and socialism. The Libyan regime has repeatedly sought to revive life in the revolution through the transfer of power from the government body to another” (POGAR, cited in UNDP, on 05/06/2008).<sup>16</sup>*

In practice these structures remained largely dormant and the Libyan people have possessed no democratic right to replace the ruling revolutionary government with another. The transfer from the Sanusi regime to the revolutionary system represents (domestically) a transformation from an elite-led and largely unaccountable monarchical system to a form of military-nationalist dictatorship, often but not always paternalistic in its relationship to the Libyan people. As we will see later, the nature of the revolutionary regime in Libya has been quite different to post-colonial regimes elsewhere in the Middle-East and North Africa (MENA), in significant part because of the actors involved, most obviously Gaddafi himself.

Via the Third Universal Theory (which was partly based on The Quran), Gaddafi sought to show that this theory was unprecedented and distinct from both capitalism and communism. The claim was that it provides the only alternative, as it is against the class exploitation of capitalism and the class warfare of communism. The Third Universal Theory asserted that both ideologies of capitalism and communism were exclusive and driven by the interests of ruling elites at the expense of the people. This populist appeal to the masses above and beyond elites has always been a powerful part of the ideology of the post-revolutionary governments under Gaddafi (Vandewalle, 2006; Martinez, 2007). The Third Universal

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<sup>16</sup> <http://www.pogar.org/arabic/countries/localgov.asp?cid=18> last viewed February 3<sup>rd</sup> 2009.

Theory claims to eliminate class differences by establishing a nation-wide network of consultative councils in accord with the Islamic idea of “Shura” (Harris, 1986; St John, 2008). The system of Shura varies in practice in different Islamic countries and in accord with contrasting Shia and Sunni interpretations of what it means (an-Nabahani, 2002). This system, in theory, legitimises the legislation of the society by allowing for consultation with the people. Thus, in Gaddafi’s *Green Book*, he argued that,

“Natural legislation in any society is grounded in either religion or customs and any attempt to make legislation for a given society derived from sources other than these two is invalid and illogical. Constitutions cannot be considered as the legislation of society. A constitution is a man-made law which needs to be ascribed to particular sources for its vindication it does not have a natural source. Codes of man-made laws derived from man-made measures. Customs call for spiritual non-physical, but deserving punitive measures. These customs are inherent in religion in which most physical punishments are postponed punishments and most judgments are passed as exhortations guiding instructions and answers to questions making them the most appropriate legislation which is respectful of human beings. In religion immediate punitive measures are taken only in extreme cases for the benefit of society. Religion embraces customs and customs are an expression of the natural life of the people. Therefore religion is an affirmation of natural legislation. In the Third Universal Theory, in a democracy no one group can claim the right to do this on behalf of society as society is its own overseer. Any such claim by an individual or group is dictatorial because democratically this is the responsibility of the society as a whole. Democracy means all society overseeing its own progress. This can be achieved through the democratic instrument of government which results from the self-organisation of society into basic people conferences and from the government of these people through people’s conferences and people’s committees then the general people’s conference (the national conferences).” (See the *Green Book*, part one, ‘The Authority of the People’, p. 32).

According to this theory the people are part of government and as such they are their own overseer. In this manner society thus becomes by itself the overseer of its legislation. By this “Shura” consultation system, society and nationals would be involved in consultation with their views towards political, economical or social matters. Thus, this mutual consultation was manifested later in Libyan society through the system of people’s committees and

popular congresses (Vandewalle, 2006, and Metz, 2004, El-Hawat, 2003). Nonetheless in practice these councils and consultative committees did not establish a democratic mechanism for the Libyan people if by that we mean that it gave them the power to replace the revolutionary government in a peaceful manner. As a consequence the state retained an unaccountable level of authority and power over society.

The Revolutionary Government came to power saying that it wanted to overcome the mistakes of the Sanusi's regime which was totally loyal to the Western powers and upon the core of the MOWS (Ahmida, 1994, Ahmida, 2005). King Sanusi left the main issues of government to the British administration and involved himself only in resolving small problems. Since Libyan independence the English administration had sought to re-establish itself in a different form. It was not to be an exercise in military power, but cultural, through the establishment of new educational institutions such as schools and colleges and the establishment of elite level cultural links with the new rulers of Libya. In this way the British administration could claim to be helping to satisfy the needs of Libyan people whilst at the same time trying to shape their cultural beliefs and practices through control of access to education (Ahmida, 2005). Gaddafi, influenced by Fanon, has described this situation as "a cultural attack" on the culture and identity of societies who were colonised by those foreign nations (Martinez, 2007). This led eventually to the decision by the Libyan government to end cultural exchanges with the West. Gaddafi believed that Arabic symbolised the identity, values and culture of not only Libya, but all the other Arabic countries as well, and argued that all Arab societies should protect their identities from that cultural attack (Decart, cited in Leclerc, 1990, and Vandewalle, 1998). Therefore, language was to be the unifying force "people are only in harmony with their own arts and heritage" (Gaddafi, cited in Ashorax, 1985: 47). The Arabic language was one of the central elements in Gaddafi's *Green Book*, not just for the Libyan people but for all the Arab nations, because it is seen as a symbol of trust and loyalty for them. However, attempts by Gaddafi to broaden this Arab unity largely floundered in the face of indifference and hostility amongst other Arab rulers. This led Gaddafi to switch his focus to Pan-Africanism, something he still espouses (Ahmida, 2005; and Otman and Karlberg, 2007).

More to the point, the physical removal of colonialism was not a complete end to colonial rule. Fanon (1965), an important influence upon Gaddafi, highlighted that the elimination of colonialism is not only about transforming the leadership from the bourgeoisie of imperialist rule to the bourgeoisie of nationals, as Libyans had experienced during the Sanusi regime. It is also about the actual physical and ideological removal of colonisation. In the physical sense, colonisation was largely removed. However, culturally colonisation remained as a part of Libyan culture and identity till the early stage of Gaddafi's revolution 1969. This incomplete removal of colonialism and the perpetuation of neo-colonial rule were exemplified in several parts of the world, with the pretexts for intervention being the need for those countries to modernise and civilise their way of life (Clark, 1990). For example, in Algeria, the development model was based on France's strategies "*to industrialise the country by setting up powerful modern units, both in the base sector (industrialisation industries' was the official term) and in the consumer sector, However, as these installations progressed, thanks to capital derived from oil, new forms of dependence emerged to replace the old colonial forms*" (Amin, 1978: 77). As result, after their formal independence in the 1950s, the entire Arabic world received a new form of colonialism and dependence, which used different mechanisms of power and control, most importantly through control of the global economy and the domination of global culture. As Fanon noted, this was of particular importance as the power of culture to displace indigenous beliefs and identity, led to the normalising and acceptance of the belief that Arabic barbarism had to be replaced by Western civilisation (Fanon, 1965). Thus Libya's incorporation into the MOWS was established during the period of colonisation by the European powers which established the social, political and cultural relations that continued after formal independence and which helped to secure Libya's dependence upon the core and its subordination to the orientalist assumptions of the MOWS. This remains a central issue now as the new vision policies re-engage Libyan economy and society with the global economy and the core of the MOWS. The consequences of this are likely to prove problematic for the revolutionary government as it attempts to liberalise its economy but at the same time maintain political and social control.

### 3.9.1 The Libyan Education System During and Since the September 1<sup>st</sup> Revolution

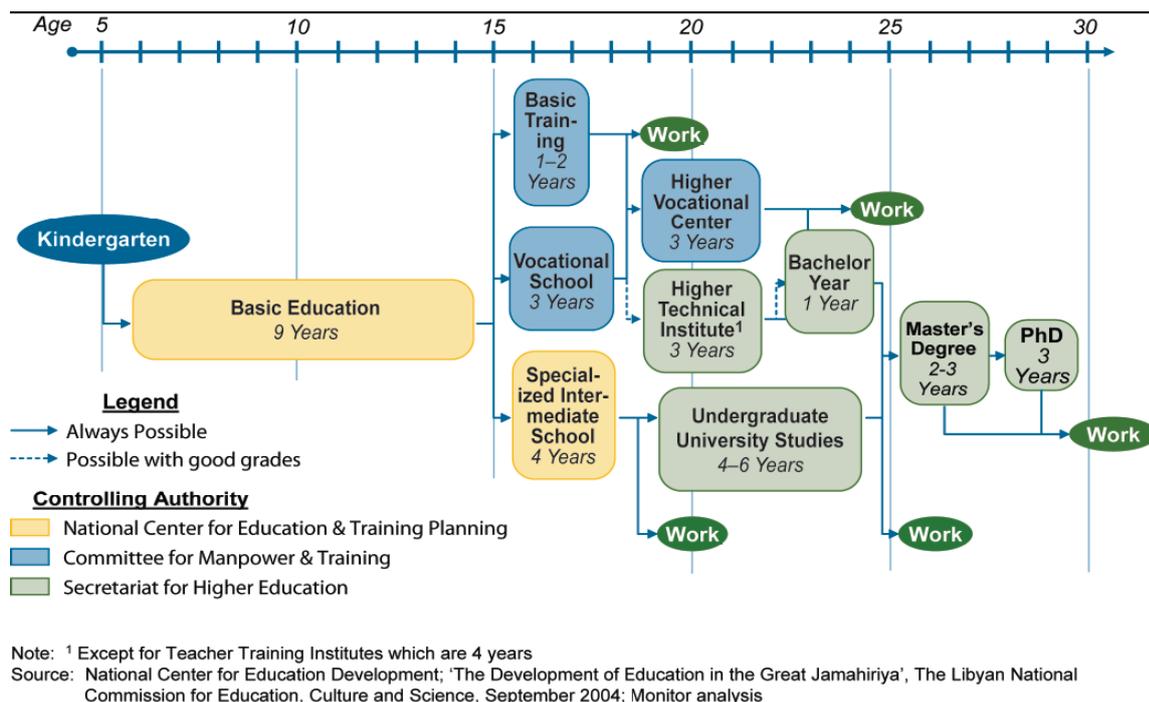
According to St John (2008) the education sector at the early stage of the September 1<sup>st</sup> revolution received less attention than the other socioeconomic programs such as providing houses and improving health care. However, during the years of 1970-1973 attention to the education sector in Libya became greater as the government saw it as a tool for widespread social engineering. St John (2008:149) described Gaddafi's perspective as, "*the revolutionary government aimed to create a new man supportive of the new regime*" where the governmental socioeconomic programs planned to profit directly all Libyans in terms of their social development. This led to a series of radical populist policies aimed at improving the general quality of life for Libyans, a fact reflected in its relatively high ranking in UN Human Development Reports. Since the September 1<sup>st</sup> revolution, for example, the figure of illiteracy fell from more than 81% in 1963 to 21.3% in 1995" (Arabshehani & Manfor, 2000: 5). The *Green Book* has given a considerable attention to the education sector where it ruled that Arabic should be the sole language to be used in all Libyan educational institutions. While English language was initiated from the seventh grade at the secondary schools (Al Hawat, 2002 & 2003). The educational programs were funded by the revenues earned by the hydrocarbon industries (Arabshehani and Manfor 2000-5). Otman and Karlberg (2007:107) agreed that the government expenditure for education has reflected the priority and the importance afford to this sector in Libya. The noted, however, that:

*"From 1986 to 1999, annual expenditure on education was significantly reduced, averaging 72 million LD, reflecting a lower oil price in the mid-1980s. It fell to a low of 17.8 million in 1993, the same level as 20 years earlier, before rising significantly again to 72.5, 62.5, 308.1 million LD for the years 1992, 195, 2000, and 2002 respectively. In 2004 it increased to LD 603 million, before falling again to a budgeted LD 230 million in 2006"* (Otman and Karlberg, 2007:107).

Moreover, the education system in Libya provides free education to all levels for all citizens. This system follows a 6-3-3 pattern - six years for the primary stage, followed by three years of elementary schooling and then Secondary school follows. After three years a successful applicant gets a general secondary school Certificate (Lagga et al., 2004, & Arabshehani &

Manfor, 2000-5). Technical institutes (skills-acquisition) were provided till recently. Thus according to Al Hawat (2002 & 2003) in 1980 the Libyan government created its “New Education Structure” where curriculums at all educational levels were restructured in favor of technical and humanities subjects. Currently higher education in Libya has 84 tertiary institutions, 12<sup>17</sup> state universities where the main universities in Libya are: Al-Fateh University in Tripoli (1957), and Gar-Yunis in Benghazi (1955), polytechnics, and employees and teachers training institutes providing free education to all citizens (Lagga et al., 2004). The free education in Libya has encouraged students (males *and* females) to be enrolled in the following stages of the undergraduate studies, unless they decided to start their employment/business life. It is therefore clear that the Libyan government has accomplished valuable achievements in terms of education development over more 30 years.

**Fig: 3.6 the Libyan Education System<sup>18</sup>**



<sup>17</sup> [http://www.virtualcampuses.eu/index.php/Libya#Libya\\_education\\_policy](http://www.virtualcampuses.eu/index.php/Libya#Libya_education_policy)

<sup>18</sup> National Economic Strategy Report, 2006: 123.

The free education, according to Al-Hawat (2002 and 2003), has led to increasing enrolments at all levels of higher education and thus the number of institutions of higher education. The university (the University of Libya) was divided into two universities: the university of Tripoli and university of Benghazi which renamed later to the university of Al Fateh and university of Gar-Yunis. As in many other countries there has been an increasing government led emphasis upon the idea of a knowledge economy where educational qualification is seen as the key factor in determining a successful career. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP, 2009) in its Human Development Indicators (HDI) places adult literacy in Libya at about 86.8% and in its 2010 report it sees Libya as having high levels of human development, currently 53<sup>rd</sup> out of 169 countries (UNDP, 2010; Rauch, 2009). Although the UNDP has limited information about many quality of life indicators in Libya in placing it in the high development category it suggests that Libya has distinct social and economic advantages over its Maghreb neighbours, all of whom fall some way behind it: Tunisia is in 83<sup>rd</sup> place, Morocco in 114<sup>th</sup>, Egypt in 101<sup>st</sup> and Algeria 84<sup>th</sup> (UNDP, 2010). This has provided Libya with some of the required pool of human resources for its political, social, and economic development. It also reflects the important qualitative differences of states in the periphery and semi-periphery of the MOWS. The authoritarian populism of the revolutionary government generated material progress for Libyan's that was superior to that experienced elsewhere in the Maghreb.

Al-Nouri (1995) has however observed a conflict between traditional and modernistic forces affecting Libyan educational patterns, particularly between the state and Libyan traditional tribal culture. He believes that students and their families have an enormous interest in college education and the degrees accruing from it, as is happening in most of the Arab world (Al-Nouri, 1995). Yet the old and young within the family tend to perceive higher education goals and practical benefits quite differently. In particular, these differences seem to be prompted by normative and religious questions, such that medicine, engineering, pharmacy, and, to a lesser degree, natural sciences appear to be far more appreciated locally than humanities and liberal arts (Al-Nouri, 1995). This discrepancy, perhaps, might stem from the value-laden nature of the latter disciplines due to their closer linkage with peoples ideological traditions (Al-Nouri, 1995). The lack of intellectual openness in Libyan higher educational culture is quite marked when compared with that found in even more authoritarian regimes

such as Iran, for example. It is a familiar trend in the periphery and semi-periphery of the MOWS that the state should seek to control education and limit free speech and inquiry.

### **3.10 The Decision to Stop Teaching English Language in 1986**

By 1986 the revolutionary Libyan government had sought to build a number of alliances in the Arab world and then in Africa with a view to challenging the power of the Western states that dominated the core of the MOWS. This, in turn, saw a well-studied propaganda battle being waged by Western states against Libya of a kind that Said and Hitchens chronicle in their book *Blaming the Victim*. In supporting Third World independence movements from Iran to South Africa the Libyan government was also inviting attacks from the Western states as they sought to restore their authority over the MOWS. Thus Gaddafi became a ‘mad-dog’ in the Western media and a sponsor of terrorism rather than Third World independence movements (Said and Hitchens, 2001). Thus the continuing relationship between Libya and the states of the core was driven by a global geopolitical agenda and the desire of former colonial rulers to continue to control access to and the price of natural resources, among which oil continues to be the most important (Amin, 1978; Amin and Kenz, 2005; Ahmida, 2005). Although former colonial powers no longer rule directly they have a variety of mechanisms that enable them to co-opt elites in postcolonial countries: Funding and training of military and police forces; cultural ties with elites including educational ones in prestigious Western Universities and schools; diplomatic and financial support for pro-Western governments, punishment for those who are not; and increasingly the spread of what Leslie Sklair describes as a global cultural-ideological market place where ideas, images, symbols and meanings are overwhelmingly reflections of the interests of the key core states and in particular, the USA (Ahmida, 2005). Out of this emerges the Orientalist framework that Said describes in his work and which has its correlates in the idea of ‘Eurocentrism’ as articulated by a number of world-systems analysts (Amin, Frank, and Wallerstein, 1997). As Said makes clear it is the capacity to construct the historical stories that shape a peoples sense of who they are that is at the heart of the Orientalist project, and he describes how this power/knowledge basis is constructed over a historical period when Western colonial powers ruled their subaltern populations directly (Said, 1979). Western colonial powers believed and continue to believe that they have a firm and scientific understanding of the culture, language, historical evolution and capabilities of their former subjects. These colonies are unable to articulate their own views and therefore need to be guided by the West to evolve and develop into a civilized nation.

*“We know the civilization of Egypt better than we know the civilization of any other country. We know it further back; we know it more intimately; we know more about it. It goes far beyond the petty span of history of our race, which is lost in the prehistoric period time when the Egyptian civilisation had already passed prime” (Marx, cited in Said, 1978:33)*

The scientific credentials of Western knowledge gave its scholars the ability to provide the world with ‘legitimate’ accounts of the orient, its peoples and their way of life (Said, 1978). This Orientalist view has been supported by Gaddafi who was deeply influenced by the work of Fanon, the Algerian writer who was of great importance for the work of both Said and Wallerstein. Following Fanon, Gaddafi argued that the colonial powers tend to deprive people of their own social tools of understanding and analysis through their ability to impose their own knowledge, culture and languages. Colonial powers also barbarise the ‘Other’s’ (in Said’s sense of the term, the non-Western subaltern population) language, and believe that these “Third World countries” cannot understand or explain their own history in the objective way that Western Orientalist's can (Said 1978 & Morthialo, 1980). For example, according to Okolo, (2005), the English language as a representative of colonial languages, has reshaped word associations and their meaning in colonized countries, which in turn serves to validate the necessity for colonialism itself by placing the colonized at a lower stage in the level of human development. More specifically, *“the dictionary still lists words like bad-tempered, angry, horrible, dirty, malignant and so on as appropriate replacements for black and the black man as ‘an evil spirit’, ‘the evil one’, ‘the devil’”* (Okolo, 2005:86). Hence, this kind of representation embedded in colonial language has revealed an awareness of the extent to which colonial language distorted and *“continues to disjoin the African man from his reality”* (Okolo, 2005: 86). Language, then, is never neutral or simply an instrument for communication but carries with it also important cultural meanings and symbols that in the context of colonialism are inherently about power. Thus the colonial language is valorised as aesthetically and intellectually superior.

Chiswick (2000) states that most of the population groups of the African countries do not speak any of the main indigenous languages of their country, that “*the designation of country boundaries by the European colonial powers with little or no regard for ethnic or language groups, combined with the migration of indigenous ethnic groups, has resulted in linguistic heterogeneity within individual countries*” (Chiswick, 2000:349). When most countries gained independence they found they had to continue to use the colonial language for different reasons. Education cannot easily be changed over to local languages, because these languages have never been used for the construction of educational curriculum in different subject matters. As a consequence “*some of these countries who gained their independence from England either kept the English language as an official language or recognized its utility*” (Fishman, 2001:26). But, the situation in Libya regarding such foreign “colonial” languages was different. In fact, one of the Libyan revolutions goals was to reject these languages of colonialism, in favour of Arabic as the national and official language on the basis that language has a broader role to play in society than that of communication alone (St John, 2008, and Walsh, 2006). In 1980, Gaddafi expressed his great concern at the time of the ‘Africa Day’, when he stated that keeping the colonial languages in some of the African countries meant protecting the colonial interests in these countries. Gaddafi added that the usage of colonial languages in African countries could hinder nation-building and social progress in these societies as the role of language is a potentially unifying factor in nation-state building projects (Vandewalle, 2006; An-Bardi, cited in Morthialo, 1980). Thus not only did the Libyan government promote its own independence but tried directly to support that of other Third World countries, inviting the wrath of the Western states.

It was six years later that US planes bombed Tripoli as a military action after the Berlin attack on US troops was blamed upon the Libyan Government. Consequently, in the same year the (1986) the decision was made to stop learning foreign languages at all levels of the Libyan education system. The decision came as reaction to the attack of the US on Libya and was symbolic act of resistance against Western imperialism. This reaction towards foreign languages did not face any resistance by the Libyans then to the extent that they had burned all the books which related to those languages (especially English and French) in most of the Libyan universities, schools and public areas (Kramer, 1986). The US attack served to unite Libyans behind the government and against the Western states. According to Black’s report

in 2007<sup>19</sup> this situation continued until the mid-1990s where English language learning was to be resumed in a number of Libyan universities' scientific faculties for technical reasons (Black, 2007). It has only been since the rapprochement between Libya and the West under the Bush Presidency (in 2004) that English language learning has resumed in Libyan educational system. On this point Dr. Abughania, the director of the curricula of education research centre in Libya, said of this decision that:

*“English is considered as a second language in the Libyan education system. In 2005 English was implemented in basic education starting from grade 1 where the student can learn English for 5 years. During 2006 the number of years was reduced to 3 years in secondary education and there are 6 specializations in the secondary school which are: basic sciences; engineering; life sciences; economics; social sciences and language and communication. During 2005-2007 we had designed two English courses, one general course for all the specializations except the specialized English majors, and the second course for the specialised English majors. In 2008 we had designed 5 different courses for the non majors. We are using text books for every year and we have prepared CDs for audio-learning in every unit. The student has 4 lectures per week for the non majors and 19 lectures for the major student”<sup>20</sup>.*

One notable feature of Dr Abughania's response was the absence of any discussion of the ban on learning English. The subject itself, directed by the government, was striking as a subject in that many Libyans I interviewed were unable to discuss it. The reason for this is perhaps two-fold: First, at the time of the ban the decision was an understandable reaction to the US assault on Tripoli that left 45 soldiers and 15 civilians dead. In the wake of this most Libyans welcomed the ban as a sign of defiance against Western imperialism. Second, a significant section of Libya's educated classes were disappointed by the ban as they saw learning English as being increasingly important for Libyan citizens. The possibility of effectively

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<sup>19</sup> Ian Black report (2007), “After years when foreign language teaching was banned, Libyans are now queuing up to learn English”... Tuesday 10 April 2007, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/education/2007/apr/10/internationaleducationnews.tefl>

<sup>20</sup> An interview was made with Dr, Abughania in 25/03/2009.

opposing government policy was extremely limited and potentially a risky strategy to pursue. For many the decision came as a shock as reflected in the comments of the Libyan Higher Education Committee<sup>21</sup> members themselves who told me that:

*“At the time of that decision we used to have frequent meetings, but sadly at the time we were discussing the possibility of introducing English language from earlier stages, we were surprised by the decision to stop it completely”.*

Dr, Haney<sup>22</sup> explained that what happened was as a result of a suggestion at a public conference made by the Libyan educational minister to involve the educated people regarding the attack of the USA on Tripoli in the same year (1986). But, in a press conference in Tripoli 2008 regarding this issue, Mr. Ahmed Ibrahim<sup>23</sup> when he was asked about the decision and about the state of the education system in Libya, replied that it was very poor and old fashioned and he mentioned that he tried to turn that system into producing the productive educational outputs:

*“I succeeded in building a productive education system then, and I found that it’s important to teach our society the educational things that could help them to build their social identity and economic development where the technical skills’ learning was my target. Therefore, there was no need to learn skills like foreign languages at the time”.*

He added that:

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<sup>21</sup> Focus group discussion is made with the Libyan Higher Education Committee in 10/05/2009

<sup>22</sup> The leader of the Libyan Higher Education Committee and he is one of the focus group participations which was made in 22/4/2009.

<sup>23</sup> (The previous Libyan educational minister), the person who is considered in Libya as the decision maker of stop teaching English language in the Libyan education system

*“There are some who criticised my view but I found that to be unreasonable because I wasn’t the one who took the decision, it was taken by the higher general committee. Besides I dedicated my time into a scientific study together with a group of specialists from the United Nations institute to assess the importance of teaching English language in Libya. My conclusion was that we did need to learn English and eventually the study led to the re-introduction of English language into our education system. However, I am seeing all this criticism, but no one has mentioned what have I brought into this sector, as I was the one who was instrumental in establishing 19 universities in Libya which introduced different foreign languages. Yet, I have also approved the proposal of increasing the hours of teaching English language in the universities, Furthermore, I have prepared a team of (3500 members) educational experts to offer their time in setting up the national educational curriculums, which was described by educational expertise from the United Nation institute as the best of its type in the region”*

Whilst this was a governmental decision it also received support throughout the educational sector. For other sectors of higher education such as engineering and the natural sciences the decision to ban the learning of English language created technical problems that persist to this day. Dr. Osama,<sup>24</sup> as one of the Libyan higher education committee’s members, declared that

*“We should separate the stage of higher education from secondary education as the English language was never stopped from being taught in technical disciplines such as engineering and medical science. Hence, I believe that graduates in technical fields from Libyan universities mostly don’t face problems with English language”.*

Most Libyan university graduates who have been interviewed in 2009 confirmed their lack of English language skills. Indeed those from the human and social sciences faculties and who had specifically sought to re-train themselves in order to meet their academic and practical needs especially in terms of their research or their job opportunities. One case in point,

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<sup>24</sup> Focus group was made 22/4/2009 with the Libyan Higher Education Committee and Dr, Osama one of its participations

Nagwa<sup>25</sup> is one of the Libyan postgraduate students at al-Fateh University who has stated that:

*“Though students in technical fields such as engineering have got some of the basic knowledge of English language, still the case is different with us in human/social sciences, where we don’t have the same experience. Considering the fact that we have not studied any foreign languages till recent times, as postgraduate students we are now required to acquire the English language skills at this very late stage in order to finish our studies. However, the gap is still greater for us in the human/social sciences, whereas, it is easier for the technical sciences students who are at least able to search on the internet for relevant information”.*

On this issue I returned to question the Director of the Curricula of Education Research centre in Libya and asked specifically about the 1986 decision. Strikingly again he tried to avoid the subject by saying that the decision was only for a short time (two years). Further probing revealed that:

*“I think every phase has its philosophy and circumstances. As in 1986 there were political circumstances. Libya is now opening itself to the world, either the African or European world. Why do you all consider stopping teaching English language as an unjust reaction? Is the Arabic language being taught in Britain? Nowadays, the Arabic language has become important even in Europe and America especially after the events of 9/11, because they have curiosity about Arabs and Islam. Even though I have mentioned earlier that English language is a tool of communication and sciences, we are now adopting at school level the teaching of African languages such as Hausa and Swahili, to facilitate communication with the whole world”*

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<sup>25</sup> Focus group method was made with the postgraduate female students at Al-Fateh University in 21/04 2009.

This is the central dilemma of this thesis: to what extent can Libya improve its social and economic position in the MOWS by promoting the acquisition of English language? What are the potential risks and benefits of pursuing such a developmental strategy? Shaheena,<sup>26</sup> as one of the British council members in Libya, believes that such an idea of the dominance of the colonial language on most of their colonies does not exist anymore. For example, regarding the quality of Libyan education and the importance of the English language learning in Libya she said that:

*“Libyan curriculums need to be re-evaluated, and there has to be consultation. I am not saying that British curriculum would be beneficial in Libya, but there needs to be an examination of bi-lingual schools, as Libya and other North African countries are moving away from French and other languages, because English is not any more a colonial language, and all international businesses and academic studies are conducted in English language.”*

Shaheena adopted a pragmatic view in response to these issues which says that in a globalised economy it is increasingly difficult for countries such as Libya to integrate with businesses without a strong commitment to the use of the English language as it is the language of global trade and business. Interestingly, since 2004 this perspective is largely being accepted among Libyans, especially amongst the educated class (Otman and Karlberg, 2007). For instance, regarding the decision to stop teaching English language in Libyan education sector for 18 years, Manal<sup>27</sup> was one who experienced this decision at Al-Fateh University and she stated that:

*“I believe that it was a big mistake to stop teaching foreign languages, especially English. However, I consider that decision was an understandable one at the time as it came in political situation where it was attached to our national identity. Moreover, I*

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<sup>26</sup> In 21/4/2009 an interview was made with Shaheena as one of the main members in the British Council in Libya.

<sup>27</sup> Manal is a postgraduate student and teacher assistance at the Language centre at Al- Fateh University in Libya and was participating in the focus group that made in 21/4/ 2009.

*would have been prouder if all other Arab countries followed the same action, then the outside world would have had to learn Arabic, because they needed to deal with us, but today reality says that English is the language of science and technology, hence, we have to accept this fact”.*

Manal considered that at the time the decision was a reasonable response by the Libyan government where English was seen as one of the neo-colonialism's forms (a cultural attack). In truth, the commitment in Libya to the teaching and learning of the languages of the colonial powers has been uneven since the September 1st Revolution. The dilemma facing Libya and other former colonies is described by Okolo (2005) who notes that Africa has been caught on the wrong side of the colonial language, because Africa cannot make meaningful progress in its spiritual, material civilization and socio-cultural life in its own languages, it must use the languages of its colonial rulers. Such a situation where the *“linguistic imbalances that demean the black man must be reviewed and righted”* (Okolo, 2005:03) remains of deep importance for the future of African peoples.

This point about a new pragmatic view of language learning amongst former colonial countries is also taken up by Emmanuel Kwofie (1972) (cited in Okolo, 2005:15) who notes that *“the adoption of English and French as official national languages in West Africa have moved them from their old status as an imposed ‘foreign’ language to a new status as a second language”*. He further predicts that *“both languages have great chances of becoming mother tongues, especially since educated opinion considers it advantageous for children to use the official language in family life even to the exclusion of indigenous languages”* (Kwofie, 1972 cited in Okolo, 2005:15). To demonstrate this he says that *“in the Oxford Companion of the English language (1996), puts the contemporary situation of English as the official language of 16 African countries”* (ibid, 1972 cited in Okolo, 2005: 16). Moreover, Hill stated that India has fourteen official languages, with Hindi scheduled to become the national language. Yet English, the language of India’s former colonial masters, is still the most widely used in official communication (Hill, 1969). The British colonial regime laid the foundation of higher education in India through establishing universities and colleges so that the English language became the general means of communication between staff and students. More specifically, Alan and Shahid (2007:17) stated that *“the most dynamic export sector in India is information technology (IT) enabled services for global companies*

*including call centers and software application, design, and maintenance. Such activities require qualified English-speaking labor and India has an abundant low-cost supply”*. As Wallerstein notes (2006) the English language being an alternate tongue in India does not determine that economic development will be evenly spread amongst the population. On the contrary, the distribution of wealth remains highly unequal and a political issue, not one of language skills. While Alan and Shahid (2007:17) showed that India along with China recently have been concentrating significant resources into the learning of English language skills as a tool for attracting foreign (mainly from the Core states) investment for economic growth and poverty reduction.

Although some scholars argue that neo-liberal economic globalization creates further poverty (Chossudovsky, 2005; Wilkin, 1996), China has dealt with this process by using ELA (ELA) as a means of training a section of its population to take part in a global capitalist economy whilst retaining strong state control over the economy and development (Friedman, 1999). For the Chinese government globalisation heightened the problems for economic growth generated by a lack of access to information (primarily in English) along with the lack of educated and skilled people who could take advantage of new technological developments. In this context of Chinese and Indian resent economic development, Alan and Shahid (2007:33-34) have revealed that:

*“The current data suggest that those two countries are maintaining their positions in skill-intensive components and that the trend for skill intensity is on the rise. Thus, preparedness would require a focus on human capital, facilities for high-tech production, and a welcoming attitude toward FDI, even from China. Similar comparisons between China and Latin America suggest that, so far, the direct “threat” from China is muted. This situation may not persist, however, unless Latin Americans invest heavily in the skills and technological capability of firms. They might draw lessons from Korea or Taiwan (China), which are less likely to be hurt by Chinese and Indian competition because they are far enough ahead in technology and human resources—and are making sustained efforts to stay ahead”*.

Yet, in contrast to the perspective of the Chinese government the negative side of globalisation is presented by Barber (1995 cited in Friedman, 1999) who stated that:

*“Globalisation forces threaten to undermine centuries of tradition, local autonomy, and cultural integrity. The internet, for example, is overwhelmingly an English language medium, and those who want to participate fully with all it has to offer had best read English (Barber, 1995). In fact, a high level government panel recently recommended that Japan consider adopting English as an official language in the future (English 'imperialism,' 2000). Moreover, globalization establishes a global economic system in which those with the most capital are best able to capitalize on the global market, setting up what Friedman calls a "winner take all" system (1999, p. 245). Although technology levels the playing field, it does nothing to diminish the size of the competitors. The US, for example, overwhelmingly benefits from the rise of information technology, as it is the US that dominates almost all commercial sites and many, if not most, of the most profitable technology manufacturers. In addition, Westerners have clear advantages in telecommunications, as illustrated by the fact that there are more internet connections in Manhattan than in the entire African continent (World Bank statement on technology, 2000). The same access to information made possible by the internet also empowers those with devious ends, such as international terrorism or even garden variety hackers, with greater powers at their disposal to exploit or attack others.”*

Clearly some governments and peoples still view globalisation as a threat to their culture, religion and national traditions and languages (Beyer, 1994). In the next two chapters the attention will turn more specifically to the idea of language as a factor of human capital and the implications of the forces of global economic system on Libya and its governmental strategies.

A further observation has been made by Amin (1978) who noted that after most of the Arab countries gained their independence, the Arabic language became the most important symbol for all Arab countries. Such a language potentially illustrated the Pan-Arabic nationalism of

the Islamic and Arabic nation. Amin argued that over time since independence Arab countries have become different, and they have lost the unifying social beliefs that were prevalent in the post-independence period. He added that all the Arab countries have suffered the same circumstances of European imperialism during this period. Even though they speak the same language, live with the same culture and history, they are Arab nations and they keep their countries as their nationality. Pan-Arab national unity only appears now in exceptional cases such as justice for the Palestinians (Amin, 1978). Some of the Arabic and African countries still retain not just the languages of the colonialism, but even more the strategies of colonialism, such as dependency in economical and educational sectors. For example, in Algeria:

*“The Algerian state inherited the strategic position which France had taken over during the years preceding independence. The French state had even controlled the oil sector, which it had developed as a means of reinforcing its autonomy vis-à-vis the American companies which dominated the Cartel” (Amin, 1978: 77).*

Amin’s argument that although Algeria is one of the biggest Arab oil producers worldwide which supposedly established Algeria as one of the most powerful post-colonial countries still relies on the foreign colonial strategies and languages such as French and English language in its oil sector and French in its cultural/educational sector. This view has been supported by Mr. Tawfik<sup>28</sup> who is one of the training department members at the Libyan Oil National Corporation (LNOC) who noticed the lack of the Arabic in Algeria while the colonial French language is the language of communication among the nationals. He said:

*“From my experience in this institution I enjoyed many job trips to other Arab countries. For example, in Algeria I had some language communication problems. Although people I met were working in Government ministries their language was unclear. Despite being Algerian one of the ministers hoped I could speak French in order to communicate more easily. The problem here is the impact of French*

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<sup>28</sup> Focus group method was made in 22/4/2009, with the National Oil Corporation in Libya.

*colonialism whose influence on Algerian culture and educational systems has been immense.’’*

Regarding the oil industry in the region of Africa, Algeria is not the only country that still follows the American strategies in terms of this field. In a discussion with the training department members at the Libyan National Oil Corporation (LNOC) in 2009 in Libya Mr. Haney<sup>29</sup> stated that:

*“The oil sector is an industry that is strongly connected to America, because it is mostly an American industry. Therefore, any technical or informational changes or improvements to this field will be made by America even though we are producers of the raw material. On the other hand, in other sectors Libya is effected by the globalization and introducing the new information technologies which rely on ELA”.*

Another explanation was given by Mr. Jamal<sup>30</sup> when he said that:

*“In the oil exploration department, we use American made machines with all parts written in English language, and even machines made in Russia come with English writings. That is why we give great attention to the English language more than other languages. Also, in the import and export department we have strict schedules that written in English to follow the international standards which if we did not go behind schedule we will be charged. Therefore, it is vital for our staff at custom department in our institution to acquire good level of English language”.*

He continued to touch another vital point regarding the Libyan university graduates when he said that:

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<sup>29</sup> Focus group method was made in 22/4/2009, with the Oil National Corporation in Libya.

<sup>30</sup> Focus group method was made in 22/4/2009, with the Oil National Corporation in Libya

*“In the oil sector we don’t require higher educational levels as it might be the case in research centers or academic fields at universities. However, it is only important for graduates to be specialized and we provide them with training and improvement of skills they would need to do their jobs. Thus, we only focus on the practical side of those graduates rather than the academic side. Hence the key thing we need is that they can use the English language as it is the language of the oil sector, which is a largely American dominated industry. They need those skills to enable us to communicate effectively with the outside world”.*

These views expressed by members of the important LNOC raise a vital point; to integrate into the global economy it is crucial for Libyans to learn English (Coleman, 2004), particularly when one considers the dominance of the hydrocarbon industry in Libyan society, and that it is, as was made clear, an American dominated industry. As a consequence Libya, like far more powerful countries in the semi-periphery such as China and Russia, are dependent in part for their economic and social development upon acquiring English language skills. This point is supported by Dr, Suliman<sup>31</sup> as one of the Libyan higher education committee where he stated that:

*“There is no doubt that we need English language especially in technical academic fields such as: engineering and geology. Also, in some cases we receive books which are poorly translated from English to Arabic language. Thus, it is better to discover the original copy which was written in the English language in order to understand subjects correctly. Therefore, it is important for students to have a good knowledge of English language during their studies, so they can improve their knowledge in their fields and thus meet the requirements of job market,”*

One could say that Libyan society has achieved a high protection of its culture and its language in contrast to the other North African countries such as Algeria, but most Libyans

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<sup>31</sup> Focus group method is made in 10/5/2009, with the Libyan Higher Education Committee

wish today that they could speak or deal with the English language for different economic and educational reasons. Since Libya has re-engaged with the West in 2004, the foreign investments in Libya have rapidly increased and consequently, Libyan university graduates expect to capture their job opportunities with high paid careers, yet their lack of such skill (English) not only affects their opportunities both within the Libyan job market and in the wider global economic system (Otman and Karlberg, 2007). In response to this the Libyan government has sought to develop its human capital of which English language skills are regarded as perhaps the most important.

### **3.11 Conclusion**

This chapter has discussed the history of languages in Libya during and since colonialism. It showed the significance of language as a symbol of the nations' identity and continuing issues that it raises with regard to Libya's relations with the West and its integration in the MOWS. Libya is a Muslim country and the language of the Koran is Arabic, this persuaded Libya and other Arabic countries to maintain the Arabic language as the main and official language. Although, most of the foreign colonial rulers tried hard to impose their own languages, particularly through the education system, Libya was one of the few states who successfully resisted those languages of colonialism. Libya kept its own language. Echoing Fanon, Gaddafi further asserted that the independence of a country is related to the independence of its language, in particular the language and knowledge of colonialism, a view about which he now appears to have changed his mind. The pragmatic view that is emerging in Libya now is that learning languages allows people to become knowledgeable and discover what's going on around them worldwide. In short it is an instrumental and pragmatic view of language. At the same time the view also persists in Libya that language is intrinsically related to colonialism and the themes of orientalism and identity that Fanon and Said raise, that it is not merely a tool for development. The thesis will show that these two views continue to exist side by side in contemporary Libya.

In theoretical terms this chapter has illustrated the way in which language has, in fact, always been at the centre of debates about colonialism and neo-colonialism, as set out in the work of Fanon, Said and Wallerstein. In particular the relationship between language and identity has

been seen as a site of social struggle for those nations looking to cast off the legacy of colonial rule. Although Libya has a long history of resisting colonial languages, to the point of ending the learning of English under the Gaddafi regime, this is now changing in a dramatic fashion, largely driven by the government's embrace of neo-liberal economic policies. The consequences of this for Libyan national identity are controversial as my interviews have indicated. But it seems that there is right now to be no retreat for such a policy.

## **Chapter4: Human Capital and Libyan Development: English Language Skills in the Modern Orientalist World-System**

### **4.1 Introduction**

The concept of human capital is broad and is an important one in current debates about development (Balasubramanyam and Balasubramanyam, 2010; Galor and Moa, 2004; Hendricks, 2002; Eicher, 2001). Equally the more recent concept of social capital has also emerged in both policy discourse and academic literature as a way of describing factors of individual development (Dasgupta & Serageldin, 2001; Fine, 2001). Hence, this chapter will explore the concept of human capital and its importance for ideas of development in the Libyan government's new vision strategy. It will proceed by examining the relationship between human capital and social capital and their implications for ideas of social development. Both of these terms have emerged as part of the so-called Post-Washington consensus which has seen global developmental policies allowing more sensitivity to social needs and the recognition of market failure, in theory at least (Fine, 2002; Fine, Lapavitsas and Pincus, 2001). In addition, it shows the ways in which these ideas have profound implications for understanding the recent government developmental strategies in Libya. This, in turn, raises a fundamental question for the Libyan government. Simply put: to what extent is the promotion of human capital useful as a way of achieving the developmental goals of its new vision programme? Second, to what extent is human capital part of an Orientalist discourse that helps to structure the MOWS? As the chapter will also illustrate, the concept of human capital, like that of social capital, is one that can best be understood as situated into the Orientalist analysis of Said and Fanon, as well as the structural analysis of world-systems analysis (Wallerstein, 2010). If one accepts that human capital is a Eurocentric concept that reflects the dominant economic ideology of the core states in the MOWS, to what extent can it still enable Libya to develop its economy and society? Or in other words, to what extent do the discourses and the practices that go with it both constrain and enable Libyan institutions and actors to pursue and achieve their developmental goals? Thus this chapter develops the theoretical concern found in MOWS with the relationship between language, power and identity.

In order to examine this and develop the argument, the chapter will look at examples including the experiences and perceptions of Libyan postgraduate students regarding ELA. Can the pragmatic view of language (and by extension of theories and concepts) as a tool or instrument for social change, as advocated by numerous interviewees in the previous chapter; provide a way for Libyans to use their English language skills to their advantage in the MOWS? The alternative scenario that the thesis explores in the final chapter is that in fact this represents a significant problem for Libya in terms of its development. As so many developing countries are now promoting ELA, including many who are well ahead of Libya in this goal, will the ability to speak English lose its exclusive value? In short, will any advantage to be gained by this or will it be lost in the great rush of people in the periphery and semi-periphery, not to mention parts of the core, to acquire the same skills? As we will see my conclusion is that this is not necessarily the case for Libya because it has the crucial strategic advantage of its vast oil resources. As a rentier state it has at least the potential to use those resources for wider social ends. To some extent it has done this already, hence Libya's relatively good ranking in the UN Human Development Report (HDR) quality of life tables. But it has attained this without fundamentally altering its economy, leaving it dependent on a single, though vast, resource. To what extent might Libya be able to strategically situate itself in the MOWS in a way that could benefit its general social development?

#### **4.2 What is meant by Human Capital?**

In order to clarify what is meant by this term we need to begin by addressing the question of capital itself. If capital is the total amount of money and resources combined are people one of those resources or do they simply make use of those resources? In order to answer this question we need to consider the origins of the concept of human capital as found in the works of Adam Smith, John Stuart Mill and Alfred Marshall before subsequently being taken up by, amongst others, Mark Blaug and Gary Becker. It has now become firmly established as a part of the developmental literature of the International Financial Institutions (IFIs) including the World Bank, the IMF and the Organization for Economic Co-Operation and Development (OECD) (Fine and Milonakis, 2008; Smith, 1994; Sweetland, 1996 & OECD, 2007).

Adam Smith (Smith, 1994 edition) emphasised that the wealth of nations lay in both the quantity and the quality of its labour inputs where the abilities of the educated and skilled individuals are a primary factor in the generation of a society's wealth and development. As Smith observed, the early approaches to development stressed not the role of people and Free Trade but the necessity of having a protected market driven by modern machinery (Smith, 1776 – 1994 edition; Sweetland, 1996). Up until the 18th century many economists stressed the importance of physical capital (the quantity) in order to complete any production operation, where money, factory and machines were placed alongside land and workers as the main factors of production (OECD, 2007). Smith showed how workers or labourers were physically needed to complete the production operation, thus they had a quantitative value in the production process. As a consequence it did not matter if they had the knowledge/experience (the qualitative values) of what they were doing. Smith was aware of the possibilities for production that could be generated by joining the individual abilities of workers in a division of labour when he stated that “*economic activity was fuelled not by workers as a collective mass but by the acquired and useful abilities of all the inhabitants or members of the society*” (Smith, 1776, cited in OECD, 2007:28). Smith then suggested that individual abilities were to be seen as a kind of (human) capital and therefore a factor of production and a means to generate social and economic development for any society (OECD, 2007: 28).

Building upon Smith's ideas Mill (1848) suggested these abilities were inherently fixed in the person and could not be counted as wealth as such. Mill stated that human abilities acted “*as economic utilities - means to wealth*” in society. What, then, is Mill saying at this point? Is he indicating that human abilities emerge through the use of capital's resources, or that they are in fact one of capital's resources? It appears to be both, a quantitative and qualitative view. Mill sought to build an argument about the importance of human capital as a qualitative factor of production that could be developed and refined. However, Mill moved further than Adam Smith in emphasising the role that governments can play in developing human capital (Mill, 1848 – 1988 edition; Sweetland, 1996; Fine and Milonakis, 2005). Governments can affect people and the development of their latent abilities through the delivery of public goods including, in particular and importantly for human capital, by providing services such as schooling and health-care. Unlike Smith writing in the C18, by the time that Mill wrote his

works on political economy the limitations of the free market had been cruelly exposed in a British society riven with great wealth and massive poverty and squalor (Sweetland, 1996). The State, for Mill, had to assume a role in alleviating this and transforming the lives of working class people. In contemporary terms this idea of Mill's remains powerful and has been developed by Appleton and Francis (1998:23) in a study examining human capital and economic development in Africa they concluded that:

*"The poor health and education of Africa's workers is one factor explaining its low per capita income. Government investment in the social sectors is likely to be economically productive and indeed is likely to bring more direct benefits to the people than many other forms of government expenditure. Government investment in both education and health may be particularly important as there are indirect benefits of such investment which individuals may not allow for in their investment decisions".*

In this context governmental strategies towards education and health (the two central factors of human capital) are a crucial aspect of any society's social and economic development. The claim being made is that poverty is directly linked to lack of education, a pervasive theme in contemporary developmental literature and policy (Appleton and Francis, 1998). Thus the World Bank says, 'the creation of human capital is the creation and distribution of new wealth' (World Bank, 1995: 27). These ideas have become a common-sense for most governments and IFIs, as well as for those who rely upon such public services. For example, with regard to the Libyan government's strategies towards education, Hakem<sup>32</sup>, a postgraduate student at Al-Fateh University in Tripoli, has reiterated this point:

*"I believe that the Libyan government should consider investing in its human resources by improving the quality of teaching and learning many different skills, as the whole world is turning to such investment in skills, as well as developing our infrastructure".*

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<sup>32</sup> This statement has obtained by Hakem via using focus group method with the Libyan male postgraduate students at Al-Fateh University in 2009.

Indeed, governmental strategies of investment in human capital are increasingly seen as being crucial in social development. For instance, China has developed its strategies towards human resources investment and has taken the education sector as being the key for its industrial development (Hu, 2006). Such strategies view people as human capital and the development of these qualities are fundamental to general social development.

This view raises the question that if human capital is solely for the purpose of increasing society's wealth, national income and economic development, what are the benefits to the people themselves? In an attempt to respond to this concern Jacob Mincer (1958) argued that the human abilities developed in training programmes directly affect someone's personal income. Blaug (1976) endorsed this by arguing that the concept of human capital lends support to the idea that the more money people spend on them to become skilled and educated, the more they will benefit in terms of their career prospects. For people to achieve their optimum financial and social returns they need to invest in themselves first (Blaug, 1976). Becker in support of that stated "probably the most impressive piece of evidence is that more highly educated and skilled persons almost always tend to earn more than others" (Becker, 1964). This viewpoint, problematic for many reasons as Fine (2001, and also Fine and Milonakis, 2008) suggests, has nonetheless become something of an orthodox view in the International Financial Institutions (IFI). In the case of Libya some Libyan postgraduate students have turned towards re-training themselves and acquiring more skills so that they can take advantage of the recent Libyan job market activities, often at great personal expense. Thus this ability to top-up skills through private income adds to the stratification in Libyan society between those who can afford it and those who cannot. Hence the key strategic question is the extent to which the development of human capital is primarily a task for government rather than the individual, or where the balance lies between the two. In short, if the additional education, training programmes and skills would improve the development of human capital: how should this be paid for? The prevailing developmental orthodoxy of recent decades has been neo-liberalism as embedded in the so-called 'Washington and Post-Washington Consensus'. Ahrens indicated that "*The Washington Consensus type of policies emphasized essential policy measures in an era of transition (such as stabilization and liberalization), but they neglected institution building (except for private property rights).*"

*However, especially the failure of IMF-led transition programs in countries such as Russia revealed that liberalization-cum-privatization approaches did not automatically bring about efficient and sustainable market structures”* (Ahrens, 2006:13). This has prioritised the market and in particular the related policies of privatisation, liberalisation and deregulation of the economy in order to spur investment, risk and entrepreneurial activity (Ahrens, 2006). This has been superseded by the Post-Washington consensus which in theory places emphasis upon the idea of market failures and the need for the state to do more in terms of providing for basic needs. In practice, Aybar and Lapavitsas suggest, there is little substantive difference between the two in that they both accept liberal ideas as their theoretical basis (Aybar and Lapavitsas, 2001). The problem for countries such as Libya is that such an approach potentially leaves them open to the financial and corporate power of the states in the core who whilst happy to take over local industries as we have seen in, for example, former Eastern Europe, have no interest in investing in the development of local human capital. Indeed, a feature of contemporary neoliberal capitalism is that a new transnational managerial class (as Sklair suggests) has emerged and this managerial strata tend to be cosmopolitan and mobile and largely from the core states. Rather than corporations seeking to employ local graduates as managers they are happy to draw upon managers from the core who view living in foreign countries as part of their career development, rather as colonial administrators of old (Sklair, 2000). As a consequence the Libyan government, like others in a similar situation, has to take responsibility for the development of its human capital if the global economy and its potential benefits are not passing them by. Hence its current strategy of promoting the development and refinement of its human capital by investing in education and global English language acquisition.

This ideological view has, as Fine observes, become a global common-sense in terms of development policies (Fine: 2001). Even in a closed society like that of Libya this common-sense can be found amongst the population. For example, (7) focus groups conducted with the Libyan postgraduate students and the Libyan employees in 2009 mostly agreed with the argument that there is a strong relationship between the additional educational and skills acquisition and the chances of securing better job opportunities with higher incomes. Libyan students certainly believe that this is the case. This view supports Mincer (1958) who stressed that *“as more skill and experience are acquired with the passage of time, earnings rise”* (Mincer, 1958:287 cited in Sweetland, 1993:345). But can Mincer’s claim be generalised

across time and space of the MOWS as he believes? A central assumption behind human capital and development is that indeed it can (Fine and Milonakis, 2008). However, these kind of ahistoric models of development are problematic for reasons that have long been exposed by world-systems analysis, failing as they do to recognise the historical development of the MOWS and the power relations that have and continue to structure and reinforce the inequality that is a stark feature of the world-system (Wallerstein, 2006; Janelle, D, Warf, B, and Hansen, K, 2004). As Janelle, D, Warf, B, and Hansen, K (2004) argue “*today, the world-system is enormously unequal. Despite (or, world-system theorists argue, because of) several centuries of worldwide economic integration and trade, global inequalities are stark and continue to worsen*” (Janelle, D, Warf, B, and Hansen, K, 2004:11). By contrast, the concept of human capital comes from a modern liberal tradition that eschews history in favour of mathematical models that pay no heed to power, history and the nature of actually existing societies with all of their social divisions (Fine, 2001).

So can Libya develop as a state and society by embracing such models of economic progress? For Libya to take advantage of its opening to the global economy it will need to be able to link its investment in human capital to the resources secured from its oil revenues with a view to diversifying the economy unless it simply repeats earlier patterns of dependent development (OECD, 2007). The most important skills for Libyan Postgraduates tend to be the most generalisable ones, those that connect several different industrial areas, namely: IT; and the main foreign languages, particularly English. This helps to explain why the Libyan postgraduate students are increasingly motivated to obtain English language skills as they are the skill that all sectors of the Libyan economy most require whether from graduates or employees today. A case in point is Sami<sup>33</sup>, an employee working at the Libyan Foreign Bank (LFB), who stated that:

*“In this institution (LFB) there are some employees whose positions have improved and reached the highest levels only due to their English language skills, even for those who lack the necessary technical or administrative skills to do the job. Moreover, because the Libyan foreign bank is an international institution English*

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<sup>33</sup> Sami is one of the focus group participants that made in 2009 at the Libya Foreign Bank.

*language is the language of global business, whether we are dealing with English, Chinese or German investors”*

In similar manner Akrem<sup>34</sup>, a Libyan postgraduate students at the Higher Academic Studies Janzur Tripoli, has confirmed that:

*“I am certain that if my ability in English language was good enough, I would have been employed at one of the biggest companies in Libya, with a very high salary.”*

These two examples show that there is a perception amongst the Libyan postgraduate community that it does not always depend simply on the quantity of skills that people have if they are to succeed in the job market. Instead it is about the type and quality of skills that they have. This, then, raises the central question that will be addressed in subsequent chapters: to what extent does the evidence support the perception that an increase in an individual’s human capital (in particular, their acquisition of English language skills) will indeed enhance their chance of securing both (a) a job and (b) a better paid job.

On the other hand, spending on education, training and health care is quite a challenge for many people and countries, even in a relatively wealthy country such as Libya, which makes it difficult for individuals to find the money that they need to invest in their human capital development. For most African countries it is difficult to meet even the most basic needs of their citizens. According to the OECD (2007) most developing societies could not update their human capital skills without considerable help from their government and the international community in the form of aid and grants, reflecting the ideology of the Post-Washington consensus (Fine and Milonakis, 2008). Although many countries provide free primary and secondary education for their children, at the tertiary level it is common for students to have to share the cost of their education on the assumption that by obtaining a high degree they will gain a high income job enabling them to pay off any debt incurred along the way (OECD, 2007). This is where the dilemma over investment in human capital arises. The argument in favour of investing in it only holds if the evidence does indeed

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<sup>34</sup> Focus group was made with Akrem and other postgraduate students at the Academy of graduate studies in 17/04/2009 in Janzur-Tripoli

support the argument that it leads to better paid jobs. If it does not it merely incurs another level of debt on young people who are in all likelihood living in countries that already have high debt levels. We will turn to this issue in the final chapter of the thesis.

Since Libya is considered the wealthiest country in the region of North Africa because of its natural resources, mainly oil, it has adopted this policy of free education. This policy is not only at the first stages of primary and secondary schooling but, also at the tertiary stage. Additionally, the issues of education and health care have been adopted by the Libyan government as main concerns since Libya obtained its formal independence from neo-colonial rule in 1969. However, it is only recently that Libya has committed itself to using these resources as a means of pursuing a strategy of investment in its human resources. In order to support this point Hanan,<sup>35</sup> a postgraduate student at Al-Fateh University, said that:

*“Since the late nineties the Libyan government has been greatly preoccupied with how to invest in its human capital. For example, English language is the skill mostly taught in Libya to both students and labourers, even in small factories.”<sup>36</sup>*

Postgraduate students in Libya have recently benefitted from the fact that the Libyan government has invested more than ever in its human resources. These training programmes and centres across the country confirm the direction of government strategy and policy: to invest in Libyan human capital. More specifically, in 2009, the Minister of the Libyan Educational Curriculum<sup>37</sup> said of these policies that *“nowadays I personally believe it is the investment in our human resources (capital) that is the best investment for us. In other words, we should not be totally reliant on investing in the oil sector only.”*

An issue that arises here for the Libyan government is exactly how to measure the impact of human capital on the Libyan economy and by extension, society. The OECD (2007) has touched upon this vital point of how countries could evaluate or measure their human capital

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<sup>35</sup> Hanan is working at the Language Centre in Al-Fateh University and she's one of who participated in focus group method that made in 2009.

<sup>36</sup> This statement was obtained from a focus group with the Libyan female postgraduate students at Al-Fateh University in 2009.

<sup>37</sup> Individual interview method was used with the Libyan educational curriculum Minister in 2009.

for a productive participation in society and its development. Fisher (1906) believed that human capital could be measured in the same way that is traditionally used for the measurement of capital in the form of machinery. This is unpersuasive, however, because the measurement of human capital is quite different because we are evaluating people's individual abilities which will vary significantly from one to the other. The capacity of machines is uniform in a way that those of people cannot be. The measurement of human capital depends on the skills and qualifications that they have and their performance in the job market. Further, an important factor is the way in which people's human capital combines as part of the production process. An economy is the result of complex social interactions through a division of labour and the way in which people combine their efforts to produce the outputs that they do is best seen as an emergent property of their interaction and not something that can be abstracted, quantified and individualised. As Fine and others note, human capital is not open to any serious measurement and remains, at best, an opaque concept (Fine and Rose, 2001).

Having said that the OECD also sees that measurement of human capital is problematic for any government (OECD, 2007). The OECD has illustrated that for a country to measure its human capital would depend on factors such as: the type of qualifications the students have; or the length of time the students have spent in education, their capacity to exercise these skills consistently, etc. However, the OECD explained that even with this highly individualised information it would not give clear figures as to how to measure actual human capital abilities. Human capabilities and skills are not simply generated in the classroom and cannot simply be measured by the certificates a person accrues. Moreover, the OECD pointed out that the amount of time devoted to learning varied from school to school. Further, the effort required to obtain a diploma of national educational will also vary from country to country and from college to college within countries, even where nominal national standards operate.

The measurement of human capital, then, presents grave logistical problems for any institution. And yet the dominant neo-liberal ideology in the MOWS asserts that it is crucial for governments that they can do just this if they are to gauge the efficiency of their investments. Human capital could be measured by possibly examining the skills, knowledge,

abilities or performance in the job market of individuals. This method faces two problems: First, to measure human capital individually by using some interviews or surveys across all the country would take too much time and resources. In addition, such an approach would not be able to incorporate productive but non-academic skills easily; second, there are many abilities to be measured apart from knowledge in calculating levels of human capital. Factors such as gender, personality and health might all affect the productivity of human capital (OECD, 2007).

In the past, human capital was seen as a resource which was based on people and machines performing a function. In more recent times, human capital has been seen to possess not only economic value but also social value. This raises the question about what is this social value, and the relationship between social values expressed as ‘social capital’. In order to answer these questions the next section discusses the relationship between human capital and social capital.

### **4.3 The Relationship between Human Capital and Social Capital**

#### **4.3.1 The Measurement**

In recent times most mainstream economists, following criticism of the Washington Consensus and its mono-focus upon the free and potentially perfect market, have broadened their frame of reference by linking economic growth to the ideas of social capital. In so doing it is claimed that these economists are taking the social seriously, although many critics have argued that the opposite is the case for reasons which I will set out. Importantly social capital follows on from the idea of human capital which has much older roots in Liberal political economy as shown already. The argument that has developed, broadly, is that development requires investment in both human and social capital (OECD, 2007). These alleged benefits could play a crucial role in a society’s economic activities and thus one could measure human capital by measuring the improvement in these activities’. Interestingly, some of these social values which are linked with human capital are also some of the main aspects of social capital. Does this mean, therefore, that social capital can also be subject to the same measurements and problems of measurement as human capital? From the point of view of the MOWS social capital, like human capital, is part of the power/knowledge framework of the

world-system, a body of thought that has claimed scientific and therefore unchallengeable status as the only way in which an economy and society can be organised if there is to be progress that can be measured objectively. Unsurprisingly the economic and developmental theory that has become the global norm for the IFIs and development agencies is the product of the centres of knowledge and education of the core states of the MOWS, rendering it a form of knowledge that serves the interests of these states and corporations of the core. Even countries in the semi-periphery that are powerful such as the CRIB group still embrace aspects of this ideology, while reserving the right to use the state as a powerful force for social change. Equally the core is currently applying many of these policies to its own populations in order to resolve a global financial crisis caused, ironically, by pursuing the very same policies (Hudson, 2011).

From the point of view of the OECD, prospective social capital is harder to measure in contrast to human capital because, “*social capital is seen as deriving from a number of sources - networks, norms, values and understandings*” (Fukuyama, 1999, Fine, 2001, and OECD, 2007:116). A measurement to cover all these factors would be more difficult to measure than even those of human capital. The former all depend on people’s subjective feelings about things which vary over time. Hence, although both are difficult to measure, human capital is seen by its proponents as possessing objective properties that are more measurable than the more elusive emotions, perceptions and subjective aspects of social capital.

#### **4.3.2 Values and Utilities**

With regard to human capital there are two important and related elements: first, the levels of education and health care for people (individuals/groups); second, how to generate these qualities to produce wealth. By these two elements one could achieve what is called a single entity and maximizing utility for individuals. This means, in theory, an increase in individual income and by extension an increase in national income. That at least, is the simple model that human capital posits as part of a development strategy as noted in Mincer’s comments earlier in the chapter. By contrast, social capital offers a variety of different relational factors as being at the centre of social development. Coleman states that “*social capital is different in*

*contrast to other [forms of] capital in that social capital inheres in the structure of relations between actors and among actors”* (Coleman, 1988). As a relational concept it is more difficult to put forward a model of social capital that lends itself towards individual measurement. In short, one’s social capital is embedded in social networks and is not a discrete quality. Thus, to clarify, human capital, by contrast, is said to focus upon the specific measurable competences, skills and knowledge that individuals possess and which can be used to produce value through work whilst social capital refers to the complex web of social networks (relationships) that sustain individuals in society. The social networks that social capital refers to are valued for the normative resources that they provide for individuals. These networks vary and are not necessarily open to everyone but might well be restricted in terms of such social categories as gender, ethnicity or class.

Clearly one could view human capital and social capital by the functions that are played by both social institutions and individuals’ capabilities, as both of them are concerned with creating value and production. For instance, Baker shows that economic activities in societies are affected by social capital as well as human capital when he notes that *“how even in the highly rational market of the Chicago Options exchange, relations among floor traders develop, are maintained and affect their trades”* (Baker 1983, cited in Coleman, 1988; Fukuyama, 1999). At this point Coleman along with Baker tried to focus on the ways in which human capital could be affected by people’s social capital. For example, the trust relationships, that underpin capitalist economic activities depend upon both social capital (the networks of contacts established amongst traders) as well as the human capital (the specific skills and intelligence of individual traders). As such, Coleman (1988) declared that *“a group within which there is extensive trustworthiness and extensive trust is able to accomplish much more than a comparable group without that trustworthiness”* (Coleman, 1988: 101). However, Roberts (2008) suggests that building trust itself *“requires knowledge and the execution of complex transactions that require the input of many parties”* (Roberts, 2008:15) Roberts’s statement shows not only that to implement such complex transactions, knowledgeable and skilled labours are required, but also that the knowledge of how to construct trust relationships among “parties” persons and social institutions, and good governmental policies is required. Human capital and social capital are, then, in some senses, interdependent.

### 4.3.3 Family and Education Units

In an attempt to address the above point, David (2001:04) said that social capital “*may be viewed metaphorically as a species of (glue) holding the constituent members of society together, and so permitting them to function more productively in the economic sphere*”. He highlighted that social capital is “*a form of knowledge*” that is more a relational benefit than a personal characteristic possessed by individual performers: thus it is part of the complex networks of peoples social relationships, whereas human capital refers to an individual’s specific competences, knowledge and skills. He also stated that the concept of human capital is “*defined comprehensively*” where it includes personal capacities, information, individual actions, and interpersonal transactions. By comparison social capital remains a more ambiguous idea around which there has been far less of an intellectual consensus as to its meaning or how it can be measured. Nonetheless it is reasonable to construe that there is a relationship between the two in that people are never just individuals, they exist in societies where they have relationships with others. It is these relationships, their social capital that feeds into and helps them develop their human capital (their individual qualities).

In contrast to social capital, Mincer and Polachek (1974) suggest human capital is a vital factor “*to the extent that earnings in the labour market are a function of the human-capital stock accumulated by individuals, a sequence of positive net investments gives rise to growing earning power over the life cycle*” (Mincer and Polachek, 1974:78). They added that “*when net investment is negative, that is, when market skills are eroded by It depreciation, earning power declines*” (Mincer and Polachek, 1974: 78). So, what is the relationship between social and human capital in the economics literature? Dasgupta & Serageldin (2001) believed that the concept of human capital is by now well accepted and they also argued that human capital is developed by its relationship to social capital. Social capital works across successive generations through the networks it creates that pass on values, beliefs and practices. These, in turn, inform successive generation’s development of their human capital (their individual skills, competences and knowledge). The social relationships of social capital are crucial to a properly functioning capitalist market economy. For example, Coleman stated that “*family relations are as important in the market as is the stability of proprietorship*” (Coleman, 1988: 98). More than anyone families can affect their children’s

human capital whether positively or negatively. Most families are aware that their children's future depends upon such factors as the need for a supportive home environment. Hence in many countries the emphasis upon the family supporting their children's education. For example, in Libya "Fadia"<sup>38</sup>, a postgraduate student at the Academy of graduate studies in Tripoli, noted that many Libyan families are registering their children to learn English language from an early age. These families believe that the Libyan job market strongly requires such language skills if their children are to be successful. By way of contrast, "Salwa"<sup>39</sup>, a postgraduate female student at Al-Fateh University Tripoli, explained that although she grew up in an educated family environment, that there were many other factors that could limit a family's efforts to support and improve their children's capabilities and skills. One of the most difficult elements is the child's desire and self-aspiration. For example she said that:

*"My mother is a foreigner and English is our language spoken at home. Therefore, all my family speak English well as we started using it when I was a child. However, since high school I don't really like using the English language because I remember a day when my teacher at the high school asked me to read a word, and I read it as I used to hear it from my mother, but my teacher told me that was wrong, she corrected it me. However, I insisted on saying it in the way that my mother spoke, but she disagreed and hit me with a stick. So I have hated speaking and learning English language since that time..."*

*When I entered university I chose to study law, where we did not have a curriculum in the English language, and we did not even have English language lessons, so I felt comfortable. Nevertheless, our law literatures were dominated by examples using English and French terms and at that time I wondered how I could be successful in my career when I did not like the English language and dealing with it. In the end I was successful to the point I was assigned as research assistant at my university to do my postgraduate studies. However, after avoiding this language for a long time the problem*

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<sup>38</sup> Fadia 28 years, one of the postgraduate female students who participating within the focus group that made at the Academy of graduate studies Jansue-Tripoli in Tripoli-Libya 17/04/2009

<sup>39</sup> Salwa 30 years, one of the postgraduate students who participating within the focus group that made in Tripoli-Libya 21/04/2009

*came up again when I was required to complete my postgraduate course. As I was specializing in International Law, which is mainly based on the English language, I had to develop my knowledge. I was supposed to finish my research this year, but my lack of English language skills has delayed me finishing until I reach the required level. I have brought up my experience to explain the fact that not only political decisions or financial inability that prevent from learning English language, but it is more about the person's desire and aspiration towards learning. Thus, in my case my personal environment was very suitable for learning English language, but I was not attracted to it at that time because of my experiences at school"*

Salwa's experience shows that whilst a family can play a crucial role in their children's educational life nonetheless it is the education and teaching quality that plays a greater role in shaping a child's intellectual development. Thus, the education sector is the second vital unit in the development of social capital where it is subject to social and governmental strategies in society. The assumption here is that a functioning society requires an educated populous. In order to illustrate the centrality of educational policies to the promotion of social and human capital we can consider the success of a number of Asian countries in recent decades. For example, after Singapore achieved its independence in 1965 it was able to transform itself by 1990, to become the state with the second highest standard of living in Asia, and six years later Singapore had exceeded several small Western countries in gross domestic product per capita (Dasgupta & Serageldin, 2001, and Tilak, 2002). In the 1980s the Republic of Korea was able to achieve a high rate of growth in its GDP of, on average, 9.4 percent per year, followed by a rate of growth of 7.2 per cent during the period 1990-95 (Ito 1997, cited in Tilak, 2002:03). In 1996 Korea was able to join the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). During 1980 and 1990, had recorded an extraordinary rate of growth of 10.2 percent per year on average, followed by a still higher rate of growth of 12.8 percent. In order to generate this growth these countries concentrated on developing their human capital through a strong education system (Ciccantell and Bunker, 2004; OECD, 2007, and Tilak, 2002). Hence these countries and their economic performance in terms of economic growth, human development and education system, made them a great example for many developing and developed countries. The question remains, though, as the extent to which their particular experiences can be generalised to other parts of the semi-periphery and periphery and indeed the extent to which their development reflected any adherence to liberal

theories. Furthermore, Dasgupta and Serageldin believe the high economic level that Asian countries have attained is in part because of their investment in human capital. “*Conventional factors such as investments in human and physical capital and technology only partially explain the high growth rates of the East Asian “miracle” economies*” (Dasgupta & Serageldin, 2001:44). The opinion that Asian countries would never be able to achieve economic development which had been expressed by numerous economists has been shown to be false. What has been shown is also the case with the ‘Asian tigers’: South Korea, Taiwan, Singapore, and Hong Kong, and also both China and Japan. All have achieved social and economic success in part through massive state investment in their educational systems in contrast with the anti-statism of neo-liberal theory.

#### **4.3.4 Strategies and Benefits**

Woolcock (2000) pointed out that although the concept of social capital resides in relationships whilst that of human capital lies in individuals, the two are highly interdependent. The capabilities and skills (human capital) that individuals have can significantly affect social institutions and relationships. At the same time social institutions play a key role in developing human capital by providing for people’s needs be they, education, health care and social services. Accordingly, the last 30 years has witnessed a transformation in many job markets to one where the educated and skilled are more in demand than other types of capital such as physical capital. This ties in with the point made earlier about the rise of what is often termed a ‘knowledge economy’ where educational qualifications are seen as the key to career success. This point was supported by Dasgupta & Serageldin (2001:19) when they said that:

*“The idea is that the concept of physical capital as embodied in tools, machines, and other productive equipment can be extended to include human capital as well. Just as physical capital is created by changes in materials to form tools that facilitate production, human capital is created by changes in persons that bring about skills and capabilities that make them able to act in new way.”*

In the new global economic environment people are being encouraged to develop their human capital in order to take advantage of job opportunities (OECD, 2007, 2001 & Baker, 1975). Thus, the argument goes that investing in human capital has become a dominant requirement for *all* states in order to increase their integration in the global economy. This integration aims to include other capital types such as social and physical. These forms of capital are interdependent and integral to the workings of the global economy. Human capital, with its emphasis on the skills and capabilities acquired by individuals, and social capital, existing in social systems and relations among persons, are both said to be tangible factors. Fine (2001) stated that capital could be in any type but that not every type of capital is social. He said that “*social capital is bound to be found whenever economic and non-economic issues are considered together. In contrast, the sense in which capital is social in a broad historical sense is that it is attached to a specific socio-economic system, namely, capitalism* (Fine, 2001:29). Fine argues that historically social capital is a network of a society’s values, norms, understandings and forms along with its relationships amongst people and institutions. But Fine is a critic not a supporter of the concepts, arguing that the way in which they are utilised even by critical sociologists such as Bourdieu, is unhelpful and distorting on the nature of social life (Fine, 2001). Additionally, Fine argued that the idea of social capital has proven so popular amongst governing institutions such as the OECD because to a great extent it is a consequence of the power of capital itself. Adam Smith and John Stuart Mill were, after all, political economists of capitalism so it is uncontentious to note that human capital has its roots as a concept within the milieu of capitalist social relations and pro-capitalist theories of economy and society. Social capital serves the interests of capital by promoting values and beliefs that empower capital and disempowers workers. For example, Fine sees it as a functional ideology for capitalism, an ahistoric account of human nature that reifies society and undermines ideas of social change and that it is ultimately a disguised attempt to reintroduce rational choice theory into ideas of economic development (Fine, 2001). The onus is placed on the responsibility of the individual worker for their own improvement and ability to make themselves attractive to a capitalist employer. Thus, according to this theory the only strategies that a government needs to pursue are those that encourage and support the private sector, capital. These can be either infrastructural investment in such factors as transport, communication and energy, or in human capital, with examples of these strategies being seen in the recent policies of China and the East Asian countries (Fine, 2001; OECD, 2007; Ciccantell and Bunker, 2004; Tilak, 2002; and Coleman, 1988).

In defending the idea of human capital David (2001) divided human capital itself into two forms: tangible human capital such as: *stature, strength, physical endurance*; and intangible human capital, including: *cognitive ability and procedural capabilities*. These are directly and indirectly perceptible in the physical characteristics of the individual agent (David, 2001). Although this point takes us back to the complexity of trying to measure human capital David's point, contra Fine, is that it is possible to do so. Both forms of human capital (tangible and intangible) are connected where both strongly affect human well-being and economic growth. David noted that in its current usage by economists the term tends to refer only to the second form of human capital (intangible capabilities) that have more experience, high standards of education and training, and skills excess. For example, David indicated that:

*“In the US intangible human capital (formed by education and training investments) represented about three-fourths of the total non-tangible stock; within the remaining fourth, the stock of R&D capital in 1990 was only half as large as that formed by investments health, safety and human mobility”* (David, 2001:02).

Supporting David's vision Solomon Fabricant in 1959 was emphasizing the important of intangible capital when he stated that:

*“In an important sense, society's intangible capital includes all the improvements in basic sciences, technology, business administration, education and training, that aid in production whether these result from deliberate individual or collective investments for economic gain or are incidental by-products of efforts to reach other goals ”* (Fabricant, 1959: 22

What David and Fabricant argue is that investing in this intangible human capital form is the primary strategy for governments and for individuals. This is illustrated in developments in

Libya that became apparent during a discussion I held with a group of people in charge of the training department of the LNOC<sup>40</sup>. In conversation they indicated that the LNOC has been preparing so-called ‘national training programs’ in order to fill in the skills gap in all its companies across Libya. By these programmes Libyan graduates from various fields could progress to be trained in order to be made ready for entering their careers. On the other hand Mr Adel, the project manager in the training department, stated:

*“While recently the Libyan education system has been paying great attention to funding technical colleges in order to bridge the skills gap, the graduates weren’t well qualified. This fact led to foreign workers replacing those technicians in places such as Jansor textile plant in Tripoli.”* He added that, *“the students couldn’t meet their required levels because they lacked confidence in their abilities. Without that belief, without a culture of success and achievement, they are unemployable.”*

Such a statement shows not only how individuals can hinder governmental policies because of some false beliefs, but also how the social environment was not supportive for those individuals to continue their studies. It was not supportive of the development of human capital. An example from Fahima,<sup>41</sup> a Libyan postgraduate student, shows how other barriers facing individuals seeking to be trained, includes: finance, time for study and specific social circumstances. These matters, ‘time, money and social issues’ that individuals face also hinder an individual’s capacity to invest in their own human capital. She added:

*“The Libyan government has solved some problems regarding the skills gap for this generation and future generations, but how about our generation who missed the chance of learning English language skill? We are really struggling! The biggest problem is the time and the money we spend on training ourselves, except for some lucky people who get sponsored to study abroad or those with private financial means to fund their language training. Additionally, some of us are married and busy with our*

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<sup>40</sup> Focus group method used with the Libyan National Oil Corporation in 22/04/2009.

<sup>41</sup> Fahema studying at The Higher Education Academy in Tripoli was participating in the focus group discussion that was carried out in 2009.

*family commitments, so we don't have enough time or energy to involve ourselves in such training programs."*

There is a sense that the generation who missed out on learning English due to the ban placed on it from 1986-2004 will be permanently disadvantaged given their age and relative social position. Family commitments and existing careers all stand in the way of their ability to catch-up whilst for younger generations coming through the opportunity to learn and develop their human capital may see them rapidly transcend this older generation in terms of job opportunities. Further, as Fahema says it is the wealthier sections of Libyan society who have the resources to take advantage of the new opportunities to acquire the English language.

The key conclusion here is that government policies are central to the development of human capital but that in the Washington and Post-Washington consensus this means, in practice, public funding for private firms to deliver these services, what is sometimes called Private Finance Initiative (PFI) or Public Private Partnership (PPP). As Heckman, Lochner and Taber (1999) argue, national policies could promote human capital formation and could contribute to "*substantially alter the proportion of the work-force that is skilled*" (Heckman & et al, 1999:25). This point has been supported by Becker (1975), who suggested that people's abilities are the most important factor and should therefore be central to any government economic strategy (Becker, 1975 & OECD, 2007).

China as mentioned in the first chapter is a good example of a successful emerging job market driven by its policies towards high investment in its human capital in order to produce well educated workers. In some factors China, as with other successful Asian economies, has overtaken most of the European countries in terms of its GDP. The OECD notes that "*China has overtaken the United States to become the world's largest exporter of IT goods, computers, network routers and so on which are helping to create the new knowledge economy*" (OECD, 2007:23). The shift of production and capital to the East is part of the changing balance of power in the MOWS that Libya has to adapt to and unsurprisingly China has now become an important investor in Libya and a number of African countries (OECD, 2007). For example, Zhong Manying, director of the department of West Asia and Africa under the

Ministry of Commerce said, ‘26 Chinese enterprises were involved in businesses in Libya. Their businesses, valuing more than \$20 billion, were in property, railway, crude oil service, and telecommunication’ (Yan, 2011). There is no doubt that China is one of those countries, like Brazil, India and Russia (the CRIB bloc) who have sought through strategic government intervention to adapt to the emergence of knowledge economy in the MOWS. When considering the CRIB, the OECD note that as they are reshaping the world’s economy they suffer from a shortage of well qualified graduates and suitably qualified staff where “*India’s population has much lower level of education than China’s, as the OECD stated “Only 61% of Indian adults can read; in China the figure is more than 90%”* all these factors might limit Indian society in its social and economic growth (UNESCO cited in OECD, 2007:32). Investing in human capital would seem to make sense for developing countries if the OECD is correct in their analysis. But this investment also becomes a way of shifting public wealth into private educational corporations, a subsidy for these companies that appears to go against the ideology of neo-liberalism.

There is no doubt that people cannot live without both agriculture and manufacturing, where they still rely on raw materials like cotton, plant seeds, iron and oil. Physical capital remains central to any society. However, proponents of the idea of a global knowledge economy now argue that knowledge has become the most important factor in social and economic development (World Bank, 2003). By embracing the means of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) and computing power China and India have achieved rapid improvements in their economic development, however unevenly this has been spread. China, in particular, has been highly active in investing in information and communication technology (World Bank, 2003). Consequently, Libya has amended its decisions towards the quality of its education system and its direction of the investment policies/programmes to its human capital so that in 2009 the Libyan higher education committee members<sup>42</sup> argued:

*“Any investment in human resources and capital usually starts with the educational system where unfortunately we are lacking the high quality teaching staff needed. Thus we have been adopting a strategy of sponsoring students for overseas studies in places*

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<sup>42</sup> Focus group was made with the Libyan higher education committee in 10/05/2009 in Tripoli

*such as the USA and Europe, as part of investing in human capital in order to avoid totally relying on oil sector for graduate employment.”*

Such a statement reflects the belief that there is a strong relationship between human capital and social capital and how to achieve the optimal use of the country's natural and human resources, its human capital, in order to meet the country's job market requirements. And this, in turn, connects with the latest development in the MOWS, the rise of the global knowledge economy. Again, when one examines the meaning of this concept with its emphasis on learning, education, new high tech industries, they tend to be areas where those states in the core have dominance, either directly or through investment and indirect control of companies based around the world.

**Table 4.1 the Relationship between Human Capital and Social Capital:**

<b>An overarching category</b>	<b>Social Capital (Social relations/skills)</b>	<b>Human Capital (Education and Health)</b>	<b>The relationship</b>
<b>Actors</b>	Society's units	Individuals	Interdependent
	All actors and actions describe in social context	Actors and actions describe as individual context for independent goals	Interdependent
	Depends on relationships/understandings/values	Depends on skills and knowledge	Interdependent
	Within the social context can account not only for the actions of individuals but also for the development of social organisation	Within individual context can only account for individuals their actions and benefits	Interdependent
<b>Specifications</b>	Affect society's social-economic development	Affect society's social-economic development	Similar
	Maximizing utility principle	Maximizing utility principle	Similar
	Variety of different entities	Individual entity	Different
	Social capital Facilitates productive activity	human capital facilitates	Interdependent

			indirectly	productive activity directly	
			Difficult to measure	Difficult to measure	Similar
			Less tangible	Less tangible	Similar
	<b>Unit s</b>	<b>Strategie s</b>	The human value of social capital is in the generation of social trust	The social value of human capital is in the building of trust. Is this different?	Interdependent
			Governmental strategies are affected by already existing social capital	Governmental strategies support the development of human capital	Interdependent
			Social capital comes through changes in the relations among persons and institutions that facilitate action for all society	Human capital comes through changes in individuals their abilities that facilitate their personal benefits first	Interdependent
			Education and family are the important units for social capital formation	Education and skills are the main requirements for human capital and affect their productivity in job market	Interdependent
			The effect of social capital is within the family and society's structures in Society	The effect of human capital is within the individuals' abilities in society	Interdependent
			Social capital affects the functioning of economic system/activities.	The existence of economic institutions is often explained by the functions of human capital's performs for/in the economic system/activities	Interdependent

This leads us to a very important question flagged earlier by Ben Fine: who is empowered by the promotion of human capital? And who benefits from it? In order to address this question I want to step outside the framework of orthodox ideas about development and draw upon the ideas of such figures as the post-colonial writer, Edward Said.

#### 4.4 Human Capital as a Question of Power: Human Capital and the Geoculture of the World-System

Human capital raises questions about the relationship between knowledge and power in the MOWS that have to be considered here. Power is a complex concept and embraces numerous factors. For the Oxford English Dictionary it is “*the ability to do something*” (Oxford dictionary, 1999:576). This power has several types such as, the strength to defend something; to control someone (a person or organization or country); the capacity to do something, including such activities as reading and writing. Dahl (1957) suggested power is an action between any two parts (whether between people or countries) that enables one to make the other do something that otherwise it would not have. Max Weber too, had made a similar point when he defined power “*as the probability that someone in a social relationship will be able to achieve his or her will, i.e., whatever is desired, despite resistance*” (Weber, 1947 cited in Uphoff, 2003:02; and Weber, 1947<sup>43</sup>). These ideas of power address not only power in its constructive or creative form, the power to produce something, for example, but also power as force or control of another, In short, to impose one’s ideas, beliefs and values on another person or country. Human capital seems to embrace both the constructive and coercive aspects of power in terms of Libya’s embrace of the concept in a global economy whose rules, trade flows and capital exchanges are neither under its control nor of its own making. Instead it is something that Libya is essentially subject to. So when it comes to Libya’s strategic policy of promoting investment in human capital, how should we think about the issue of power?

Central to this is the history of colonialism for non-Western countries such as Libya, which has left a complicated legacy that manifests itself institutionally and culturally. Following world-system analysis it is apparent that historically it has been the major Western states that have had the power not only to shape the world-system through military force and trade, but also, and crucially, through the production of knowledge about the world, hence the idea of the MOWS. Power can be viewed in different ways, then, and central to the organisation of the world-system has been the power to produce forms of knowledge that are seen as being legitimate and therefore acceptable and necessary for state’s and individuals to follow. As

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<sup>43</sup> Max Weber, *The Theory of Social and Economic Organization*, translated by A M Henderson and Talcott Parsons, 1947, The Free Press and the Falcon's Bring Press, <http://taodesigns.tripod.com/weber/weber47.html>

Wallerstein (2006: 71) says, “*the realities of power in the modern world-system are a series of legitimating ideas which made it possible for those who have power to maintain it*”. This is what he referred to in an earlier work as the ‘Geoculture’ or ideological battleground of the world-system (Wallerstein, 1991). Human capital and social capital can both be seen as concepts that have their roots in this historic power relationship between the West and the non-Western world. It is Western countries (in MOWS terms, European imperialist states and the USA in the core) that have generated these ideas and promoted them as being central to universal social and economic development, but they carry with them assumptions about the world that also serve the interests of states in the core (Wallerstein, 2006). Most important, the forms of knowledge generated to produce economic theories of the kind that dominate the world-system have the status of being scientific, the highest form of knowledge in the MOWS. It is, after all, the non-Western world, the periphery and semi-periphery where Libya is situated, that must change itself in order to satisfy the conditions laid down by the core powers (Chase-Dunn and Grimes, 1995). The core’s power here is precisely due to the vulnerability to financial, political and military pressure of many non-core countries, even relatively wealthy ones such as Libya. One of the implications of the development of the MOWS suggests that it is not possible for countries such as Libya to develop without Western support and investment and in order to attract this it is necessary to accept changes to the national economy that embrace ideas that reinforce the dominance of the core over the rest. Hence the dependent nature of this relationship. In this respect ideas such as human and social capital operate, as Fine suggests, by reinforcing capitalist ideology (Fine, 2001).

As mentioned the issue of the relationship between power and knowledge has been explored by both Fanon (1965) and Edward Said (1978) who argued that what passes for legitimate knowledge, particularly in issues pertaining to general social and economic development, have been laden with Western conceptions of progress and civilisation, to the detriment of the colonised peoples (Wallerstein, 2006). Said’s *Orientalism* provides a better understanding of this category of power when he states that ideas, knowledge and culture were central to the colonial project. His argument was that the Orientalist’s, the intellectuals and artists whose work acted to underpin colonialism and justified it for the colonial powers and their populations. The main power/knowledge stemmed from Orientalist’s who in their knowledge of the Orient, its religion, culture, language and ‘mindset’, constructed histories and cultural representations that helped reinforce the idea of a natural Western superiority over the

colonised world. In essence, they knew the ‘Orientals’ better than they knew themselves, *“To be a European in the Orient, and to be one knowledgeably, one must see and know the Orient as a domain ruled over by Europe”* (Said, 1994a: 197). The knowledge gained via the Orientalist’s “scientific” studies about the orient leads to control and power over the orient, then. This idea of a ‘natural’ Western superiority is still manifest today (Dixon, 2001; and Wallerstein, 2006). For example, Karima<sup>44</sup> one of the Libyan postgraduate students at Al-Fateh University, has touched upon this issue when the discussion was about the importance of the English language for the Libyan university students:

*“I don’t really understand the idea behind misrepresenting the picture of Arabs by the Western media showing Arab men wearing scarves on their heads and that all Arab men are concerned about protecting or repressing their women”... “I think it is great opportunity for someone to study abroad in some European countries, in order to learn their languages and express our culture and identity in the right way, because I think we have been misunderstood. Therefore, I think that clarifying concepts, especially issues related to Islam is the duty of every student who has a chance to study overseas.”*

Thus for Karima learning a language such as English provides the opportunity for her to actually challenge Orientalist discourses in Western culture, not to succumb to them (Said, 1994a; and Coleman, 2004). In a way this both reinforces Said’s claim about Orientalism and power/knowledge whilst at the same time challenging it by suggesting that the non-Western world can take back its own identity regardless of the language its people speak. In short, by acquiring English non-Western people can assert their own identity and culture and in so doing challenge Orientalist assumptions (Coleman, 2004). In a way, this is precisely what Said’s own work has done. Social and human capital may be Western concepts that reflect the power of the core over much of the non-Western world, but it doesn’t mean that people in countries like Libya are without power or the capacity to use them for their own ends.

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<sup>44</sup> Karima was one of the focus group participations at Al-Fateh University in 21/04/2009.

#### 4.5 Human Capital as Orientalist Discourse

In fact, the work of those such as Fanon, Said and Wallerstein make clear that knowledge has always been intimately related to power and a part of colonialism. For example, two empires: the British and the French were both rivals and allies who generated knowledge about the world that justified their dominant positions within it (Dixon, 2001; and Chase-Dunn and Grimes, 1995). They encountered each other and the orient with the greatest intensity, familiarity and complexity, to either monopolize or share it. What they shared by military force was not only land, goals, profit or rules it was the kind of intellectual power 'knowledge/information' over the subaltern populations and their sense of identity. The strong desire for colonial expansion in Britain and France was intimately related to the ideas and information that Orientalist's had produced. Orientalist's and their writing played a vital role in the construction of the desire amongst European peoples to colonise the orient. These writings were the only helpful way to achieve extensive desire of colonialism such as the press campaigns that happened in Paris in France 1914, or the several commissions that happened in England, and the famous Committee which was chaired by Mark Sykes and George Picot in 1927. As a result, the Orient was geographically divided between the two parties by "mutual force" of the world at that time (Said, 1987).

Since the First World War, America (USA) has replaced Britain and France as the most powerful nation both militarily and in terms of the production of Orientalist discourses through its vast university and think-tank infrastructure (Said, 1994a; Wallerstein, 2001). Thus, the USA "successfully" took the place of the European powers by the use of military force, technology, information, the production of knowledge and ultimately through its hegemonic place in the expanding capitalist world (Said, 1994a, Wallerstein, 2001 and 2006). This is an important point because, as Wallerstein noted, there are three main ideas that corroborate this idea of the superiority of Western knowledge over that of the non-Western world. These are: "*the right of those who believe they hold universal values to intervene against the barbarians; the essentialist particularism of Orientalism; and scientific universalism*" (Wallerstein, 2006: 71). Human capital is a part of this Western process of exercising power through the dissemination of developmental policy-based knowledge, which places significant constraints upon the autonomy of those in the periphery and semi-periphery. Wallerstein (2006:72) added that:

*“If one looks at the arguments encrusted in the various doctrines that were put forth, they always ended up by seeking to demonstrate the inherent superiority of the powerful. And from this inherent superiority, these doctrines derived not merely the capacity to dominate but the moral justification of their domination”.*

So, there is a problem for any states and peoples in the semi-periphery and periphery of the world-system adopting such concepts and strategic goals as the promotion of human capital because they are not simply neutral scientific concepts but part of a broader Orientalist discourse that helps to underpin the power of the core states in the MOWS. For example, I asked Dr, Husain Al Ajeli<sup>45</sup> the coordinator of learning English language project at Libyan universities, if he thinks that Libyan government changes its position on ELA amongst its students because of Western power. He answered:

*“The demand for English language skills nowadays hasn’t left any authority or autonomy for us as government. We have no choice now but to prioritise English language training and skills. Whatever we thought before about the dangers of colonial languages has been overturned and English is simply a tool by which we can develop our country”*

The acquisition of English language skills raises both advantages and disadvantages for the Libyan people; it is not simply one thing or the other. The power/knowledge relationship that it entails is there and cannot be ignored as it is more insidious than older forms of colonialism. This factor, the acceptance of the legitimacy of such ideas as human and social capital, never happened within the old form of Western power and its brutal military colonialism (Said, 1987; Boulding, 1999; Stoler;<sup>46</sup> 2002; & Wallerstein, 2006). Nonetheless given the interdependent nature of the advantages and disadvantages that ELA in particular and human capital development in general can potentially bring to a country such as Libya it

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<sup>45</sup> Interview with Mr, Husain Al Ajeli the coordinator of learning English language project at Libyan universities at the language centre in Al-Fateh University in 04/05/2009.

<sup>46</sup> Stoler insists on “*knowledge is power and that colonial regimes were masterful at acquiring both*” (Stoler, 2002:206)

means that there are always strategic and relational possibilities for the Libyan government and people to try to use these ideas to their own advantage.

The promotion of policies advocating the development of human capital, then, have become a means by which the core has been able to exert new forms of control over the periphery and semi-periphery and in the process this has tended to help drain the non-Western world of its skilled population whilst marginalising its unskilled. For instance, Germany has changed its immigration policies in order to achieve its high level of its investment in human capital, by stipulating that only skilled migrants will be allowed to enter the country on a permanent basis (Desai, et al, 2001). Thus human capital becomes a form of power/knowledge in line with Said and Wallerstein's ideas, allowing the states of the core to use the peoples of the periphery and semi-periphery as a source of cheap, skilled, migrant labour. This usage of migrants as skilled (and also unskilled) workers provided expertise and helped the developed nations for example to succeed in its IT sector in 1990s. For example the success of the United States IT sector during the 1990s and till now is due to its implementation of the H1B<sup>47</sup> program towards the developing countries immigrants and workers (Saxenian, 1999 cited in Desai, 2001). Desai (2001) stated that the H1B program has led European countries like Germany to change their immigration policies where the Germany's Interior Minister Otto Schily argued that, *"There's competition among the industrialized countries for the best minds. That's why we have to direct our immigration law more strongly toward our own economic interests"*. Desai (2001: 08) assured that *"countries are becoming more skill-focused as they compete in the market for migrants"*. It appears that it does not matter from where those "migrants" human resources come, as long as they are well educated and skilled, as long as they possess the necessary 'human capital'. What human capital promotes is the capacity of people to work and produce wealth for capitalists, not to control it for themselves. The measure of one's human capital, in practice, helps to categorise and regulate the job market in any country. It becomes a means of evaluating the worth of an individual, not in moral terms but in terms of their capacity to produce wealth primarily for capitalists.

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<sup>47</sup> H1B visas are intended for "professionals" in a "specialty occupation". This means also an IMC intending to pursue a residency program in the United States with an H1B visa needs to clear all three USMLE Steps before becoming eligible for the H1B.

## 4.6 Conclusion

This chapter has concentrated on the concept of human capital, its origins and problematic place in Libyan developmental strategies since 2004. In so doing it also examined its relationship to social capital in order to differentiate it where possible. The Libyan governments' planned education systems and policies aspire to play a significant role in creating and developing these skills and to enable Libyan society to achieve rapid social-economic growth. As has been shown, however, this is not a risk-free strategy as the concept of human capital is inherently bound up with what Said and Wallerstein have called Orientalist discourses, knowledge that is embedded in the MOWS. In particular, examples have been given from the experiences of Libyan institutions, postgraduate students and employees in order to set out the kind of problems and opportunities that Libya faces in embracing these ideas. The Libyan Postgraduate students mostly agreed that they are in dire need of English language skills in order to enhance Libyan development and their own job prospects. Globally, investing in human capital ('skilled people') itself a form of power/knowledge has become the dominant requirement for those in the periphery and semi-periphery in their developmental strategies, in particular, to attract investment from the Core and powerful parts of the semi-periphery such as the CRIB bloc and ultimately to deepen integration into the global economy. In this context, the Libyan government has introduced strategies to develop its human capital as to integrate itself in the global economic system. A dilemma remains, however, that it may not be possible for Libya to simply catch-up with these major states in the semi-periphery, that Libya's specific historical position in the world-system and its economic dependency and vulnerability mean that it lacks the qualities that have enabled the CRIB countries to grow rapidly (large domestic population and demand for goods and services, diverse supply of resources). Indeed this point has been made by Alan and Shahid (2007:12) who confirmed that:

*"The prodigious growth in the number of graduates in China and India presages a significant increase in the giants' shares of world skills and, hence, changes in their comparative advantages".*

The comparative advantage of the CRIB economies far outreaches that of Libya, however. That said, given its strategic goals, the Libyan government is committed to believing that this is not necessarily the case, of making use of its resources to achieve its developmental goals.

In theoretical terms this chapter has set out the ideas behind human capital, a prominent concept within contemporary neo-liberal discourse. It has argued that Libya's embrace of neo-liberalism and abandonment of an authoritarian state-led model of development is part of this cultural process of opening up to the West and to the global economy. The consequences of this are that the Libyan state will lose much of its direct control over the economy, further undermining its ability to act in the manner of a developmental state. More broadly though it also opens up the opportunity for generations of Libyans to engage with and travel to Western countries in order to learn English and perhaps to work. This will have profound effects on the legitimacy of the Libyan government as the development of a bourgeoisie, as Barrington Moore famously noted, tends to lead to democracy as a bourgeois class asserts their social political and economic rights (Moore, 1968). The extent to which the current Libyan regime can adapt to and accept this remains to be seen but it is a direct consequence of its new policies of cultural (global English) and economic integration in the MOWS.

The next three chapters will discuss how and evaluate these strategies.

## **Chapter 5: Libya in the MOWS: Promoting Human Capital as a part of the ‘New Vision Strategy’ for Development**

### **5.1 Introduction**

Since 2004 Libya has sought to re-position itself in the MOWS, in part through the promotion of ELA amongst Libyan graduates. This liberalising approach to the English language is reflected in such things as allowing the use of foreign languages in addition to Arabic in forms intended for tourists, information on archaeological and tourist sites, administrative formalities at ports of entry, on roadside billboards, names of cities, and on commercial notice boards (PANA Press, 2007). Thus, this chapter examines whether there is evidence to suggest that the new vision strategy currently underpinning Libyan governmental development policy formalisation of ELA at the level of tertiary education will enhance the job prospects of Libyan university graduates. As mentioned in the previous chapter, investing in human capital in the periphery and semi-periphery (following Fanon and Said, a form of power/knowledge) has become the dominant requirement for developmental strategies of the Washington and Post-Washington consensus, in particular, to attract investment and integration into the global economy. Therefore, this chapter will present two sections which evaluate the Libyan government’s new vision strategies to develop its human capital: (1) The first section examines the Libyan state, economy and society since the revolution in order to provide an account of the context in which Libya has evolved as a state in the MOWS and in particular its resistance to the policies of the dominant states of the core; (2) The second section will examine the new vision policies of the Libyan government and its attempts to integrate Libya more fully in the MOWS. In so doing I will trace the pivotal role that the Libyan state has played in social development and ultimately the failure of its policy of resisting integration into the MOWS, reflected in its new vision policies which have led to a dramatic reversal of the revolutionary government’s original ideological basis.

Theoretically this chapter examines the transformation in the nature of the policies pursued by the Libyan state. As mentioned in chapter one this has led it form a form of developmental state policy, though always mitigated by its status as a rentier state, to one where it embraces neo-liberal developmental policies such as investing in human capital. The broader goal is to

turn the state into an enabling state that supports Libya's integration into the MOWS. Ironically, perhaps, for all of the failures of previous Libyan government policies in terms of political freedom and diversifying the economy it did at least have a capacity to act differently to other rentier states. By this I mean that the post-1969 Libyan governments embraced a political ideology that however flawed saw it trying to assert an independent place and policies in the MOWS. Of course this was always constrained by its structural dependence on the core and the semi-periphery as noted in chapter one, but at least there was always an espoused commitment to Libyan independence, in keeping with the Fanonist background of the Gaddafi governments. This is now being replaced by an embrace of neo-liberalism with a view to modernising Libya which in reality also serves to intensify the nature of its dependence on the core.

## **5.2 Libyan State and Society since the Revolution**

The Libyan revolution of 1 September 1969 was the turning point of the Libyan state and society in the MOWS. The Sanusi monarchy (1951-1969) started a mixture of programs mainly regarding health, housing and education that led to the creation of a new social class in the country; this was mainly in the eastern region. Only Tripoli in the west developed in similar fashion and the majority of rural Libyans stayed firmly 'poor'. During this period the biggest universities in Libya were established in 1955 under the name of the University of Al Fateh in Tripoli and University of Gar-Yunis in Benghazi.

Prior to the revolution Ahmida (2005) notes that Libyan society had been largely unchanged in terms of its social structure since the middle of the nineteenth century. Libya remained geographically divided into three regions under Ottoman rule and it was only with the occupation of Libya by Italy and then France and Britain that it became a nation-state under centralised rule. These three regions (Tripolitania, Cyrenaica and Fezzan) were dominated by different social groups and were in political competition with each other, a problem and legacy that were to affect Libya right through the post-colonial period (Vandewalle, 1998; Otman and Karlberg, 2007). Therefore in terms of social and cultural changes/structures Libya possessed three main classes of workers,

*“peasants (tribesmen) who had settled on small plots of land as sharecroppers; wage labourers from British and Italian companies; and a bourgeois class that was composed of urban notables who were either salaried bureaucrats or comprador merchants who traded with Europe” (Ahmida, 2005:09).*

In addition Libya had its ruling elites that were connected to the Monarchy. In this period Libya as a modern nation-state barely existed and it was only after the Sanusi regime came to power in 1951 that Libya became a state. By the time of the Sanusi monarchy Libya could be viewed socially as follows: The country was divided into the following social classes - elites who were connected to the monarchy; the dominant loyal tribes leaders; a middle class (mainly from students and intellectuals); small working class; lower-middle classes containing educated people who came from poor and minor tribes; and a large poor class, mainly rural, who were the largest social strata of the country (Vandewalle, 1998; Harris, 1986; Ahmida, 2005). The state itself began to evolve in this period and according to Vandewalle (1998: 53-54)

*“The five most important ministries which allocated roughly 80% of the budget were: housing and state property, public works, planning and development, communications, and industry were headed initially by tribal supporters of the king and by two Tripolitania technocrats. These ministries as well as the development funds, became the most important formal mechanisms for distributing the growing wealth.”*

Thus, Libya remained a highly underdeveloped country which was dominated by poverty, particularly rural. The Sanusi regime attempted to modernise aspects of Libyan society but this was a process dominated by corruption and the continued links between Libyan elites and the former colonial powers. The power of the core over post-colonial Libya was firmly entrenched in this period of the MOWS as the regime established close relations with both the USA and the UK which included establishing military bases on the country. The political system was a limited kind of democracy but power overwhelmingly resided with King Idris who appointed ministers and dominated decision-making (Harris, 1986). Even after the discovery of oil in 1959 and the establishment of Libya’s first 5-year plan for development

(1963-1968) progress towards general social development was poor, as reflected in the high rates of illiteracy at the time of the revolution (St John, 2008; Vandewalle, 2006).

The revolution itself was driven by a number of factors but socially gained greatest support from the majority of poor tribes in the country (Ahmida, 2005). The Free Officers Movement, led by a twelve member directorate which called itself the Revolutionary Command Council (RCC), claimed to have organised the coup and proclaimed the country to be the Libyan Arab Republic. In the initial period up until 1973 there were many threats of counter-coups against the revolution which saw the military-led state begin to adopt more overtly authoritarian measures such as taking control of the media and Trade Unions. The idea of civil society, so powerful in Western democracies, never really took hold in post-colonial Libya, but then, this was also the case throughout most of the region and the periphery and semi-periphery of the MWOS (Nonneman, 2001; Abootalebi, 1998). In that sense Libya's path was unexceptional and reflected the pattern whereby, as Fanon feared and Said and Wallerstein documented, newly installed national elites replaced colonial elites and established networks of power and support with the former colonial powers. This corruption of post-colonial regimes was to be a familiar pattern in the MOWS.

1973 represents a turning point for the revolutionary regime, now firmly dominated by Gaddafi and his loyal supporters. The consensus in the academic literature is to portray post-colonial Libya as a rentier state and an example of authoritarian populism and there is little reason to doubt this (Nonneman, 2001; Chaudry, 1994; Schwarz, 2008). Libya has always remained dependent upon its vast oil reserves which have enabled the post-revolutionary governments to fund its ambitious foreign and domestic policies. One of the consequences of Libya's rentier outlook has, of course, been the emergence of a monopolistic economy and a state that has lacked the complex bureaucratic structure associated with modern nation-states. Rather, the ruling regime has been able to use its vast wealth as a form of clientelism to buy support rather than trying to govern through what Weber famously described as the modern bureaucratic rational state and not by imposing taxes upon the population to fund public services (Anderson, 1987; Otman and Karlberg, 2007; Martinez, 2007). In this sense and like other rentier states it leaves the governing regime potentially vulnerable to domestic dissent as it does not possess the state infrastructure needed to unify and coordinate national policies

and crucially to embed the population in a mutual relationship with the state. Hence the division of Libya into three regions remains a political issue for the populations of those territories to this day. The populism of the revolutionary government was reflected in a number of policies including removal of foreign military bases and a move to guarantee welfare for ordinary Libyans. It was this kind of appeal that marked the direction of the Libyan state rather than the move to construct a fully functioning state system.

However, in 1973 after the failure of the Arab Socialist Union with Egypt and Syria, Gaddafi announced the establishment of the Jamahiriya state (meaning, of the masses), a populist cultural and political transformation of Libya's governing system (Otman and Karlberg, 2007; Vandewalle, 2006; Harris, 1986; Ahmida, 2005). According to Ahmida (2005:72) "*Gaddafi destroyed institutions of the old monarchy and, at the same time created the Jamahiriya institutions legitimizing a strong state acceptable to most Libyans in the hinterland*". Under the Jamahiriya state a network of 'people's committee' were established which for Gaddafi represented a Libyan version of direct democracy as they were the mechanisms through which policy would be implemented and also, in theory, through which the mass or the people could make decisions about policy (Vandewalle, 1998; Ahmida, 2005; Otman and Karlberg, 2007). In reality the latter did not take place. Committee members were elected and with the rise of a powerful authoritarian state over Libyan society it was decreed that there was no need for political parties as Libyan society was unified in its support of Gaddafi's 'Third International Theory', a programme for development that he saw as applicable to the whole of the Third World (St. John, 2008). At the same time as this apparent move to decentralise power was taking place in reality the ruling regime under Gaddafi's leadership very quickly moved in the opposite direction to take power more firmly into the hands of the state with Gaddafi himself becoming officially leader of the revolution in 1979 (Harris, 1986; Metz, 2004).

Libya became a testing ground for political experiments in the 1970s with a series of councils and committees established in support of the idea that Libya was governed by a form of direct democracy (Fathaly and Abusedra, 1980). The most important of these were the Revolutionary Committees which, in theory, existed to help raise people's political consciousness but in reality acted as a mechanism by which the government could monitor

and survey the population for signs of dissent (Martinez, 2007). Again, when one considers the authoritarian nature of Libyan state and society it is important to situate this in the context of political trends throughout the periphery and semi-periphery which were generally, in this period, prone towards authoritarian and military governments. Libya became distinct in the eyes of the West because its ruling governments authoritarian populism embraced an anti-imperialist rhetoric and material support for those Third World movements resisting Western imperialism. This is not to excuse the nature of the regime but to recognise that again, in the MOWS, the way in which governments in the periphery and semi-periphery are described in a media and academic discourse dominated by the core is also part of the structure of power/knowledge at the heart of the MOWS. This desire for political independence by the governing regime and its populist support and policies for the Libyan population have been significant factors in differentiating it from other rentier states in the region which were firmly in the Western camp and highly dependent on Western political and military support (such as Saudi Arabia, Tunisia, Algeria, Morocco) (Delacrois, 1980; Schwarz, 2008). If the Libyan government sought to control its domestic population and opposition in ways which were an affront to human rights then they were in keeping with and often lagging behind other states in the region such as Algeria. The main difference between Algeria and Libya in this respect is the vast scale of human rights abuses carried out by the military junta in Algeria when compared with the Libyan governments own abuses (Whitley, 1994). The fact that Algeria was a part of the pro-Western bloc of Arab countries explains a great deal about its comparative sympathetic coverage in Western media and political circles. That said it must be acknowledged that the Libyan government carried out its own share of wide-spread abuses, particularly of opponents in exile, many of whom were assassinated in the 1970s (Sturman, 2003; Otman and Karlberg, 2007; Human Rights Watch, 2011). Further, its support for war against states in the core went back to the early years of the revolution when Gaddafi warned the French in 1971 not to oppose Libya's military intervention in Chad or suffer the consequences (Vandewalle, 1998). These overt warnings to states in the core helped to fuel the picture that was built up by the Reagan administration that Libya was one of the world's foremost sponsors of terrorists, not freedom fighters. Given that President Reagan viewed the ANC as a terrorist organisation the denunciation of Libya needs to be viewed in the context of the geo-political environment of the time which was framed in a familiar East-West Cold War narrative. This narrative decreed that all states were either friends or enemies of the USA or the USSR with no room for non-alignment. Nonetheless Gaddafi's support for independence movements throughout the Third World, including the

Palestinians, saw him easily portrayed as a ‘mad-dog’ and all the other features of Western propaganda (Hitchens and Said, 2001), an image which he embraced and presented as proof of his successful defiance of the West.

At the same time these early state-society models has some resonance with the ideas of a developmental state as mentioned in chapter one. The Gaddafi led governments sought to use the state to cement their power over Libyan society but unlike their East Asian developmental state counterparts and in keeping with rentier states more generally, the easy flow of money was too tempting of the state apparatchiks and political leadership. Without having to produce anything Libya like other rentier states became cash rich and this flow of money was sufficient o fuel the grandiose political projects of the Libyan governments. It meant that the emphasis on state-building witnessed in East Asian states was generally lacking, replaced instead by a form of patron-client relationship which did little to diversify the economy. Thus there are some links with the developmental state model but fundamentally Libya’s rentier state status was the key factor in undermining its overall development. Ironically as the country became cash rich it at the same time became developmentally only moderate. Certainly the social quality if life indicators for Libya were stronger than most of their immediate neighbours, as we will see in chapter four.

### **5.3 Libya and its Economic Development**

Since the revolution Libya’s economy has followed classic rentier developmental lines with the state increasingly coming to dominate economic life, using its vast oil revenues to fund an improvement in the general quality of life indicators such as education, health and housing, as well as occasional grandiose projects such as the great man-made river project begun in 1984 (Otman and Karlberg, 2007: 163). Libya has enjoyed the benefits of a small economy and high income from its oil revenues which have, at times, raised its per capita income higher than countries such as Italy, even allowing for its persistently high levels of unemployment (St John, 2008; Metz, 2004). This, in turn, gave it the highest GDP per capita income in Africa. Thus since the revolution Libya’s economy has been centrally planned and directed by the governing councils with little room for a private sector (Chaudhry, 1994:18). It is the need to transfer economic activity and institutions form state-controlled to private sector that

is the most problematic aspect of the government's attempts to integrate the country more fully into the MOWS as it goes against the grain of decades of protection and planned economic activity.

Thus, during the first decade of the revolution one of the *Green Book's* economic policies was to eliminate the private sector's activities in the country. Such a policy caused anger and frustration among Libya's private sector as they were needed by the citizens in their daily life to provide everyday goods and services. However according to Ahmida (2005:72) "*the Jamahiriya government received wide public support among the lower and middle classes, which allowed the government to engage in a major transformation of the economy as well as the social and political structures*". This support was despite the fact that the private sector would not only contribute to the prosperity of society's job market but would also guarantee more job opportunities. But, the Jamahiriya state instead, was empowered to extend the public sector to dominate all of its economic activities and businesses. The reason for this was revealed in the (1973-1975) plan which declared that its goal was to diversify the country's products and exports; liberalize the national economy from the oil sector and reduce the reliance on it; and more importantly assure social justice for Libyans (Otman and Karlberg, 2007; Vandewalle, 2006; Saif AL-Islam, 2002). To implement this plan over the period (1973-1975) a set of laws was established that confirmed the public sector's authority and its essential function for the country's social-economic development. This was followed by a plan (1976-1980) which prepared to finalize the framework for both sectors by distributing the state's capital assets accordingly. In this respect as Otman and Karlberg have shown, the private sector was stunted and highly regulated under the revolutionary government (Otman and Karlberg, 2007).

Between the years of 1990-1999 the Libyan economy was opened up to an extension of its private sector in such areas as light industries, and fishing activities. This limited liberalisation of the economy was framed in law number (242) in 1999 by the General People's Committee (GPC) which systematized the exports of goods; following on from the earlier banking law (1) in 1993 regarding the trade in currency. However, this had limited impact in an economy still overwhelmingly dominated by the state. Crucially the problem of a lack of quality in consumer goods and services remained. As a result, these policies did little to reduce the problems of unemployment, bribery and corruption, all of which had grown during the period of Western sanctions against Libya. In addition to this the period

also saw an increase in the number of black market activities and growing inequalities (Martinez, 2007; NESR, 2006).

During the period 1999-2003 the government began to address these problems by undertaking a series of actions that would eventually leading to the 'new vision' policies. Fundamentally an opening to the West depended upon the Libyan government accepting responsibility for the Lockerbie bombing, taking a clear stand with the West against terrorism after 9/11 and agreeing to open up the Libyan economy to Western investors which would require a massive transformation of Libyan economy and society, something likely to generate much upheaval and dissent. Embracing the neo-liberal concept of privatisation was always going to be highly controversial in a country where the state had dominated social and economic life. Subsequently, in 2003 the government adjusted the law of the Libyan Foreign Investment Broad (LFIB) No: (5) (passed in 1997) which established a series of articles to encourage FDI in the country. This meant guaranteeing private property and the profits of foreign investors (law (7) 2003) which further opened the door to the international private sector. The creation of the Libyan Foreign Investment Board (LFIB) is one of the major policy outcomes of Libya's National Economic Strategy (NES) project between the years of 2003-2007. The LFIB report (2004) says that it is to play a significant role in creating an entrepreneurial culture in Libya and providing support to private business (NESR, 2006; Saif Al-Islam, 2002). In short, this followed standard neo-liberal policies of the state adopting the role of supporting the private sector in either a public-private partnership (PPP) or through private finance initiatives (PFI). It is hard to exaggerate the significance of this for Libyan society, representing as it does the states retreat from economy and society, with the aim of reducing the dependency of the population on the state for welfare. By 2008 the head of the IMF, Dominique Strauss-Kahn, was able to comment on a visit to Libya that (IMF, 2008),

*"Our discussions confirmed that we share many views on Libya's economic achievements and key challenges. Ambitious reforms over the past years have yielded strong and increasingly broad-based growth and macroeconomic stability. The key challenge is to sustain the ongoing reforms, including reducing the size of the government. In this regard, the Wealth Distribution Program presents both opportunities and risks. If designed and implemented properly, it could promote the private sector while minimizing the risks for the delivery of basic public services.*

This statement would have been inconceivable before the Libyan governments shift to its new vision policies and represents an acceptance of increased Western interference in its economic life that both stands in stark opposition to the revolutionary governments previous populist protectionism and which also symbolically represents Libya's acceptance of the need to integrate more fully into the MOWS, with all the risks that it entails.

Further, and with regard to Libya's human capital, the report referred to a comment made by Rajeev Singh-Molares who leads the Monitor Group's project team in Libya that:

*“Over the past two years of the project the Monitor team have come to understand something of the Libyan people, and what we have learnt is there is great well of talent in the country ready to take advantage of the opportunity that the Libyan Economic Development Broad represents”* (LFIB report, 2004:72).

Indeed, such a statement shows to great extent not only the importance of the Libyan graduates as human capital.

The opening up and integration of the Libyan economy into the MOWS was driven by key figures in the government, most notably Dr Al-Baghdadi Al-Mahmoudi the secretary of General people's committee (Prime Minister) and Saif Al-Islam Al- Gaddafi, the chairman of the Gaddafi Institution for Development. Since the end of sanctions in 2004 it has been a governmental priority for Libya to attempt to catch-up as rapidly as possible with the policies of other countries in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA). More pointedly and remarkably it has actively sought to become a partner to the Western states of the core in the War against Terror that it opposed for the duration of the post-revolutionary period (Martinez, 2007; O'Reilly, 2010). Its success in achieving this led noted sociologist Professor Anthony Giddens (2007) to observe that, *'My ideal future for Libya in two or three decades' time would be a Norway of North Africa: prosperous, egalitarian and forward-looking. Not easy to achieve, but not impossible'*.

### **5.3.1 Policies for the promotion of English Language**

Since 2004 Libyan decision-makers have reintroduced the teaching and learning of foreign languages, mainly English, into the curriculum and it is now being taught from Grade five or '10 years old' (NESR, 2006). In so doing the state hopes to be able to increase its revenues

from foreign investment and to use this as a means to fund programs and projects for Libyan economic development. The Libyan Foreign Investment Broad (LFIB) is one of the key institutions for achieving these goals as set out as early as 1997 in Law No: (5) which stipulated that it aimed for *“The transfer of modern technology; develop Libyan human resources; diversify sources of income; Contribute to the development of national products in order to assist their entry into the global markets”*. However, most of those foreign projects investing in Libya are based in the oil industry. The oil industry in Libya has three forms of businesses: first are Libyan national companies, second are companies shared with foreign investors, third are foreign companies.

According to the National Economic Strategy Report (NESR, 2006,) companies in Libya have experienced that graduates from Intermediate and tertiary education, usually need extensive re-training in order to make them productive as workers. This is now seen as a cost for business that should be borne by the state or private individuals, in keeping with the neo-liberal policies of the new vision strategy. The students graduate with high certificates but at the same time lack professional qualifications and most importantly have poor language skills. Dr. Suliman,<sup>48</sup> the director of postgraduate studies, has described that in engineering jobs, for example, where both academic qualifications and English language skills are needed; the lack of English language skills has proven to be a major problem. Thus, he thinks that effective new English language training programs are essential for Libya’s future. It seems to a great extent that the relationship between foreign investments in Libya, the Libyan graduates’ job opportunities, the competitiveness of the Libyan job market, and the Libyan government’s aspiration regarding integration into the global economy, all depend on the skills these graduates must acquire.

According to Yahia and Saleh (2008), the economic sanctions (1993-2003-4) strongly affected both Libyan and non-Libyan employees. According to the report of the UK/Libya: Legislative Framework Committee (LFCR, 2006) once these sanctions were lifted, Libya has sought *“to re-position herself as one of the leading African nations and as a gateway to Africa. Thus, legal reform has become key to creating a stable environment for foreign*

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<sup>48</sup> Focus group method is made with the Libyan Higher Education committee in 10/05/2009.

*investment* (LFCR, 2006:07)”. This report represents the partnership between the Libyan general planning council and the law society of England and Wales. In other words, this has brought about considerable foreign investment in the country; especially in the oil industry (NESR, 2006; Otman and Karlberg, 2007: 247). More specifically, Zaptia (2009):

*“The Board reported that it had successfully promoted a total of 82 investment projects across all sectors in Libya between 2003 and 2007, of which 34 projects were under execution in the first half of 2008. However, beyond projects directly promoted by the Board, there are a total of 153 projects in the execution stage totalling Libyan Dinars 2.77 billion. Out of these projects there are 34 tourism projects totalling LD 242 million forecasted to create 10,000 new jobs”.*

Indeed, Zaptia’s statement emphasises the government’s enthusiasm for attracting foreign investments for promoting Libyan development. However, it has also highlighted the communication problems that exist between the influx of foreign companies, especially English speaking ones, the Libyan government institutions, companies and people. It is this structural supply-side problem that has hindered the job prospects of Libyan graduates who thus far have been unable to take advantage of emerging job opportunities. An example of that was revealed by the British Council<sup>49</sup> who said:

*“Libya wants to re-position itself within the world, but it can’t do that in just Arabic, as Arabic is not the most widely spoken language, there has to be another language that enables Libya to communicate with the world outside, and English is that. Because if you look at the global market, and all research documentation, and all international journals, they are all produced in English, I am not saying that the idea of choosing the English language is correct, but this is the situation now. Now it is time for Libya to rebuild, or more specifically to re-establish, and to maximise its potential, because there is huge potential here but it cannot be done without widening ELA.”*

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<sup>49</sup> An interview was made with the British council in 21/04/2009.

Some foreign investors, in order to solve such a problem of skills shortages, have cancelled some of their requirements in terms of job specifications such as requiring the range of an applicants' age to be 25-30 year old, by raising it up to 40. The reason for this extension is that younger graduates do not have English language skills, so they need some extra time to have English language training courses, while the 40 year olds come ready to work, rather than costing investors extra time/money for training those. Dr, Habiba has described this situation as follows: it is *“unbelievable that we have graduates in the twenty first century who still can't use the English language, especially with the noticeable increase of foreign investors' in Libya”*. Thus, despite the fact that wealth and investment in the country in general is increasing the quality of ELA lags behind this by some way (Zaptia, 2008; Otman and Karlberg, 2007). Zaptia notes that,

*“There has been increased oil production, increased oil income and Libya's general non-oil income has increased. There are new and increased income flows from investments and portfolios.”* He added: *“There are huge and increasing annual budgets, Libya's GDP for 2006 was about US\$68 billion (PPP) and is estimated at US\$ 83 billion plus for 2008. That is a per capita income of over 8,000 for 2006 and estimated at over 12,000 for 2008”*.

Already, then, as Libya enters the initial phase of securing enhanced FDI into its economy and the transformation of its socio-economic conditions, the pressure of the MOWS to conform to the standard of global English has become a structural supply-side problem.

### **5.3.2 Procedure for Promoting its Private Sector**

According to the United Nations Human Development Index (HDI) (2010) Libya has a small population (6.545.6m) and vast wealth (oil), and has reasonable levels of achievements in its education, health care and social-services and self-reliance. In this respect Libya contrasts markedly with many other African/Maghreb countries. But, at the same time, Ogunniyi (1996) pointed out that *“due to various socio-economic factors, African countries have not been able to achieve the goal of self-reliance with respect to scientific and technological human-power development”* (Ogunniyi, 1996: 01). Becker, an early proponent of human

capital, went further when he observed that “*most countries that have a large supply of oil are wasting their resources*” (Becker, 1975:03). In order to overcome these problems the Libyan government has embraced its twin strategy of opening up to the MOWS and developing its human capital resources as a means of making itself an attractive place to invest (Otman and Karlberg , 2007; Black, 2007; and NESR, 2006). Nonetheless the existing skills gap is particularly acute for the Libyan private sector which often faces the difference between the skills required in the job market and the skills that Libyan workers have (NESR, 2006; Otman and Karlberg, 2007). For example, regarding the job seekers of the university graduates and the private sector requirements in Libya, a question was given to Mr Akerm<sup>50</sup> as the manager of one of these private companies,

*“Nowadays in Libya and more specifically in my company when interviewing graduates who have applied for a job, the first thing to be asked about is her/his level of English and computer skills, and the English is most important. Moreover, as a multi-operational company we must have engineers who are highly qualified in English. Because our operations are in English, and most of the terminologies we use are in English, and do not have Arabic translations. We therefore rely on the engineer and the knowledge and proficiency in English language and to solve such a problem we do employ some foreign workers<sup>51</sup> who are qualified and mainly have English language skills”.*

Furthermore, Mr, Akrem went on to explain that many Libyan businessmen and foreign investors in the private sector are still hesitant about investment due to their lack of trust in the government, fearing that its policies could as easily change back to state control and lose them their capital and property. This lack of trust in the Libyan government is a big problem for the new vision strategy and reflects long-standing and understandable scepticism about the government’s commitment to policies that have been regarded for a long time as anathema to its ideological outlook (Gaddafi, 2005; St. John, 2008).

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<sup>50</sup> Individual interview with Mr, Akrem was made in 24/03/2009, the manager of Al-Manar Company for Construction in Libya

<sup>51</sup>He stated “in the civil engineering department we do have foreign employees from different countries such as; 3 German engineers, 3 Tunisians, 12 Jordanians, 12 Egyptians, and 1 Nigerian. In fact, the foreign employees we have are much more than our employees from Libya”.

Although the NES (2006) acknowledges that the private sector in Libya has faced numerous problems, most notably, that they do not have the active support of the government, and this has been changing. According to the International Monetary Fund (IMF, 2006) Libya has achieved a notable improvement in its private sector (Alafi and de Bruijn, 2010). Alafi and de Bruijn (2010:12) stated that:

*“Notable progress has been made on various structural reforms, tariff rates were reduced, resulting in a decline in the simple average tariff to 17.8 percent. This makes it far easier for foreign investments and capital to enter the country. The trade regime was simplified by cutting half the consumption tax rate on imported goods. The state import monopolies were also reduced to petroleum products and weaponry. The list of prohibited import (40 items) was scaled down to less than ten products. The government intend to keep the import bans only for religious and health reasons.”* They added: *“that private sector can freely import or produce goods that were previously under public monopoly. Numerous investment agreements with a number of countries have been signed so that to encourage foreign direct investment and harmonise taxes. Infrastructure is also being modernised and free zones are planned. Certification requirements for trade with Maghreb countries have also been simplified”*.

Nonetheless the limited opportunities, so far, for Libyan graduates means that many are seeking their opportunities in the public sector or shadow economy. In particular people who have graduated from some of the practical sciences faculties such as medicine and engineering or who have had a chance to study abroad where their family’s financial circumstances let him/her to. This point is reinforced by the Libyan representative at the United Nation Information Centre in Libya as she said that:

*“Those Libyan who acquired English language skills are the minority who were able to study abroad or who have the financial capability to cover the expenses of English language courses in Libya. In other words those are the rich people who manage to enrol their kids in foreign schools from the early stages till the higher education.*

*Nevertheless, some of those these rich families can even provide job opportunities for their children to work in foreign companies or embassy offices not for money, but, for the social prestige as interns. Therefore, lower-middle or middle class Libyan graduates who cannot afford to fund these English language courses, would not have the opportunity to work in such places, where they can get high salaries. This has built a huge gap amongst Libyan graduates”.*

These class divisions in Libya are not surprising and reflect the kind of divisions found elsewhere in the MOWS where the wealthy elites use their power to maintain the wealth and status by dominating the best jobs and educational opportunities (Vandewalle, 2006). For the majority, then, the best prospects for employment remain with the state’s own companies or those in partnership with foreign companies (mainly in the oil sector, embassies, airlines) that such graduates find employment. According to Alafi and de Bruijn (2010:12) *“Some key strategic companies are still earmarked for privatisation, particularly Libyan airlines, public telecommunication company, Brega Petroleum Company, and the electricity distribution network. The stock exchange was established in 2006 and by the end of 2007; seven companies (mostly banks) were listed with a capitalisation of LD1.2 billion”.* For example, the national economic strategy report stated that:

*“Engineering and technical skills are an exception to the general shortage of skills, especially in the energy sector where there are many qualified engineers and technicians. This is due to the demand for such technical people from both state-owned enterprises like the LNOC, and from foreign oil companies, which increases salaries, enabling Libyan oil workers to earn more than the average Libyan” (NESR, 2006:63).*

However, the state run companies do not offer the same level of remuneration as that offered by foreign companies and so as a consequence Libyan graduates are failing to maximise their potential earnings. A good comparison of this was at discussion with some employees at the Libyan Foreign Bank where Osama<sup>52</sup> said that:

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<sup>52</sup> Focus group with the Libyan foreign bank in 14/04/2009

*“In the past one of our staff had good English skills but was not good at her job technically. Nonetheless, she left the bank to work with the private sector. Now, she obtains one of the highest positions at that company with great salary because of her English language skills”.*

Accordingly, it seems that the private sector and the foreign companies who deal with the private sector in Libya have created their own solutions which are to employ foreign workers to solve the problem of the lack of English skills in the Libyan job market. One example of this is the Al-Manar company which has employed more than 31 out of 50 employees/engineers in the department of civil engineering are non-Libyan because of their English language skill. Thus, some of the private companies in Libya and some foreign investors have adopted this strategy because they know in advance the Libyan graduates lack English language skills.

### **5.3.3 Reforming State Education Policies**

It is the Libyan education system that is the primary focus of this governmental strategy of bridging the skills gap in order to enable Libyan graduates to meet the demands of the local and global job markets (Porter and Yergin, 2006; Otman and Karlberg, 2007). This view has been supported by the NESR (2006:118) that *“two important goals of the Libyan education system are to contribute to the economic, social and cultural development of Libyan society, by improving the skills and abilities of Libyans, and to rapidly raise standards of human development in the society”.*

For example, in Farrej & Al-Hedary’s study (2008), on the subject of *“the outputs of the educational system and the job market requirements in Libya”*, confirmed that the accounting education curriculum is not adequate in terms of preparing Libyan graduates to properly manage modern accounting systems, be they with private firms or the state itself. Farrej & Al-Hedary divided the types of skills into two groups: the first group was called the general and personal skills, where the reading and writing of English comes as the most important example; while, the second group was called the Job and professional skills, where the ability

to use ICT was the most important quality. Therefore, Farrej & Al-Hedary have persuasively argued that this gap between the skills promoted by the education system and those required in the Libyan job market have not been adequately addressed so far by governmental new vision strategies.

In 2008 a national conference took place in Libya and titled “*The Planning and Training of the Libyan Education Sector: between the Reality and the Job Market’s Requirements*”, which was attended by the state decision makers and international private companies and stakeholders in Libya. The conference reinforced the points made by Farrej and Al-Hedary and focused on Libyan education sector’s policies and its outputs regarding the issues of: unemployment, skills, educational planning and training, workforce strategies, human resources, foreign investments, the policies of the governmental economic development and the requirements of the Libyan job market. In this conference there was agreement on the lack of skills and the lack of quality of the curriculums being taught in the Libyan education system as compared with other MENA countries. Particular attention was paid to the following professional skills: good analytic thinking skills and the ability to solve problems; all kinds of communication skills mainly foreign languages (listening-conversation-writing); and technical information skills. The conference’s papers concluded that the government’s task was to: develop the Libyan graduates and their skills; bridge the gap between the Libyan education sector and the needs of the private and public sectors in the Libyan job market; use this as a means to take the advantage of the implementation of the recent local and foreign investments which would provide jobs for Libyan graduates. Following on from this in 2009 I interviewed Mr. Fikery,<sup>53</sup> the manager of the training department at the Libyan Foreign Bank who told me:

*“There is an annual progression report which all Libyan foreign bank’s employees have to submit. In this annual progression report even though employees have an excellent level of administration skills, they cannot receive an excellent grade unless their English language skills are very good”.*

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<sup>53</sup> Focus group is made with the Libyan foreign bank in 14/04/2009.

## 5.4 The Libyan Government's new Strategy: A Vision for Libya 2019

In 2005 the NESR created a vision for 'Libya 2019', to coincide with the 50th anniversary of the Libyan Revolution and which highlights the economic, social and political opportunities for Libya. The aim of this vision is "to help create a unique model of 'popular capitalism'— that balances market mechanisms with the core values of the Libyan Jamahiriya, to help Libya achieve this inspirational vision" see box (1), (NESR, 2006:01-02) all of which is a long way from the idea of 'Islamic Socialism' that was central to the *Green Book* that had previously guided Libyan development.

### Box 5-1 A Vision for Libya 2019<sup>54</sup>

- 1- **Egalitarian:** Libya is a leader in social welfare, and known as a nation that cares for and is highly responsive to its people. All citizens control their economic needs, enabling them to enjoy a stable, secure and prosperous environment.
- 2- **Democratic:** Libyan direct democracy allows Libyan citizens to efficiently make decisions, and benefit from a responsive government.
- 3- **Productive:** Libya's key resources its people are engaged in highly productive activities, with a real employment rate in excess of 90%, and a strong work ethic.
- 4- **International:** Libya is an internationally connected nation, with an economy that is fully integrated with global markets and a world-class infrastructure.
- 5- **Competitive:** Libya has a thriving diversified economy, with the non-oil GDP reaching more than LD 50Bn. Libyan companies are globally competitive and foreign firms compete to locate their operations in Libya.
- 6- **Entrepreneurial:** Libya is a centre of dynamic entrepreneurial activity with one of the fastest rates of business formation in the world.
- 7- **Skilled:** Libya is a leading centre of education and training developing its own people and opening its doors to foreign students.

<sup>54</sup> (National Economic Strategy Report, 2006:02)

- 8- Connected:** Libya has a state-of-the-art information and communication technology (ICT) infrastructure. This gives Libya's citizens easy access to information, knowledge and education enabling them to take control of their lives.
- 9- Green:** Libya is an environmentally friendly country, protecting its history, heritage and culture and investing in its long-term future. It is a world leader in water management.
- 10- Regional leader:** Libya is a role model that other countries seek to emulate. It has a leadership role within the region, and contributes to the wealth and stability of surrounding nations.

This vision is clearly an optimistic aspiration for Libya and its people. In particular, it has highlighted indirectly some significant problems in Libya such as, respectively, the lack of productive resources other than oil; the lack of an international communications network; an uncompetitive economy; and the fundamental underdevelopment of its human capital. The given goal of Libya to become a leader in the region of Africa, for example, gives us a clear idea of what the Libyan government aspires to but in itself is a long-standing goal rather than a recent initiative (Alafi and de Bruijn, 2010). To achieve the high quality educational system it needs it is very important is that workforce ministry plans are in coordination with those of the education ministry, for example, which has in practice run into problems of intra-bureaucratic rivalry where different parts of the state compete for resources and influence (Ozman and Karlberg, 2007).

Therefore, the new vision for 'Libya 2019' emphasises that people need to be more involved in terms of the country's economic processes, absorptive capacities and goals. It also stresses Libya's unique history, culture and natural resources as qualities that can serve to attract more foreign investments (see chapter-6) (Alafi and de Bruijn, 2010; and NESR, 2006).

However, the underdevelopment of human capital is also seen as one of the main obstacles to reaching 2019's goal. In this regard Mr. Al-Zilitni the leader of the Libyan foreign investments company confirmed the importance of the new vision strategy when he said that:

*“As the world is currently struggling through a huge economic crisis that isn’t affecting the oil producing countries, therefore we should take advantage of this to reduce the gap between our country and the developed countries. The state of Libya shouldn’t be measured by the global financial loss, but rather it should be measured by the chance for Libya and its people to catch-up with the world”.*

Historically in the post-colonial period Libyan people have had a low level of direct participation in the economy. The long-term structural problem of the Libyan economy, a familiar one facing countries in the periphery and semi-periphery (Grugel and Hout, 1999; Wallerstein, 2010), is its over-reliance on one or two primary commodities for export-led growth (gas and oil), which has helped to create a country that *“has been described as a ‘distributive’ state in which national and local institutions emerged not to extract wealth, but to spend it”* (NESR, 2006:26). Though the oil and gas sector are the main sources of revenue for the Libyan economy they actually only employ around 3% of Libyans while contributing 60% of Libya’s GDP. At the same time as the other sectors have 97% of the Libyan workers while they only contribute 40% of Libya’s GDP (NESR, 2006; and Al-Kaber, 2008). This imbalance is a major problem and explanatory factor in Libya’s dependent position in the MOWS; thus far it has been unable to use its vast oil resources for diverse national economic development. Instead what has emerged is a state-dominated economy where the public sector is expected to create jobs for the vast majority of Libyan workers, regardless of the utility of those jobs for Libyan society. This, of course, is a familiar pattern in many countries in the periphery and the semi-periphery and a feature of comparable MENA countries such as Algeria, Tunisia and Egypt (Grugel and Hout, 1999). To this end new vision strategies have been directed towards reforming the public sector, especially the industrial and agricultural sector, as Alafi and de Bruijn (2010) claimed, in order to, *“to achieve more self reliance and self sufficiency in food. It is also aimed to contribute to regional development and job creation”*. Alafi and de Bruijn (2010: 11) added that:

*“Throughout the period of 1970 to 2005, about LD6 (almost \$5) billion was allocated in different development plans for the PIS and LD4 (about \$3.2) was actually spent on it (the Ministry of Electricity, Industry, & Minerals (MEIM), 2006). As result, the PIS rapidly grew as hundreds of industrial projects were established in different regions of the country*

*(Ghanem, 1985). In 2001, it hired 172.1 employees, account for 11.8 percent of total labour force (IMF, 2005). Despite the huge investments that are being poured into the PIS, the sector still relies heavily on oil revenues, especially in providing foreign currency, for both investment and raw inputs (the Ministry of Industry 2000). The contribution of the PIS to the GDP did not exceed 8 percent during 1970s, whereas it dropped to 5.9 percent in 2000 and eventually dropped again to 3.2 percent in. “*

#### **5.4.1 Libya’s New Vision: Attracting Foreign Investment and Diversifying the Workforce**

Al-Kabeer (2008), in his study “*workforce development strategy and its impact on foreign investment*”, indicated that despite the fact that Libya has strategic assets such as its location for tourism and natural resources (oil) that could attract foreign investment, that in fact foreign investment has remained below expectations. The Libyan government’s new vision policies saw it establish the Economic and Social Development Fund in 2006, the National Economic Development Board in 2007, with a remit to overcome the obstacles which impede FDI in Libya. The task set them, however, was one that has proven elusive in most other countries in the periphery and semi-periphery that have embraced the neo-liberal policies of the Washington and post-Washington consensus, namely, to marry social justice with profit for private companies. For example, the Fund provides direct investments in all fields of investment such as tourism, real estate, industry, services and finance with total value of (14 billion L.D). Moreover, in 2008 the UNDP for Libya announced that it had signed a US\$1.86m project with the Board that aimed at supporting the management, coordination, and implementation of the National Development Programmes for 2008 to 2012. The rhetorical aim of the new vision policies is to enable Libya to move towards a diverse and integrated national economic structure (Otman and Karlberg, 2007). To this end these agencies have drawn up plans and strategies for the training and development of its national workforce. On the subject of reforming the labour market the Libyan workforce ministry now plays a vital role. The ministry is expected to work in cooperation and coordination with international organizations such as the World Trade Organisation (WTO) in order to enable Libya to move beyond accession status to full membership (ADD). During the focus group

discussions that was undertaken with postgraduate male students at Al-Fateh University and the higher education academy most of them agreed on one point that, as Gamal said<sup>55</sup>:

*“Our generation who are in their thirties are facing huge difficulties with the job market in Libya, especially at this time with increasing foreign investments which provide higher salaries for those with the required skills.”*

Omran emphasized<sup>56</sup>:

*“I am not talking about the young generation who are acquiring English language skills just for entertainment or for travelling and tourism. Those generations have different perspectives for learning language skills in contrast with our generation.”*

#### **5.4.2 Libya’s New Vision: Tangible Steps?**

According to the NESR (2006) Libyan policy since 2004-5 is acting in response to the new vision agenda which insists that:

*“Libya needs to undertake actions in four different areas in order to address its competitiveness challenges. First, it needs to establish a **governance system** that can drive the action agenda forward in line with the needs of a competitive Libya. Second, it needs to focus on **people development** building workforce skills through education reforms and training, as well as improving quality of life for Libyans through targeted interventions in health, housing and social security. Third, it needs to undertake a number of actions to upgrade the overall **business environment**, making it easier for local and foreign companies to operate in Libya. And finally, Libya needs to focus on **developing clusters** of industries that can drive competitiveness and growth. Specific actions under these areas are discussed below” (NESR, 2006:140).*

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<sup>55</sup> Gamal male group from Al-Fateh University by focus group was made in 21/04/2009

<sup>56</sup> Omarn male group from the higher education academy by focus group method that used in 17/04/ 2009

Since then a number of steps have been rapidly implemented by the government especially towards the non-energy sectors like banking, airlines, tourism, construction and human resources development. Consequently, educational reforms have started including privatisation of the public educational institutions to become the new Participatory Education Institutions (PEI) and establishing private training centres for ELA (Otman and Karlberg, 2007).

The second important step in Libya's new vision strategy concerns the banking system. The banking system was described by the NES report (2006) as limited in terms of its activities such as business information and a functioning financial market. These activities, if reformed in accord with neo-liberal principles of deregulation, contribute positively to industrial development and support the growth of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). According to the National Economic Strategy the banking sector needs *"to increase its access to payments systems and financial products that are commonplace in other countries, and access to funds for the private sector, especially SMEs"* (NESR, 2006:54). Consequently, tangible reforms have been introduced by the government in the financial sector. Thus, the main reform of this sector was passed in 2005 where the Libyan banking sector adopted a new banking law (Law No: 18) that mostly is aiming to:

*"(1) Emphasizing the independence of the Central Bank in line with international best practices; (2) Improving the capital adequacy ratio of commercial banks; (3) Strengthening the competitiveness of domestic banks, eventually leading to the participation of foreign banks in the domestic banking market; (4) Extending the domain of Central Bank supervision to include all banks including the three specialized banks (Agricultural Bank, Bank for Real Estate Investment and Savings, Development Bank), which were previously excluded from its supervisory domain; (5) Adopting Basel II principles on effective banking supervision; and (6) improving standards of and requirements for supervisory disclosure by the banks"* (NESR, 2006:55).

To transform this Banking law into established practices is to be followed by the next step that separates the Central Bank's ownership and supervisory functions regarding commercial banks. The Central Bank of Libya is the representative of the banking sector including the monetary

authority and is 100% state owned (The Central Bank Report, 2008). However, in order to enhance its attractiveness for foreign capital in 2005 the Libyan government started by privatising two of its large state-owned banks, the Al-Sahari bank and the Al-Wahda bank (Alafi and de Bruijn, 2010).

With regard to FDI in Libya this is also an area where profound reforms have been undertaken by the government to help integrate the Libyan economy into the norms of the global economy of the MOWS. The private sector in Libya lacks access to foreign capital and even the ability to buy the parts it needs to maintain industrial equipment. For example, the private sector experienced difficulties in the Libyan job market “*not only in terms of the expense of spare parts, but also the difficulty of obtaining them*” (Alafi and de Bruijn, 2010: 12). In addition foreign capital seeking to invest in Libya has faced numerous problems such as: the length of the licensing procedure to operate in Libya and the remaining uncertainty about the stability of Libya’s reforms and their impact on society (NESR, 2006). In 2004 the General People’s Committee for Planning and Commerce amended Law No (5), originally passed in 1997, to create the Libyan Foreign Investment Board (LFIB) to encourage and promote foreign projects in Libya and to organize and supervise foreign investment in the country. For example, article No 6 of this law states:

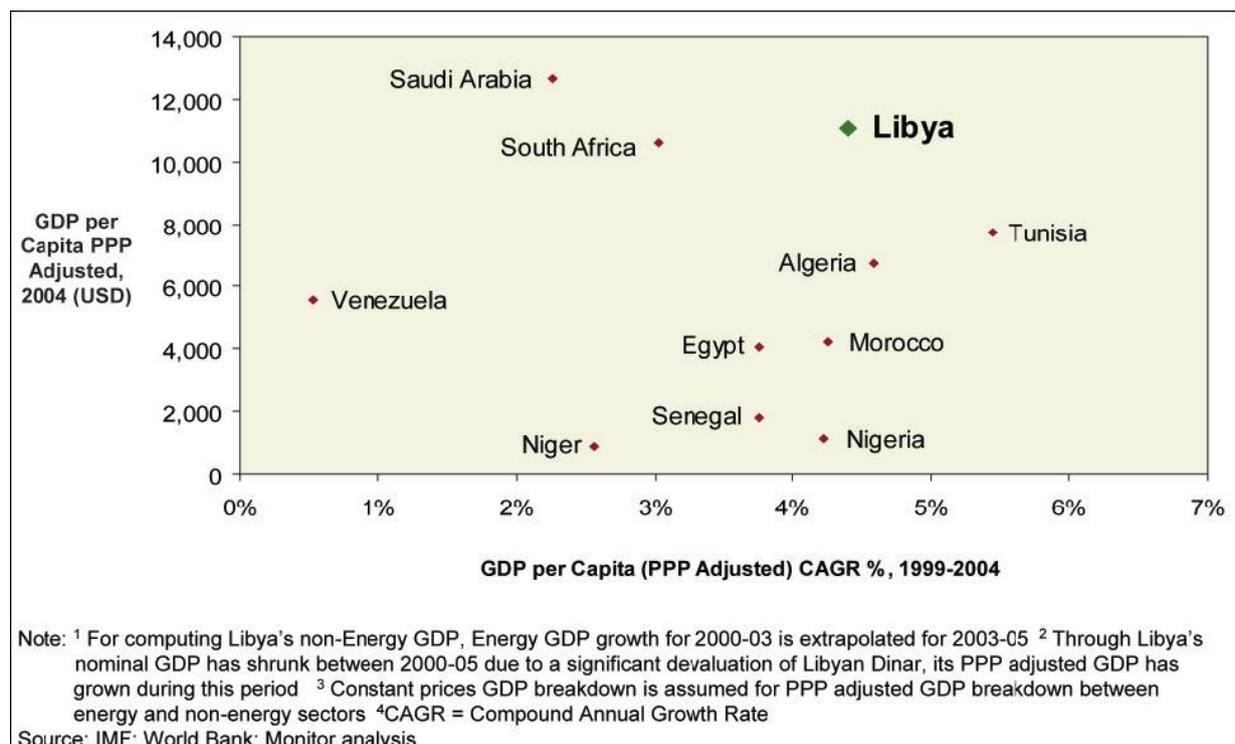
*“The authority shall work for the encouragement of foreign capital investment and in particular it shall: study and propose plans to organize foreign investment and supervise foreign investment in the country.” and “to receive the applications for foreign capital investments to determine whether they satisfy existing legal requirements and the feasibility of the project and then submit its recommendations to the Secretary of state accordingly”* (Otman and Karlberg, 2007: 252).

Thus, the country has made notable progress in terms of structural reforms like reducing the tariffs in order to make it far easier for foreign investments and capital to enter the country (IMF, 2005 cited in Alafi and de Bruijn, 2010). It is worth mentioning that the government has also begun to use national investment in the private sector to promote its growth and act in accord with practices that have become common elsewhere in the MOWS. The Economic

and Social Development Fund mentioned above is one way in which the government is seeking to support its newly emerging private sector in areas like tourism, real estate and industry. Despite the newness of these policy changes by the Libyan government they have their precedents in political rhetoric at least. As far back as 1993, Colonel Gaddafi was insisting on pro-capitalist changes to the Libyan economy, “*We have considered how to raise the income of Libyan citizens*”, but Libyans “*have to engage in trade, we have to produce and make a profit*” (Gaddafi, 1993 cited in NESR, 2006:10).

Since the reforms began in the late 1990s and were intensified from 2004 Libya has achieved strong GDP growth especially in the last few years (NESR, 2006), as measured by its GDP per capita of about USD 11,000 in contrast with the region’s countries (see figure-1).

**Figure 5.1: GDP (PPP<sup>57</sup> Adjusted) Performance, 1999–2004, Libya Relative to Peers**



<sup>57</sup> “Purchasing Power Parity (PPP) is an estimate of the exchange rate required to equalize the purchasing power of different currencies, given the prices of goods and services in the countries concerned. It is designed to accurately reflect the difference in standards of living between countries. Adjusting GDP per capita for PPP is necessary because market exchange rates do not accurately measure differences in income and consumption among countries” (NESR, 2006).

#### 5.4.2.1 Create a Competitive Market Nationally and Internationally

In recent years Libya has liberalised many aspects of its economy, opening its markets to competition from abroad and from FDI (Alafi and de Bruijn, 2010; Porter, 2007) This step is, in theory, to ensure well-organized, competitive and open markets, in order to increase the local and foreign investments into the country. “*The opening of our markets is irreversible,*” Gaddafi stated to a group of European businessmen in 2004 (Gaddafi, 2004 cited in NESR, 2006:12). However, huge obstacles to this process remain and take two particular forms: (a) national challenges such as resistance to change from those who benefit from the distribution of revenues from natural resources such as oil, import licenses and other government-granted privileges. Most of those people are working in the governmental sectors, and they are wary of economic reforms that would diminish their own power, a familiar Weberian dilemma about the nature of bureaucracy. Therefore, the Libyan government has offered the key jobs to people who are genuinely qualified in their fields rather than through the traditional network of patrons and clients; (b) and international challenges like the ability to create economic clusters of investment and production of a kind found throughout the global economy. “*Clusters affect competitiveness because of their positive impact on company productivity, innovative capacity, and new business formation*”, and thus reflect their ability to link those clusters within global economic chains. Hence, the NES report assured that Libya to meet these challenges needs “*to move from isolated firms to clusters, and to link these clusters to global value chains and markets*” (NESR, 2006: 23).

Intriguingly distributing the wealth of Libya more equitably amongst its people remains one of the main strategies of the Libyan government. However, this clearly goes against the tendency of integration into the MOWS which are producing polarised societies and economies in most of the world’s countries. Without state intervention to rectify this it is difficult to see how the Libyan government can prevent this happening. And there is the dilemma. If it does do this it will jeopardise the foreign investment flowing into Libya which expects to see a lean and neo-liberal state reducing its size and power for the private sector to operate freely. Libya, in contrast with much of the MENA, is distinguished with extensive provision of social services like the free education, health care, and housing which are the key measure of this equitable distribution. If these are under threat because of the pressure to integrate into the MOWS it will raise serious problems of legitimacy for the government which may be forced to adopt more overt forms of repression to maintain its power over

society. According to NES report (2006:129) “*Libya’s per capita income is comparatively high as a result of its oil production and it appears to be doing fairly well in distributing this income among its population Libya has registered strong growth in prosperity over the last few years, as measured by its GDP per capita, adjusted for purchasing power*”. But, the report of the national economic strategy still estimated that about one million Libyans are not having their basic needs met. So how is the government to achieve this apparently impossible task of neo-liberal policies and social equality?

One of the current plans for promoting greater equity of wealth distribution is to adjust the law No (15) of 1981, in order to improve/upgrade people’s wages. This plan was implemented in 2006 and aims to provide cost of living adjustments with sensible measures. GPC decision No. (277) of 2006 raised minimum salaries in the public and private sectors providing the basic government salaries at the following levels: 180 LD for persons without dependents, 220 LD for families with two members, and 500 LD for a family of three or more members. Furthermore, this law raised minimum salaries for other categories of employees, including those with higher qualifications and technical skills and corporations not financed by the central government. Thus, although Libyans are provided with relatively equitable distribution of wealth amongst its people and as the wealthiest country in North Africa, it can only do so through the kind of state subsidies that the new vision policies want to curtail. That said, globally accepted data on inequality in Libya is not available so there are serious problems in terms of measuring this trend.

#### **5.4.2.2 Promoting Training Strategies Programs/Regarding Skills and ELA**

At the present time and according to the Libyan educational policies of 2005, Libya has been encouraging the universities and higher educational institutions to start courses in specialized scientific usage of computers, teaching foreign languages, and Information and Communication Technologies (NESR, 2006). This has also led to the encouragement of faculty members to attend the same courses in order to develop their abilities too. As Walsh (2006) has argued “*all languages and cultures regardless of their status or numerical size, can play a positive role in national development*”. He posits that this “*can be done by integrating language into processes of socio-economic development and that none is*

*inherently anti-development*". Echoing the instrumental view of language touched upon in chapter two, Walsh's point, shared by current Libyan government strategy, is that language has a broader role in society than that of communication alone. It is this view that the Libyan government are now generally adhering to, with a few dissenting voices. In this regard the previous secretary of the workforce committee<sup>58</sup> illustrated the importance of English language by saying that:

*"for Libya as it integrates into the global economy it is clear that acquiring the English language has become the main element for all those potential investors in our country along with computer skills. Both foreign and local partners are relying entirely on these two skills in different fields in Libya"*.

### **5.5 Global English: Globalisation and English Language Skills**

Language skills have become critical ingredients in the context of globalization and all that it entails, in particular what Agarwal describes as the "*integration of the labour market for skilled people*" (Agarwal, 2006: 1). Though different languages – English, Spanish, French, and Chinese - vie for supremacy, English has long been perceived as globally dominant. Pattison (1965) posits that English "*is now a world language not only because it is much used internationally but because it is assisting the development of so much of the world*" (Pattison, 1965: 09). According to Swales (1993) there is indeed a story of the irrepressible march of the English language across the face of the earth; of its union with the powerful new technologies for disseminating information; of the growth of regional and functional varieties of the language; of the personal and functional value of being able to communicate in English. He cites a short passage, written in 1985 by the lexicographer of the English language, Robert Burchfield (1985) to buttress this point:

*"English has also become a lingua franca to the point that any literate, educated person on the face of the globe is in a very real sense deprived if he does not know English. Poverty, famine and disease are instantly recognized as the crudest and least*

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<sup>58</sup> Individual interview was made the previous secretary of the workforce committee in 02/05/2009

*excusable forms of deprivation. Linguistic deprivation is a less easily noticed condition, but one nevertheless of great significance” (Swale, 1993:283-284).*

It is this kind of belief, says Swale (1993) that impels many governments, corporations, institutions, and educational systems to invest heavily in improving the English skills of their citizens, employees, and students. This position seems to be supported by Bleakley and Chin (2004) who argue that language is a function of the labour market, an instrument, which either determines a low or high return on the language skills of employees, making the relationship between language and earnings a key factor in the spread of English. In support of that belief Husam,<sup>59</sup> one of the Libyan postgraduates at Al- Fateh University, stated that: *“I am learning English language for financial reasons is that if I acquired English, I could find a good job opportunity and thus would get a higher salary.”* However, the costs of attending courses in language training centres are quite expensive, up to 3000 D.L for 3 months. This would necessarily exclude many Libyans from attending and illustrates how the impact of the neo-liberalisation of the Libyan economy will very quickly sharpen already existing class divisions in society. In this context, Mr, Outman<sup>60</sup> from the Libyan Airline Company considered that:

*“Nowadays people in Libya believe that by acquiring English language, they might have chance to work with any foreign company or embassy, by which salaries would be four times higher than they would get with a public institution”.*

However, the utility of English as the global language is not an uncontested belief. For example, Swale (1993) stated that *“those who have investigated the place of English in Science, or Agriculture or Medicine find many large claims about its overwhelming predominance to be exaggerated, since they are based on biased and pre- selected data”*. He added for instance:

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<sup>59</sup> One of the focus group male participants which was made in 12/04/2009 at Al-Fateh University

<sup>60</sup> Focus group method is used with the Libyan airline in 23/4/2009

*“The late Peter Strevens could persuasively pile up the evidence for continued expansion, while Richard Bailey (1992) can produce evidence of an opposing trend. Bailey can point to low rates of population increase in countries where English is strong, and high birth rates in countries where English is weak. And in some countries with high birth rates and a strong English tradition, evidence of decline is patent as, for example, it is in the Philippines. Moreover, in the last decade we have witnessed a collapse in the model of economic development that laid stress on 'missing human capital' in developing countries. 'Invest in training and use English to do it' now seems a partial and fragile answer to Africa's many problems. Meanwhile John Maher (1986) has convincingly argued that languages rise and fall according to the amount of new information they contain. And so he traces the linguistic history of medical advance: Sanskrit, Chinese, Greek, Arabic, Latin, German, and now English” (Swale, 1993: 286).*

The dominance of English language in the world today is because it is the language of choice in international relations and commerce, and is spoken in many countries which were under different geopolitical influences e.g. French, Spanish and Portuguese (Lim, 2004; Fisherman, 2001). According to Lim (2004) *“Many people in the world think English is a global language and worth learning either in order to enrich their lives or to advance in their careers”* (Lim, 2004:17). However, Block (2004:17-18) argued that *“Some scholars, most notably Robert Phillipson and Tove Skutnabb-Kangas (for example see Phillipson 1992, 2003; Skutnabb-Kangas, 2000), fear that English is becoming the dominant language of international communities devoted to political, commercial, cultural and academic endeavours, they warn of the death of other languages (what Skutnabb-Kangas and Phillipson (2001) have termed 'linguicide') in the wake of globalized and globalizing English”* that the English language is becoming so dominant that it provides a linguistic infrastructure as powerful as any technological system for transmitting ideas and cultures (Block, 2004; and Said, 1994a). It is this aspect of global English that makes it such an important part of the MOWS, advantaging those in the core at the expense of those in the rest of the system. This idea needs to be qualified slightly, though, as Said observes when he said, (1994: xxvii) *“Western imperialism and Third World nationalism feed each other, but at*

worst they are neither monolithic nor deterministic” (Said, 1994a). Moreover, Mr, Al-Zlitini<sup>61</sup> the head of the Libyan Foreign Investments Institution said of ELA that:

*“By the new era of globalization the whole world becomes conditioned to acquire English language and this is a matter of power, not choice. ‘*

Additionally, he mentioned that:

*“The lack of English language would cause some problems for many institutions. For example, we have some of these problems now with the need for reading market indicators about supply and demand and measuring efficiency. Since time is very crucial in reading and responding to such changeable indicators it is always best to have employees who are highly skilled in English language to work in this field”.*

## **5.6 English Language and Employment in Libya**

Libya has for years battled with unemployment among its graduates as according to Otman and Karlberg *‘the World Bank currently estimates the Libyan unemployment at around 25%’* (Otman and Karlberg, 2007: 328). Many experts have placed the cause of the problem on the inability of graduates to compete for top jobs offered by foreign firms in the country as a result of poor English skills and the nationals’ tendency to be exclusively interested in administrative posts (Otman and Karlberg, 2007; and PANA Press, 2006). By contrast and historically the state offers secure and permanent employment regardless of the needs of the Libyan economy, a classic rentier state solution. This is a big issue among most Arabic countries in the MENA. For instance Wilkins (2005) noted a problem of rising unemployment rates among young people, who are increasingly educated in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and the other Gulf countries. As is the case with Libya, the vast majority of UAE nationals are employed in the public sector (Wilkins, 2005; Alafi and de Bruijn, 2010). Unemployment among the young is a particular problem for authoritarian governments as it

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<sup>61</sup> An interview was made with Mr Al-Zlitini the leader of the Libyan foreign investments institution in 12/05/2009

is the young who are most likely to protest and raise grievances about their lack of opportunities and freedoms as was seen in the Iranian protests of 2009. This provides an added incentive for the Libyan government to transform its economy and society but it is, as mentioned, a path fraught with danger because of the uncertainty such transformations generate.

In an attempt to address the increases in Libyan graduates' unemployment, the Libyan government is privatising several public corporations and putting into place a policy of awarding loans and financial incentives to public sector workers who wish to shift to the private sector (Salam and Flanagan, 2005; Porter, 2007; George and Miles, 2010; ). The government is also insisting that foreign firms honour their employment quota of Libyan nationals. This seems to be almost the same approach that the UAE is pursuing: the priority being to secure employment for nationals by replacing expatriate workers with UAE nationals (Wilkins, 2005). But this approach by the Libyan government is facing challenges because: (1) many nationals come to the labour market with no work experience, a poor standard of written English, unsatisfactory IT skills and sometimes inappropriate qualifications; (2) according to Otman and Karlberg (2007:142) there is an "*amount of laxity in enforcing mandatory quotas for Libyan employees which have been violated by many foreign companies*"; and (3) Most private sector firms are not willing to train unskilled and inexperienced nationals and then pay them a high salary, when the business environment that attracts them is based on cheap labour and cost minimisation (Wilkins, 2005). So, the question then is: who is to pay the costs of human capital development? The logic of the current phase of the MOWS suggests that it is the state as an enabling state that subsidises the private sector by providing these educational and training programmes to reduce the costs upon business. Secondly, it is the responsibility of private individuals to fund their own development through education. Mr. Akrem<sup>62</sup> supports the last point as he is the owner of a company which must have engineers highly qualified in English because the operations are in English and most of the terminologies they use are in English and do not have Arabic translations. Mr. Akrem added:

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<sup>62</sup> Individual interview with Mr, Akrem was made in 24/03/2009, the manager of Al-Manar Company for Construction in Libya

*“In the civil engineering department we do have foreign employees from different countries such as: 3 German engineers, 3 Tunisians, 12 Jordanians, 12 Egyptians, and 1 Nigerian. In fact, the number of foreign employees we is much more than our employees from Libya”.*

This argument supports what the spokeswoman<sup>63</sup> of the United Nation Information Centre (UNIC) in Libya’s says as she claimed that the lack of English language skills is the main reason to keep the Libyan graduates out of the job markets. She further said that:

*“From my personal experience I could see in graduates’ eyes the deep pain that they felt due to their lack of English language skills. Otherwise my director would have been a Libyan graduate highly skilled in English language, rather than the Indian national that currently is managing my office. I see this as a lost job opportunity for Libyan graduates. Although we advertise for such vacancies many times it seems that foreign workers are replacing Libyan workers”.*

Thus rather than a quota system being enforced by the state it appears that in practice foreign companies largely ignore it, with the state’s connivance. Nevertheless, Mr. Hakeim<sup>64</sup> from the Libyan National Oil Corporation (LNOC) stated that those foreign workers have, in fact, helped Libyan national workers to improve their English language skills. He further explained that:

*“One of our colleagues has been assigned to a department where his major work is with foreign workers and he must speak with them in English although he has only a high school certificate. He has made excellent progress in his language skills, ’*

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<sup>63</sup> Individual interview was made in 31/03/2009 with the Libyan spokeswoman of the united nation information centre

<sup>64</sup> One of participants that was involved in the focus group discussion in 22/04/2009 at the Libyan National Oil Corporation institution.

But, Mr. Hakeim indicates that thanks to his institution's intensive training programs "we are catching up with English language skills in some areas". Mr. Hakeim has stated that,

*"In the human resource department we follow certain rules when receiving graduates for jobs. We set language tests for graduates in order to determine their maximum level of knowledge. Then we provide graduates with suitable training program based on their current knowledge levels. We used to train each year from 30 to 40 graduates, now the number has increased to about 120 or 140 trainees for English language courses. "*

With regard to unemployment he revealed that:

*"I'm the information specialist at LNOC and we are allocated about 10 thousand graduates per annum to work with as directed by the Manpower Committee. Thus, we must adopt a process of differentiation, where some of those graduates will be rejected and others are accepted, based on real job needs. However, those graduates who combined their professional qualifications with English language skills will be the most likely to be accepted. Though the institution might sometimes have to accept some of those other graduates because of the insistence of the manpower committee, even where there are no vacancies for them such as with graduates from social science or geography. This is a consequence of the fact that we suffer from mass unemployment in Libya while we employ more than 3 million foreign workers from different countries".*

This situation of the Libyan graduates and their lack of skills in addition to the estimated figure of the foreign workers in Libya have contributed to a high rate of unemployment amongst Libyans. Nonetheless there remains an important debate about how to categorise the type of unemployment in Libya. This question was developed via several discussions that were made with some of the relevant stakeholders and groups such as: the workforce Institution, and the LNOC. More specifically, the job market has tended to move towards the overproduction of certain types of occupation, such as medical sciences or engineering because they have the highest social prestige for families. Practically and as a result of the recent LNOC workforce statistics revealed that it "had 1000 engineers for the jobs of 100", thus, the LNOC noticeably condemned the educational system's plans rather the unemployment itself.

At the aforementioned conference held in Tripoli in 2008 on '*Educational planning and training: between reality and the needs of the job market in Libya*', a key criticism that emerged in the conference was that the Libyan educational strategy was still geared towards the quantity of students produced, not the quality, a problem that is increasingly common in higher education globally as governments coerce and encourage more people to attend university. As a result Libya faced an excess number of students in the faculty of the social sciences where it has increased to 53.7% while the practical sciences have declined to 46.7%. As a consequence the Libyan Workforce Committee says that this generates more problems for the job market with students graduating with qualifications that are not appropriate for what is demanded by employers (Al-Kabeer, 2008).

Having said that, Al-Kabeer (2008) suggested five points which could develop the workforce and thus improve the quality of Libyan education and training sector: (1) to focus on the principle of quality and efficiency; (2) to integrate the policy of the workforce development with the strategies of the education sector, and the national economic strategy of Libya; (3) to raise the 'added value' of the Libyan workers through the workforce development programs; (4) find a practical means for ensuring a high degree of harmonization of educational and training outputs with the needs of the Libyan job market; and finally (5) there is a need to establish a system to measure the skills (human capital) to make the training efforts stronger in the country. This is an example of the shift in the state strategy in Libya towards becoming an enabling state which supports business by ensuring that the countries human capital (education and health) are developed at public, not private, expense. Clearly the Libyan government has vast oil revenues to try to attain this. What it lacks is the quality of state personnel to make the transformation easily and effectively.

The lack of productivity and efficiency in the Libyan job market has happened for two primary reasons: first most jobs have been working for the state and there has been a massive overproduction of public sector workers in occupations that are not actually needed. Second, many such jobs have been secured on the basis of patrimonial connections rather than due to the qualities of a particular candidate. This client-patron relationship has been an important

and problematic part of the Libyan economy and job market and is a common form of corruption found throughout the MOWS, taking different forms in different places. Thus, social relationships very often in Libya contribute in directing graduates to unsuitable positions in terms of their careers/specialties because these posts are close to where they live, for example, or due to high salaries. This lack of labour mobility is an example of the kind of structural problem that the Libyan government is now trying to remedy but it runs up against long-standing and deeply entrenched cultural beliefs. The previous Secretary General of the Libyan Manpower Committee confirmed this point by saying:

*“The social relations in Libya are a continuing problem for us in the manpower committee. We are not obliged to find graduates jobs according to where they live, but according to their specialties”.*

The previous Secretary General of the Libyan Manpower Committee, Mr Abodul-Albaset, restated the importance of the Manpower Committee as an institution which works on organizing job opportunities in both administrative and commercial systems within public and private institutions. To this end he said:

*“In Libya we have a so-called ‘work regulation law’, which is regulation 58, since 1970. This law is directed to public and private institutions in Libya which receive funds from the public treasury. Our job is to organise work for people each year in these institutions. But we have too many people looking for too few jobs.”*

In response to this statement, Shaban et al (1995:66) regarding the challenge of unemployment in the MENA region stated that: *"many governments also had to curtail their hiring of young university and secondary school graduates, who had hitherto relied primarily on the government for employment."* Especially if one consider the large flows of migrants since the 1990s from labour-sending countries like Egypt and Tunisia into Libya (Shaban et al, 1995). Those challenges would contribute not only to increase unemployment rates among graduates, but also would affect the job market competitiveness. Thus, Mr Abodul-Albaset

emphasised the confusion that some people might face, especially university graduates, who have grown up in a world to think that creating job opportunities is the responsibility of the Manpower Committee rather than something that emerges in the job market. He explained that currently there is another institution which has been introduced to help with organizing job opportunities in the Libyan job market, which are the National Centre of Economy and Planning (NCEP). This unawareness of how work is allocated in a capitalist market is illustrative of the way in which Libya has been shielded from full integration into the MOWS. With this centre the Manpower Committee are try to work with the other sectors such as education to establish the requirements of the Libyan job market and place graduates in the right posts:

*“Recently we have worked hard in Libya along with other institutions such as the National Centre of Economy and Planning to organize the process of filling job opportunities among the private and public sectors. The Libyan government is also taking care of its graduates in order to achieve a balance between educational outputs and job market requirements in Libya”.*

Very often, the gap between job market requirements and the available specialties or skilled graduates lay in the absence of integrated educational and work policies, again reflecting the limited and uncoordinated nature of the Libyan state. More to the point the Libyan education system has been placing great emphasis upon funding technical colleges despite the fact that graduates from these colleges were not well trained or able to secure jobs. This is supported by the National Economic Strategy report (2006) since it declares that:

*“At present Libya has 15,000 students in medical faculties, compared to just over 9,000 practicing doctors, and a total population of around 6 million. It simply does not need to educate this many doctors. At the same time, there is a major lack of other health workers, pharmacists, medical technicians and trained paramedics” (NESR, 2006:115).*

This has led to foreign workers replacing those technicians in places such as the medical centre in Tripoli. The NES report was laying blame on the Libyan educational and work polices when it argued that:

*“The expensive funding of Libyan doctors pursuing post-graduate specializations abroad has also been inefficient, as Libya has not derived a benefit from their skills. Faced with low salaries at home, they have chosen to make their careers abroad and Libya has been forced to import expensive foreigners to replace them”* (NESR, 2006: 115-116).

In addition to these technical problems in the Libyan educational and job market there has to be added the variety of social changes that have been transforming Libyan society over the past 30 years. These include: rising female independence, secularism, social mobility and professional ambition, declining polygamy and patriarchy, detribalisation, and most importantly, a more cosmopolitan global outlook (George and Miles, 2010; Al-Nouri, 1995). It is this tension between the demands of the MOWS and Libya’s long-standing cultural traditions, such as its tribal groups that is likely to be the main fault line as the government attempts to transform the Libyan economy. In terms of the importance of global skills, Mr. Al-Zilitni<sup>65</sup> the head of the Libyan Foreign Investments Institution (LFII) once more emphasised the necessity of English skills for the emerging Libyan financial sector:

*“For instance, if we talk of the financial transactions sector, we will find certain rules and policies that are being implemented all over the world. No one anywhere can operate without understanding these rules and policies, which are written in English”.*

Additionally he emphasised that the lack of English language skills results in the following problem: investment planning for the company relies on cooperation with other markets around the world which depends upon English language as it is the language of global financial markets. This point was emphasised by employees that I interviewed at the British Arab Commercial Bank in London (2010). Adel,<sup>66</sup> assistant manager in treasury marketing and sales at the Bank told me that:

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<sup>65</sup> Individual interview was made with Mr. Al-Zilitini the boss of the Libyan foreign investments institution in 12/05/2009

<sup>66</sup> One of the focus group’s participants that was made in 15/01/2010 at the British Arab Commercial

*“Acquiring English not only enabled me to get a good job opportunity abroad, it also makes possible my career development for when I go back to Libya.”*

This is a clear indication of a strong correlation between English language skills and employment for some Libyans, then. There is also strong evidence that many believe this relationship to be causal. The extent to which this is a plausible view to hold will become clearer in the remaining chapters but for Libya, as for many countries in the periphery and semi-periphery, it is an article of faith reinforced by ideas about human capital and development.

## **5.7 Conclusion**

This chapter examined the arguments currently being put forward in Libya for ELA skills as a means of promoting employment for graduates. The argument being articulated by the Libyan government and various international agencies is that English language is an important skill to be obtained because of the recent influx of foreign firms into Libya. This is particularly acute as the unemployment rate stands at a relatively high rate of 25-30% per cent in a population of 6.5 million, almost 60% of whom are under 25 according to the National Information and Documentation Authority. According to Otman and Karlberg (2007: 376) *“the North African region has the most rapid population growth rates in the world with population more than doubling in the last 30 years”*. They suggested that by 2025 Libya’s population would have doubled from its current level.

Establishing this relationship between ELA and employment in the Libyan job market is therefore seen by the government and international agencies as the first step in finding solutions to unemployment. However, the evidence presented on the subject in Libya is not conclusive about such a link. Although countries such as India and China appear to have benefitted economically by investing heavily in English language skills for their students it is far from clear that such experiences can be universalised and extended throughout the MOWS. The BRIC countries have particular advantages that most do not, large populations, large territory, and big internal consumer markets and so on. The specific social and historical context as well as the geography, natural resources, size and breadth of population and

country are all factors that have to be taken into account when considering the impact of ELA as a factor in any developmental strategy. We shall look at this issue in more detail in the fifth and sixth chapter of the thesis.

Theoretically the argument made by the Libyan government is in keeping with the spread of global neo-liberalism since the 1980s. After providing something of a fortress for three decades against the untrammelled movement of western capital, largely enabled by its vast oil reserves, the long-term structural contradictions in the economy had remained unchecked. As Libya's state expanded and became more inefficient so the reliance on unearned income from the export of oil intensified the imbalance in Libya's economy. The embrace of neo-liberalism is a desperate attempt to redress these problems in a manner that will also enable the Gaddafi regime to remain in power. Whilst it is not comparable to the shock therapy undergone by Russia and other former communist states its cultural, political and economic impact is just as profound. For decades Libya had resisted and opposed Western imperialism, the very logic of the MOWS. And now the government has had to embrace the very ideology that it has opposed for all of this time.

In so doing it has sought to promote the idea that the acquisition of global English will serve as a mechanism to enhance the employment prospects for Libyan students, particularly graduates. The difficulty in sustaining this argument, as chapter 7 will show, is that the market for English speaking employees in the periphery is limited and often limited to work that does not require English language skills. Libya is late entering into this particular race and has done so only to find that most other states in the periphery, semi-periphery and indeed non-English language states in the core have a well established structure for ELA in their educational programmes. This leaves the Libyan policy particularly vulnerable in the MOWS. What exactly are the jobs that Libyan graduates will apply for? The economy remains heavily centred on oil extraction and this remains largely in the hands of a limited number of skilled Libyan engineers and foreign workers. Without attending to the need to diversify its economy Libya's strategy seems destined to generate limited returns when measured as increased employment for its graduates. In the next chapter I will look at the attempts by the Libyan state to reform the state and private sector in order to make it more attractive to foreign capital and as part of its neo-liberalisation of Libyan economy and society.



## **Chapter 6:- State Strategies for Promoting ELA in Libya: The ‘New Vision’ and Promoting Public-Private Partnerships**

### **6.1 Introduction**

The need to teach and learn English, the global language (or ‘global English’), has had a profound impact upon the educational institutions and curriculums of many countries in the MOWS (Nunan, 2003). This chapter examines the role of the Libyan state regarding this matter and its attempt to cultivate a new relationship with Libya’s small but growing private sector. The latter, as part of the new vision strategy, is crucial to the Libyan government if it wishes to be accepted as a legitimate and effective part of the MOWS, rather than the dissident or critical position that it has previously occupied. The chapter will be divided into two sections: the first section of this chapter will focus on the role of the state regarding its strategies towards ELA in Libya. This section will address the following questions: What has the state done in order to encourage the acquisition of English? What does the Libyan state say about human capital as part of its programme to encourage development and how does it try to develop this? What does this tell us about the way in which the Libyan state is transforming itself in order to fit into the MOWS? To what extent do the policies of the Libyan state successfully address the troubling idea that human capital might be a part of an Orientalist discourse about development in the MOWS? The second section of the chapter offers an analysis of the emerging private sector in English language provision in Libya.

Theoretically the transformation of the Libyan state and economy reflects the structural dependency of the Libyan economy on the MOWS. What is remarkable, in many ways, is that the Libyan government have been able for so long to resist full integration into the MOWS. This is not simply a fact of Libya being a rentier state. There are many rentier states that have vast oil reserves but have been much more clearly integrated into the MOWS. The Libyan positing has been shaped by the political-ideological ambitions of the group surrounding Gaddafi who came to power in the 1969 revolution. They held to an ideology shaped by the work of figures such as Fanon which argued that in order to resist neo-colonialism the Third World (dependent state) had to literally and psychologically throw off the colonial legacy. Thus the expulsion of foreign military bases from Libya was a symbolic and material manifestation of this commitment to Third World independence and it is this politico-ideological leadership that has given the Gaddafi regimes such prominence and support in many Third World countries, not least the support of the ANC who benefitted

greatly from financial and political support from the Libyan government during the Apartheid era.

All of these factors serve to illustrate how profound is the re-structuring of Libyan society being advocated in the new vision policies. The long-term consequence of Libya's resistance of the pressure of the MOWS has helped to create a seriously uneven economy and society within which the public sector has largely served as a form of patronage by the ruling regime. Whilst this strategy was workable in the short-term over the period of the revolution there have been profound changes in the nature of the MOWS, not least of which the collapse of communism and effectively the globalising of the capitalist economy. This has created structural conditions (the free flow of capital, the impact of new digital communication technologies, the expansion of US-led global militarisation, and the expansion of capitalist consumer culture) which have made it very difficult for authoritarian governments to maintain control over their populations, let alone their economies. Added to this has been the intensification of capitalist crises in the core of the MOWS and Libya's dependency upon the core becomes much clearer and more volatile. It is no longer possible for the Libyan government to direct the economy and society whilst being excluded from important sections of the MOWS. Thus the change of policy and new vision strategies represent a capitulation by the Libyan government at the ideological level and an embrace of neo-liberal policies that means there must be a dramatic transformation of the state and economy. The longer this takes the more limited the opportunities for the Libyan economy and society to break free of its rentier status. But the quicker the government moves to make these changes the greater the political risks it entails by causing social upheaval that will be difficult to contain.

## **6.2 The Role of the State**

### **6.2.1 How has the state changed its policies with regard to the teaching of English?**

According to the Wilton Park Conference Report (2007) in 1999 after Libya had settled the Lockerbie matter, the relationship between Libya and the British government was re-established at the level of diplomatic relations (WPC's Report, 2007). In the same year Libya became a complete member of the Europe-Mediterranean Partnership (الشراكة الأوروبية)

المتوسطة) in the Barcelona 3 conference, which took place in Stuttgart-Germany in 1999<sup>67</sup>. At this conference, Libya agreed to abide by the rules of Barcelona 3 and as a result it secured new and practical relationships with the European Union member states. In terms of the EU Germany, France and Spain are all important reading partners with Libya (Saif AL-Islam, 2002).

This agreement between the Libyan government and the European Union was further enhanced when in 2003 Libya renounced its desire to develop weapons of mass destruction (Martinez, 2007). This, in turn, led in 2006 to Libya being removed from the US State department's official list of sponsors of terrorism (Report on Wilton Park conference, 2007; Martinez, 2007). Consequently, the diplomatic relationships between the US and Libya were restored in 2004 and enhanced in 2009 for the first time in 30 years (Vandewalle, 2008; Zoubir, 2002). Hence, in the last four years, the Libyan government committees have created a number of strategies of legalization to facilitate and expand the country's economy via developing its private sector and human capital. For example, according to Otman and Karlberg (2007) in 2004, Libya was provided with an estimated US \$35 billion for its infrastructure improvement. As part of this process the education system has been re-organized with a view to enabling Libya to take advantage of these economic opportunities. Therefore, development of the Libyan education system is the major function that the governmental strategies are still developing. In this regard, Shaheena,<sup>68</sup> the coordinator of the British Council in Libya confirmed that the Libyan education sector is in dire need of improvement that will bring it up to international standards. In terms of the MOWS this makes sense as Libya moves from being a protectionist rentier state to a rentier state that adopts an enabling role, in neo-liberal fashion, using public resources to subsidise the private sector rather than expand the public sector itself. This opens up great opportunities for corporations and economic elites throughout the core to take advantage of Libya's liberalised economy, but particularly those based in parts of the EU who have long-standing ties with Libya, such as France, Germany and Italy. It also, by extension, opens up the way for a new wave of Libyan capitalists to emerge and form a part of the elite sector in Libyan society. Again, from the point of view of the ruling government, this is a mixed blessing as

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<sup>67</sup> The third Europe- Mediterranean conference of the foreign ministers- Barcelona 3 which is took its place in Stuttgart-Germany in 15/16 4/1999.

<sup>68</sup> The coordinator of the British Council in Libya was interviewed in 2009

autonomous economic elites have tended historically to pursue political power to go with their economic strength. Only in a country like China, where the state has very carefully sought to control the growing inequalities of wealth and to subordinate the new capitalist class to the party-state system has this transition worked so far, but even in China there are massive social tensions due to the neo liberal policies introduced and the polarisation of Chinese society (Yaozu, 2011). Navigating these fault-lines in economy and society will prove testing indeed for Libya's own political elites.

The issue that Shaheena attempted to present is that with Libya's re-entry into the global economy its sectors do not seem equipped to have productive, economic and international dialogue. Otman and Karlberg (2007:110) agreed that *"the Libyan government must move back quickly to an acceptance and recognition of the international importance of the English language"*. They added regarding the absence of English language years ago *"for Libya this has proved to be a fundamental and disastrous mistake, which has set back Libya in terms of educational quality by two generations"*. A useful comparison can be made here. In the period between 1969 and 1983 Malaysia suspended the teaching of English in favour of promoting the "Malay language" as the medium of teaching in all Malaysian education institutions. One implication materialized as result of this strategy: the competence of Standard English declined considerably which affected the standards in the Malaysian education sector, thus undermining the Malaysian competitiveness in international trade and technology. In 1996 however, the Malaysian government fundamentally changed its policies towards ELA, re-introducing it as the main medium of instruction in tertiary education. In 2002, English language was also introduced at the first stages of primary and high school levels in sciences and maths in particular. Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamed's said of the reintroduction of English language that,

*"There is a need for English to be completely mastered because the instructions are no longer going to be simple. It is unfortunate perhaps for the language nationalists, but that is the reality today. They must not blight future generations by objecting to the mastery and usage of the English language. They must not obstruct Malaysia's progress and development"* (Otman and Karlberg, 2007: 110)

Such a statement illustrates the pressure on even the most protectionist of governments in the MOWS to accept to dominance of global English or suffer the economic consequences. According to the Warschauer's report (2000) "*at this new stage of global capitalism expands and develops new challenges will be posed to the English language teaching profession*" precisely because it is the language of global capitalism (Ives, 2009; and Warschauer, 2000). Therefore, the Libyan state has changed its policies with regard to the teaching of English language by attracting international experts in the academic fields to teach in Libya. Thus, in 2006, the General People's Committee for Higher Education (GPCHE) with the British Council to establish a new Language centre in Al-Fateh University. In addition, the British Council also provides teaching programs as Alia,<sup>69</sup> a British teacher, explained: "*I now teach so many lawyers in this centre in Tripoli and they will be dealing with international law so that is going to be in the English language*". The next section will illustrate the actual steps of the new governmental educational strategies towards ELA.

### **6.2.2 State Strategies for ELA at the Primary and Secondary Level**

In 2004-5 new educational strategies were introduced by the General Education Committee (GEC) (see Fig-5.1) in Libya towards the teaching of English language. Moreover, Dr Abughania, the director of the curricula of the Education Research Centre in Libya said that:

*"During 2005-2007 we had designed two English courses (syllabi), one general course for all the specializations except the specialized English majors and the second course for the specialised English majors. In 2008 we had designed 5 different courses for the non-majors. We are using new textbooks for every year and we have prepared CDs for audio-learning in every unit. A student has 4 lectures per week for the non-majors and 19 lectures for the major student"*<sup>70</sup>.

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<sup>69</sup> An interview was made in 2009 with two members of the British Council in Libya-Tripoli

<sup>70</sup> An interview was made with Dr, Abughania in 25/03/2009.

Libya has adopted this new strategy towards ELA at the primary and high school level since 2005, but clearly it is some way behind countries that it is competing with for FDI. For example, Tanzania adopted similar policies and strategies in 1995, reintroducing English language teaching alongside the national language Swahili at the secondary school level. Now the Tanzanian governments has increased further the number of years in which primary students study English, beginning in their first year instead of their third (Vavrus, 2002). There is for Libyan policy makers a sense in which they are trying to rectify very quickly a problem that has been embedded in the system for two decades. But, Libya contrasts significantly with the Tanzanian strategy as in the latter country English is treated as an 'official language' equal to the national language Swahili, not simply viewed as a foreign language to be used as a tool for certain development Goals (Warschauer's report, 2000).

**Fig 6.1: the Recent Strategies of the Education System Regarding the Acquisition of English in Libya**

**Development of English Syllabus in Libya**

English is considered as a secondary language in the Libyan education system. During 1970 – 2005 English learning in the schools starts from the 7<sup>th</sup> grade in the preparatory level and it also was thought for 4 years in the secondary level. In 2005, English was implemented in basic education starting from grade 5, so the student can learn English for 5 years.

During 2006, the number of years was reduced to 3 years in secondary education and there are 6 specializations in the secondary school which are:

- 1- *Basic Science.*
- 2- *Engineering.*
- 3- *Life Science.*
- 4- *Economics.*
- 5- *Social Sciences.*
- 6- *Language and Communication.*

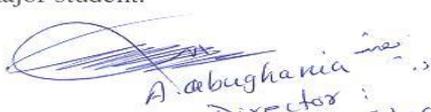
The student specialized in one of the above specialization. In language and communication, English is one of the languages thought in the Libyan secondary schools as specialized language.

So during 2005 - 2007 we designed two English courses (syllabi) one general course for all the specialization except the specialized English majors, and the second course for the specialized English majors.

In 2008, we designed 5 different courses for the non majors, i.e. the student majoring in life science study English which deals with life science terminology, students majoring in engineering study English which deals with engineering terminology and etc.... Student majoring in English study different syllabus in detail.

We are using text books (student book, work or activity book, teacher book) for every year and we have CDs for audio-learning.

The student has 4 lectures per week for the non majors and 19 lectures for the major student.

  
A. Abughania  
Director  
Curricula & Educ. Research Center



Although this new strategy regarding learning English in the Libya education sector is a first response, some people have not welcomed the strategy of learning English education stages. In a number of interviews I undertook with university educated Libyans in 2009-10, the strategy of reintroducing English language amongst students in the previous educational



These are the study plans for basic education for academic year 2009-2010. These study plans contain: the division of courses by the months of the year and the names of textbooks for basic education. English language was reintroduced from the third grade of the primary school till graduation, but now it has been shifted to start from year five. The reason according to Dr Habiba<sup>72</sup> the spokeswoman of the United Nation Information Centre in Libya is that some post-colonial countries like Libya still consider that learning English language from the early ages, like at the kindergarten stage or even the third grade can support so-called 'linguistic imperialism'. She believes that if Libya is introducing English language from year 5 just to protect its language and culture, then it should provide the high quality teaching staff needed along with appropriate methodologies. However, she agreed with Dr Abughania who stated that: *"It is best to start learning the English language from this early stage. This stage is a vital time for learning English language and also for learning in general"*. Dr Habiba added that:

*"Presently, although many training centres for the English language exist and they are spreading rapidly in Libya, still Libyan graduates lack the skills of English language learning. The reason behind that I believe, is the fact that Libyan students have not been prepared with the basics of English language in the early stages of their educational process before they graduated"*.

While Dr Abughania considers the usage of English language today as a supportive tool, he also confirmed Dr Habiba's point where he stated:

*"There is no doubt that Libyan graduates nowadays are behind the expected level of English language, which means that they face some difficulties. But, if Libya continues applying its new strategy of reintroducing English language into the education system from early stages till graduation, there will be no such barriers facing graduates."*

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<sup>72</sup> The spokeswoman of the United Nation Information Centre-Libya was interviewed in 2009.

Therefore, these new strategies are also included in the second stage at the high school level where English language is included for all faculties in this stage of the general curriculum to facilitate students' tertiary education phase. More specifically, today in the Libyan education system, each faculty has subdivisions where the English curriculum varies based on specialisms (see Fig-3-1, 2, 3, 4). For example they have social science, engineering science and biology, each of them has a different set of English language curriculum. The case is different with the English language faculty as they have more time for English language lessons. We can see, then, that the strategy must have the medium term goal of raising the general level of English skills amongst future generations of Libyan graduates. It cannot rectify the situation for the generation that missed out on these opportunities during the period of the ban without committing a different level of training. For such people it is the private sector that is expected to provide the training that they require, and this costs a significant amount of money in terms of the average Libyan income. Again, the way in which the Libyan state is trying to prepare its human capital for integration into the global economy of the MOWS is already leading to an intensification of class divisions in society between those who can afford to pay for superior English language education and those who are reliant on the less well funded state provision. For Libyan elites this creates a mechanism which they can take advantage of to perpetuate their own advantages over those of ordinary Libyans.

The recent strategy of the state's education system towards the acquisition of English in Libya at the high school stage as following:

**Fig 6.3: the Division of Social Sciences in (Yellow) and the Division of Economic Sciences in (Red)**





*“Teachers in our schools/universities rely only on a national curriculum. Very often, our teaching staff are not good at teaching English language skills themselves, which they should be using in class to help students. Sadly, it is not only English language teachers who are in shortage of these teaching skills, but also teachers for other science subjects. I believe that the value of our teaching staffs is really a vital issue for producing high quality educational outputs”*

Clearly one of the problems facing the Libyan state strategy is a shortage of qualified and competent teachers, which in part is why the new relationship with the private sector has emerged. I will turn to this in more detail later in the chapter. Shaheena,<sup>74</sup> also from the British Council in Libya, explained that since 2004 and when English language was re-introduced, the general education committee has brought back old curriculums to be introduced in the system. But unfortunately these curriculums were not of the level expected as there were lots of errors within the books and the teaching system itself. As a consequence these books had to be removed and re-written after students had already begun to study with them. Afterwards, the General Education Committee (GEC) introduced another curriculum called ‘English for Libya’ which was reliant upon a methodology which was totally unfamiliar to the Libyan teachers and students. Thus far the state and its bureaucracy have lacked the skills needed to transform the school curriculum in a competent manner creating problems for staff and students alike (Otman and Karlberg, 2007). Such a problem reflects the lack of trained/qualified people and state.

The NESR (2006) argued that teachers in Libya at most levels and fields need to be re-educated and re-trained. They stated that *“Libya has many more teachers at both primary and secondary level compared to benchmark countries, with 3,643 primary teachers and 1,051 secondary teachers per 100,000 population”*. The report adds *“according to the National Centre for Education and Training Planning, at least one-third of the 194,000 basic education teachers are inactive”*.

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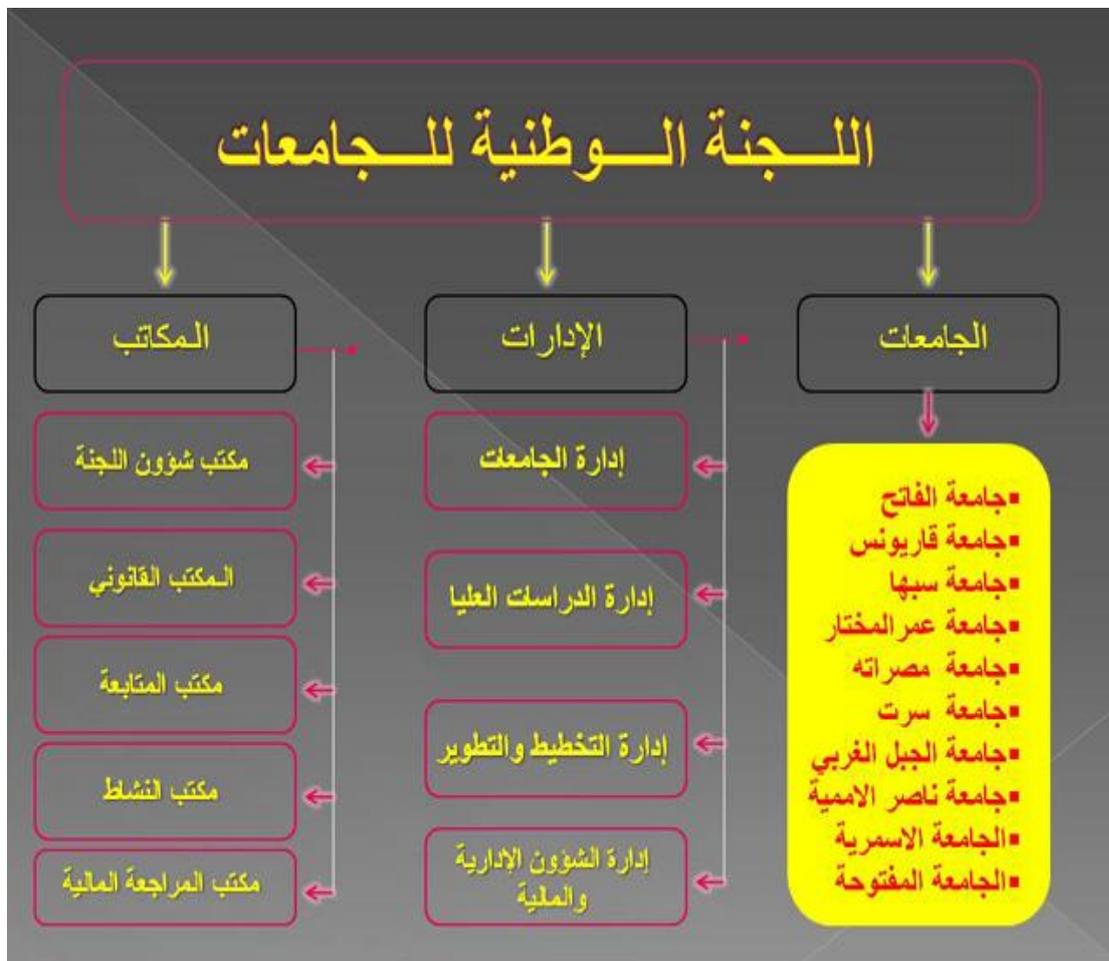
<sup>74</sup> The coordinator of the British Council in Libya and was interviewed in 2009



### 6.2.2.1 State Strategies for the Acquisition of English in the Higher Education System

The Libyan Government has also begun to introduce new policies for promoting English language at the university level. Jobs for graduates have begun to expand since 2004, particularly in the areas of tourism and leisure and the services and hospitality industry (George and Miles, 2010; Porter, 2007; Zaptia, 2009). To this end in 2006, the General People's Committee for Higher Education (GPCHE) worked in partnership with the British Council to create new strategies for ELA by establishing a new Language centre in Al-Fateh University, Tripoli.

Fig 6.7:<sup>75</sup> The Organizational Structure of the National Commission for the State's main Universities



### The Organisational Structure of the National Commission for Universities in Libya

<sup>75</sup> Was taken in 11/08/2010 by the Al-Fatah university information centre (contains the main 10 Libyan universities)

This has become the main centre for the training and organising of staff teaching in Libyan universities and it is known as the Libyan English Teaching in Universities Project (LETUP). This project for promoting ELA at Libya's universities (mainly 10 universities [see fig-5.7]) has been given an international award by the British council, a not insignificant prize given that the Libyan programme was in competition with similar ones in 13 regions and more than 100 countries (LETUP, 2010). The award recognised the LETUP programme as the most effective of its kind in the world. This project aims to offer high quality advice and to promote collaboration in the development of English language educational policy for the Libyan university students. In addition and crucially it aims to promote and develop the skills and abilities of Libya's English language teachers with the establishment of an internationally recognised teaching qualification. According to Dr Husain Al-Ejalli<sup>76</sup> the director of his task, this project is active today in more than 10 centres across the country's universities. Dr Al-Ejalli said of this strategy:

*“Today the Libyan job market requires highly qualified graduates, with good language skills, which enable them to follow up this global development, along with their academic and professional requirements. Therefore, our institution is responsible for introducing English language to universities in the major cities in Libya such as: Tripoli, Benghazi, Elbaidah, Sert, Gerian, Zawia, Musratah, Khums, and Zlitan. However, until this moment we have established 10 centres for learning English language at Libyan universities, which comes under the control of the General People's Committee for Higher Education for achieving both the short and long term goals. The short-term goal would be achieved by establishing training centres of a very high standard. However, we have arranged an extended contract with the British Council in Libya until 2011, and after that we will be running it.”*

Although this new strategy regarding ELA in Libya is greatly welcomed by the Libyan students as a major step forward, the current university graduates still blame the Libyan government for their lack of English language skills and there appears to be significant resentment towards the government. Furthermore, and what makes their situation worse for

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<sup>76</sup> The head and director of the Libyan English teaching project in the Libyan universities.

recent postgraduate students is the new decision/law of (47) made by the (GHEC) in 2008, a new strategy which has been declared at all Libyan universities. This law decrees that: (1) “No resolution for discussing the Masters or PhD thesis shall be issued for any student as of the next academic year 2009/2010 unless he/she provides proof of having successfully passed the English language test as approved by the language centre of the universities”. (2) “Readers or holders of the Masters degree shall not be appointed unless the English language test is successfully passed”. (3) “All competent entities are to observe and implement this decree”<sup>77</sup> The generation of graduate students who were denied the right to learn English language now have to face a state imposed obstacle to their ability to graduate. For many the solution to this is to pay for intensive and expensive English classes in the private sector, further highlighting their sense of injustice. This is a mechanism introduced by the state as a way of filtering out a generation of Libyan who were deprived of their opportunity to acquire English language skills by the same state. It is this double mistreatment that is at the heart of the anger amongst this generation of graduates.

And Amana added that:

*“I have learnt English just in the first year of my undergraduate study, now while I’m in the last stage of the higher education studies I am required to learn English in order to receive my qualification. This is a trap that Libyan graduates have fallen into. How are we to afford this?”*

Such a reaction is quite understandable, especially since Dr Al-Ejali explained:

*“Actually we are still facing the impact of suspending English language from the education system in Libya. Since our downturn in the previous two years 2006 to 2008, and until this moment sponsoring Libyan’s for their postgraduate studies here or*

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<sup>77</sup> This decision translated in 21/7/2010 by Al-Shams Al-Mosharka for Legal Translation.

*abroad is being used as an alternative solution for filling such a gap. Yet, most evidence indicates that those students aren't ready for international academic communications".*

Dr, Al-Ejalli suggested that one year abroad isn't enough to acquire such language skills; it needs not less than 2 years. According to the national economic strategy report (2006) "*The public expenditure from the administrative budget has averaged LYD 1.2-1.6Bn over the past 5 years, with a further LYD 280MM spent on funding Libyan third-level students studying abroad*". Therefore, the policy-makers at the Libyan General Committee of Higher Education (LGCHE) in recent years have been focusing on funding the training programs to enhance those graduates' abilities in terms of their postgraduate studies abroad, providing all the necessary facilities, especially in the non-Arabic countries. In addition the LGCE have established massive training centres all across the country.

We can see then that many of the steps taken by the Libyan state towards ELA have been haphazard, poorly thought through and planned. And yet at the same time it is receiving encouragement from the states of the core of the MWOS through organisations such as the British Council for attempting to transform Libyan higher education. A basic problem is that the Libyan state does not function in the way that a modern bureaucratic rational state does in the West. It has not evolved in the same way but has been established on the basis of a rentier state where patrimonialism and clientelism are the mechanisms by which support for the government is maintained. Trying to reform the state in the manner of a modern bureaucracy is more than just a matter of making decisions, it means transforming the culture of those that work in it and of the government that has used it in largely instrumental fashion. In Libya the state and the revolutionary government have become synonymous whereas in a country like Britain they have independence and degrees of autonomy from each other. In the UK Governments change but the state continues. In Libya it is not clear that such a thing is possible.

#### **6.2.2.2 The Role of other State' Sectors in ELA**

The other key state institutions involved in promoting the development of ELA are the Libyan Foreign Bank (LFB), General Electricity Company of Libya (GECOL), and the Libyan National Oil Corporation (LNOC). For instance, The LNOC's centres are operating

across the country to develop new graduates and employees' skills. The LNOC is considered as the director of all local and international oil companies around Libya administratively and financially. According to the directorate of the LNOC:

*“It was established under Law No (24) of 1970, replacing the general Libyan Petroleum People’s Committee Decision No (10) of 1079 to assume additional powers and authorizations, making LNOC more flexible to administer the huge and accelerating development of oil industry” (LNOCD, 2007:01).*

Hence, this Corporation works as a supervisory and controlling body aiming to achieve the plans of developing the oil industry (LNOC, 2007:01). The LNOC fully owns many of the oil companies operating in Libya as well as participating with other international oil companies. Since the workforce in these companies is mixed between Libyan’s and foreigners, English language has become the main language of communication in this working environment. Thus, quite distinct to other sectors of the Libyan economy, people who work in the oil sector in Libya have had the greatest opportunities to improve their English language. The LNOC has been providing intensive programs of language training for employees from their third month at work. For example, since 2005 a training programme for English and IT skills has been implemented by the Libyan National Oil Corporation. This strategy *“helps in upgrading proficiencies and efficiencies of employees, and contributes in preparing the professional cadres as per an actual identification of the requirements of training”* (NESR, 2006). This strategy was made by the Libyan National Oil Corporation regarding ELA as separate from other local training programs in Libya. More importantly, this strategy has offered some administrative and material incentives for the participants who achieve high scores at the English language courses and in the field of IT to obtain internationally validated certificates. For example, in terms of English language courses the trainee will obtain after securing first level certification of IELTS 605 & above, TOEFL 600 & above, or Cambridge ESOL examination FCE a reward of LD 300, to be followed by LD of 800 at the end of the courses along with administrative distinction that entitles her/him to secure priority access for candidature for international seminars/conferences in her/his field of specialty. The IT field has been the other main source of state investment in education with similar financial incentives for the successful students. These IT courses are designed for non-professional

computer users to obtain international licenses like International Computer Driving License ICDL, European Computer Driving License ECDL, and Cambridge Certificate of IT Skills.

Further, the LNOC also allows employees and graduates from different economic sectors and educational institutions to be involved into such programs. For example, The Libyan Oil College is an affiliate of LNOC and acts as the most recognized educational centre in Tripoli amongst Libyans because of its high competitiveness and excellence in terms of training and scientific research programs. More specifically, Sami an employee at the Libyan Foreign Bank said of his experience with the Oil College in Tripoli that:

*“I am working in the Libyan foreign bank and I have a reasonable level of English language competence. I was trained by the Libyan Foreign Bank at the Oil College in Tripoli. This college is one of the best colleges in Libya and when I reached the intermediate level then I was sent to the UK to complete my Master studies. As result when I went to the UK I did not need long to pass the advanced stage. Further, some of the English teachers in the UK admitted that the basic rules of the language I had obtained in Libya are excellent. Through my experience I found studying in Libya better in contrast with sessions obtained abroad”.*

This college alongside with the 2006 strategy illustrate the great task that has been assigned to the LNOC to meet the requirements of training programs at different departments in the LNOC. Furthermore, the training and development departments in the LNOC have adopted the policy of sending their employees abroad to attain their higher education levels in different specialties. This is a historically unprecedented development because of its flexibility in administering the huge and rapid developments in its industry. In this regard Mr Abdu-Al-Hakem the manager of the department of the training and development of human resources at the LNOC stated that:

*“We should focus more on our revenue streams, not be counting how many employees we send abroad, but rather how many of them return with qualifications and practical*

*skills. If we send abroad 1000 graduates or employees, and 100 of them returned with the desired skills and qualifications then I would say that means we were successful in our human resource investment. We are still in dire need to increase our human resources investments, even with the re-opening of technical colleges and training centres around Libya. Yet, such investments require time to achieve their expected results. In fact there are no immediate gains to speak of, but these investments often take 5 to 10 years to produce the revenue”.*

As stated in the previous chapter, the Libyan state’s strategy for social change in the educational sphere is a medium term one, a point emphasised in the above quote by Al-Hakem. There will be no immediate transformation of Libyan Graduate students and nor will those who have missed out during the period of the ban on language learning catch up easily. Libya’s state strategy is utilitarian in that it will necessarily mean seeking to improve ELA amongst the now young majority in the country; the older generations who have missed out on ELA will not be a priority and will increasingly have to finance their own studies if they are to catch up on what they have lost. It is future Libyan graduates who are being prepared for taking up opportunities in the MWOS rather than those who have already graduated.

### **6.3 The Libyan State and Human Capital**

As is clear, the Libyan state has identified education as the key mechanism for its plans for development and integration in the global economy of the MOWS. In order to support this point, the Wilton Park Conference’s report (WPC’s report 2007: 01) declared that in Libya today: *“Education and training are a priority in shifting the country from a culture of consumption to one of production”*. Significantly it reflects the history of the Libyan state and the way in which it has sought to govern in patrimonial-clientelist manner by expanding to provide jobs for Libyan graduates as a means of both controlling social change and of fulfilling the guarantees of the revolution which were to bring about a decent life for all Libyans (Ahmida, 2005; and Alafi and de Bruijn, 2010). It is this strategy that is in the process of being abandoned in favour of a more orthodox model of development that establishes a public-private partnership (PPP) that is a familiar form of state capitalism to be found throughout the MOWS. In effect it means that the role of the state becomes an enabling one, providing the infrastructure and training for a workforce who will gradually be

encouraged to move more towards the private sector (Fine, 2001; Fine, Lapavitsas and Pincus, 2001; Alafi and de Bruijn, 2010; and Otman and Karlberg, 2007). At the same time and as we have seen in many other countries, it means the socialization of risk for private firms with the state acting as the guarantor of profit for private companies through the shifting of tax revenues into public subsidies (Waeyenberge, Fine and Bayliss, 2011). This can, of course, take very different forms depending upon the type of state involved and its location in the MOWS but given the post-revolutionary state-society relations in Libya it is hard to imagine the state surrendering more of its power than necessary to the private sector without it generating schisms amongst the ruling elites. Nonetheless the Libyan government has made significant moves in this direction by privatising a swathe of institutions as a means of imposing market discipline on Libyan society, a norm expected of responsible governments in the MOWS. For example, the country introduced the ‘al tamleek’ program to broaden the ownership base of firms by encouraging Libyans to own the public firms with the aim of breaking down state ownership (Porter, 2007; George and Miles, 2010; Alfourjani 2005, cited in Alafi and de Bruijn, 2010). Thus, according to Alafi and de Bruijn, (2010:09) The private sector’s programs are developing now and of the ‘al tamleek’ program they stated: *“Initially, the program targeted 360 public firms included 204 industrial firms, 56 agricultural firms, 82 livestock firms, and 18 marine firms”*. They added that:

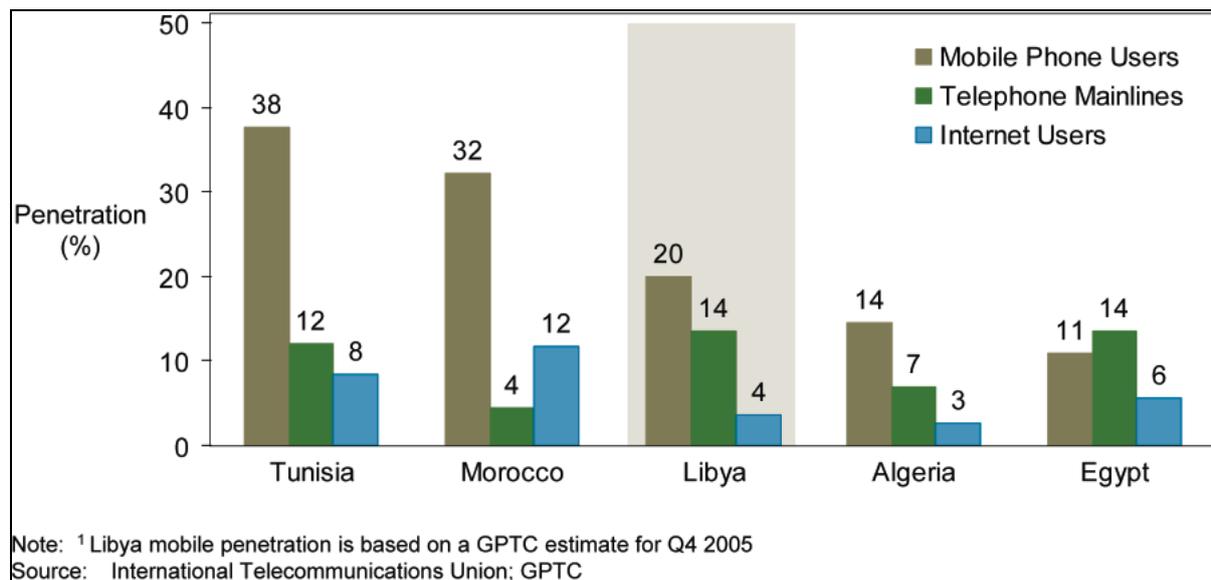
*“Another 80 public industrial firms were privatised by using four different privatisation methods. 31 industrial public firms were privatised through management and employee buyout. 37 industrial public firms were privatised by using special bidding. 10 industrial public firms were privatised through direct discussions with investment holding organisations. Two industrial public firms were privatised through partnership between the employees, domestic investment holding organisations, and the public”* (Alafi and de Bruijn, 2010:11-12).

Further, the state’s strategy towards ELA as human capital has been to establish a number of training centers throughout the country. The aim of these centers is to professionalize language training and bring it in line with internationally recognized standards. In scope it is the most ambitious educational program undertaken by the Libyan state in 30 years. The main courses these centers concentrate on are the IT and ELA and they are as follows:

- International Center for Information Technology-Tripoli
- New Horizons Libya Training-Tripoli
- ALTC Language and Training Libya
- British Libyan Centre for Education and Training Services-Tripoli
- Al-Resala Company for Education And Training Company
- Al-Masa Center for Training and Development
- Al-Nahada Al-Hathita Center for Training And Development
- Libya for Tomorrow HRD Center-Tripoli
- Libyan Training Centre-Tripoli
- American Libyan Education Training Centre-Tripoli
- Al-Qimma for IT Services-Tripoli
- Advanced Technology Training Tripoli
- An Advanced Training Foundation for High Professional and Vocational Training in the Various Fields-Alzawia
- Speah Training Company-Sapaha
- Mustakbal English Language Teaching Center MELTC-Tripoli

Today, the ICT training programs have become essential for companies and institutions in both sectors, easing access to knowledge and scientific information. But, while the internet facilities are available for all citizens in Libya, it has been controlled by the government in the same way as the postal communications across the country (Martinez, 2007; NESR, 2006). Such a situation has created a low level of information communication technology (ICT) networks, and thus far has restricted both vital communications and internet usage (see Fig-5.8). This is a familiar problem for authoritarian governments in the MOWS who want to liberalise the economy but are fearful of also liberalising society. In China, Saudi Arabia and Malaysia, for example, the state has regularly sought to censor and control the internet or to arrest and torture civilians found guilty of accessing forbidden sites. In the short term such measures can no doubt be effective but in the long term a state must create the conditions for its own legitimacy amongst the population or else rule by power alone, an unstable form of governance. This is, of course, a problem for all governments in the MOWS, be they democratic or not.

**Fig 6.8: Telephone and Internet Usage, 2004<sup>78</sup>**

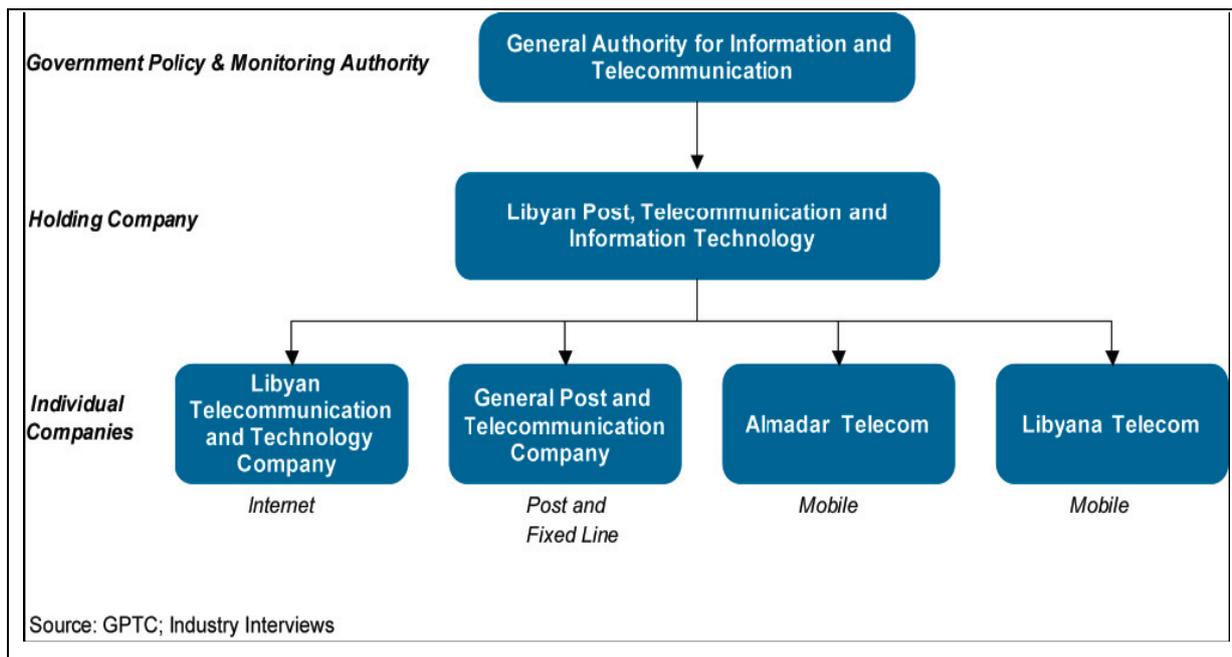


More specifically, according to the NESR in 2005, ICT in Libya is significantly behind in international comparisons (110<sup>th</sup> of 111 countries). The report says: “*Libya’s fixed line telephone and Internet penetration rates were the second lowest in North Africa in 2003, while cellular telephone penetration is growing rapidly but still trails Morocco and Tunisia*” (NESR, 2005:06). In addition, the absence of the strong ICT networks and power supplies has affected the country’s urban plans, especially communication between central institutions, committees and other organizations/activities. But what made the situation worse was the period of the international sanctions that narrowed the supplies of technology and expertise to Libya. Therefore, since 2005, the government has attempted to upgrade its ICT and make the training programs available via several strategies. Hamdy’s report of “*Survey of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and Education in Africa: Libya Country Report*” (2007) stated that new strategies regarding ICT development in Libya have been introduced since 2005. The main aim of this strategy has been to enable increased access to ICT via the provision of computers and the internet in Libya. The NESR report (2006:53) further referred to the ICT structure itself as another challenge facing this industry in Libya (see Fig-5.9) since it claimed that:

<sup>78</sup> This figure was found in 2011 from the National Economic Strategy report (2006)

*“There is no separation of roles between the policy maker, regulator and operators. In the past, the General Authority for Information and Telecommunication (GAIT) has been responsible for all policy, regulation and monitoring activities, whilst the holding company LPTIT which reports to GAIT controls all ICT operations through its various subsidiaries”.*

**Fig 6.9: the Structure of the Libyan ICT Sector<sup>79</sup>**



To this end in 2005 the GAIT has assigned an agreement with Huawei, a Chinese vendor “to roll out 1.25 million new GSM subscriber lines with guarantees of network performance at peak capacity. GPTC has also awarded a USD 68MM contract to Ericsson to provide infrastructure capable of supporting 3G mobile voice and data services”, though the report suggested that the ICT today has its greatest opportunity for improvement where ELA is seen as being synonymous with the intensive investment in ICT training and skills. Thus, “investment in human resources is the key to achieve the goals and objectives of the national ICT strategy (Hamdy, 2007: 07-08). The rise of China as an investor in Libya and Africa is an important development in the MOWS and represents the shifting balance of power from West to East that has been taking place for the past 30 years. The extent to which China can

<sup>79</sup> National Economic Strategy Report (2006)

replace Western investment is unclear but the fact that it is investing in countries of such strategic importance as Libya (oil resources) illustrates the way in which the BRIC countries are increasingly able to exert power and influence in the MOWS.

However, while Hamdy's report agrees with the National Economic Strategy Report that Libya is still at an early stage regarding the implementation of the ICT strategies, he suggests that the *"collaboration of all government entities, the private sector, and the donor community is required to achieve the set policies and ensure proper implementation and provision of access for all"* (Hamdy, 2007: 07). In 2005 (12<sup>th</sup> December) Libya signed an agreement with UNESCO to establish a National Plan for Information and Communication Technologies (NITC) that, *"will provide all higher education institutions in Libya with internet facilities including digital libraries educational sites, and facilities for distance learning"*. They added that it will be used for *"promoting the use of English in schools nationally, the government will ensure that scientific and technology websites are also accessible to Libyan student and researchers"* (Otman and Karlberg, 2007: 383). Additionally, the UNDP in its Country Programmed outline for Libya (2006-2009) indicates that in order to contribute to the efforts of the modernization for greater competitiveness of its economy, Libya needs extra support in ICT through the introduction of open source software systems. The Country Programmed for Libya also aims to modernize and upgrade its capacities via integrating initiatives in the ICT field with the UNDP's mandate to advocate for the design and implementation of a national ICT strategy. Consequently such programmes and supervision and administration agreements between Libyan institutions and international agencies like the UNDP and BC regarding skills acquisition are now considered as crucial for the development of human capital investment.

Dr Al-Ejali<sup>80</sup> considers this development of the partnership between the General People's Committee for the Higher Education (GPCHE), UNESCO and the British Council. He stated that:

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<sup>80</sup> The head and director of the Libyan English teaching project in the Libyan universities

*“The British council team provides teaching assistance through the comprehensive teacher training program. In less than three years this intellectual partnership has evolved from its initial aim to set up language centre to meeting the needs of postgraduate students”.*

It is worth mentioning that the cultural relationship between the BC and the Libyan government was only resumed in 2003 when the diplomatic relations between the two countries were restored. Accordingly, the BC in Libya has signed several strategic agreements regarding ELA courses with many of the Libyan ministers in health, education, and the energy sector enrolling their students/employees. However, in criticising the BC programs, Phillipson (2008) argued that such courses/programs have contributed to the expansion of British power in the MOWS. More specifically, he claimed:

*“The British Council was established in 1935 to promote British interests and English, partly in response to the success of the fascist governments of Italy and Germany in using language teaching and higher education scholarships to promote their national interest”.* He added: *“English is not merely an instrument for communication it is a value one identifies with for the social functions the language is seen as serving, its utility in the linguistic market”* (Phillipson, 2008:04).

Unsurprisingly the Minister of the Education and Scientific Research, Dr Abdul Al-Kabir Al-Fakhri, disagrees with this view and emphasises the pragmatic view of ELA when he says:

*“This rapid pace of change in Libya has required LETUP to be flexible and responsive to discover new ways of working and to further develop the positive relationship between Libya and the UK. For the British Council the LETUP demonstrates our place as a new World-Class leader in the provision of English language teaching and training. And for Libya LETUP is the mark and the cornerstone of the ministry and university achievements. It is the single most impressive achievement we’ve had for years”.*

However, having set out the strategies of the Libyan state to promote ELA as part of a new developmental goal that is rooted in embracing ICT and integrating the Libyan economy into global economic processes the question remains, what are the implications of this for Libya's place in the MOWS? To what extent does it open up advantages to Libya that it will be able to use and to what extent does it reinforce Libya's dependent position in the MOWS both on its own oil resources and the relationship with the states and corporations of the core?

#### **6.4 Embracing Neoliberalism: Libyan State Strategies and Human Capital - an Orientalist Project?**

As noted a powerful idea in contemporary developmental discourse is the need to invest in human capital as a means of making the national economy attractive to capitalist investment (Fine et al, 2001). It has taken on the form of a logical and common sense view of the role of the government in a global economy as being that of the enabling state that provides the infrastructure that makes a national economy attractive to FDI (Wallerstein, 2006). Rather than the state intervening in the economy through the running of public industries it is encouraged to withdraw in favour of a more efficient private sector, adopting policies of privatisation, deregulation and a general liberalisation of its economy. It is this environment that the Libyan state and society is now trying to integrate itself with and in order to do so it means adopting a range of policies that historically have had little part to play in the post-revolutionary Libyan state (Alafi and de Bruijn, 2010, NESR, 2006). A key policy for the Libyan state as it begins to move down this path has been to invest in human capital through reformed educational policies, as we have seen. The educational system has adopted competitive strategies that will help to instil the idea that Libya will become a meritocratic society where jobs are allocated in terms of ability rather than due to social pressures or the state's revolutionary desire to guarantee a certain way of life for all Libyans. Culturally this represents a profound change in Libyan state-society relations that will no doubt bring diverse and often problematic responses. Opening up an economy and society in this way cannot easily be controlled by the state as has been shown in other countries, most spectacularly the Eastern European communist states during the late 1980s.

In this respect even the teaching of English language might produce unintended and unanticipated effects in Libyan culture. My interviews have revealed quite diverse views on this amongst Libyan graduates, state officials and the private sector. Further as Tripasai (2004:02) said: *“the significance of English is closely related to the power of the English speaking countries that were former colonisers”*. He added regarding Thailand’s educational strategies towards the teaching of English language since the nineteenth century when it was occupied by the British Empire till present that, *“the more Thailand contacts the outside world, the more Western influences come into the country”* (Tripasai, 2004:05). Tripasai’s judgment concerning the political effects of the teaching of English language in the Third World societies connects with Pennycook’s perspective (1994 and 1998 cited in Tripasai, 2004:02) who stated that, *“English is not free of political values. Having originated from colonialism, English and English language teaching are involved in the colonial discourse, in which the power relations between the master and the colonial subjects”*. Similar to Phillipson (2008), Pennycook (1994 and 1998) and Fanon (1965), Tripasai explained that using English in Thailand has not only increased the importance of English, it also made Thai society more subordinate to the West where Western education, culture and capitalism are considered by Thai people as a form of progress that they should imitate. Other studies have also supported this idea that ELA is best viewed and understood in Orientalist terms regarding its impact on indigenous cultures, including Liddle and Rai’s study (1998:03). Said (1978) in Orientalism had already emphasised that *“power or the lack thereof, therefore, lies at the heart of the Orientalist discourse and allow the stabilization of the consensus that is critical to the maintenance of dominance”*. The relationship between power and knowledge in the Orientalist discourse survives as political and economic language within the developing countries themselves, one which they embrace or have forced upon them in the form of developmental policies. This was supported by Liddle and Ray (1998: 20) when they stated that,

*“The power of Orientalist imagination can only be sustained by the continuous production and reproduction of practices and discourses. This power is both underpinned and helps to maintain the structure inequality between the advanced nations of the west and developing post-colonial states”*.

Hence the argument in contemporary development economics that its prescriptions are scientific and politically neutral but rather an ideological tool to control and subordinate the Third World. This is a point that world-systems writers such as Wallerstein have examined, arguing that the scientific credentials of mainstream liberal economics are bogus, resting as they do on a flawed methodology and asocial and ahistoric view of how an economy functions. Nonetheless these prescriptions serve as an important ideological underpinning and justification of inequality in the MOWS (Wallerstein, 2006). They may work as a form of power/knowledge in the MOWS but their power stems precisely from the fact that to flout these rules means incurring the wrath of the world's major IFIs, public and private. The dependent nature of relations between the core and the rest of the MOWS is tellingly reflected in comments made in interview with me by the director of the Libyan Foreign Investments Company Mr. Ramadan Al-Zilitni who stated that,

*“We are indeed a crude oil producer, but technically to distribute and refine it, it has been through Western and mainly US companies. Thus, it is they who re-supply it in its final stage to consumers worldwide, and thus English language comes as the language of the final stage of the distribution of industrial goods. For the US it means that they can impose themselves and their language when they supply oil to the world. Thus, today we should think reasonably, we are the producer of the oil, but also the consumer. When it is refined by Western companies, and has added value, then it is sold back to us”*

Mr. Al-Zilitni makes a point long argued by world-systems analysis that development in the periphery and semi-periphery is dependent upon developing countries gaining investment from and access to the core, its markets and its capital. Thus growth for most in the semi-periphery outside of the CRIB (China, Russia, India and Brazil) is always contingent and subject to the power of the core and the states located there. Even the Harvard educated liberal economist Professor Michael Porter who has been employed by the Libyan Government to help it devise its economic strategy concedes that it has a highly dependent economy (Porter, 2007).

As a country in the semi-periphery of the world-system Libya has certain strategic advantages, but these are largely derived from its hydrocarbon industries. This is a pattern found in many other countries in the semi-periphery such as Algeria, Saudi Arabia and Tunisia. Access to a vital commodity allows a state in the semi-periphery more space to make strategic-relational decisions about investment and social change than faces those states without such a relationship with the core. Nonetheless these advantages can and often are easily squandered through corruption, incompetence, military rule and unaccountable decision-making by the state, as the situation of Algeria illustrates starkly. Libya's revolutionary government has been quite different to other regimes in the MENA, combining its own brand of authoritarian populism with resistance to the MOWS. This has not stopped it failing to make the strategic-relational decisions it needs to about investment and social change in Libyan economy and society. Hence the sudden embrace of neo-liberal policies as a quick fix alternative. An unanswerable question for the Libyan government, more egalitarian and sensitive to social needs than many of its neighbours, is the extent to which in embracing the Orientalist developmental policy discourse of which human capital is a significant part it risks creating social inequality and undermining its social goals in favour of profit for private companies and global capitalist investors. In a sense it appears to have little choice but to adopt these policies and the English language that comes with them in that they are now global policies, as Otman and Karlberg (2007) notes:

*“Government across the world, from Chile to China, from Malta to Malaysia, have in the last few years embarked on ambitious educational reforms which will integrate English more deeply into the curriculum. English will cease to be a foreign language for many. Perhaps most of the world's citizens as it become repositioned as a “basic skill”, to be learned by primary school children alongside other 21<sup>st</sup> century skills in information technology (Literacy Trust, 2005)”.*

The next section will investigate the role of the private sector and its strategies for language acquisition, examining its relationship to the state. This section will discuss the following questions: How has the private sector been encouraged to promote ELA in Libya? How is this viewed by private firms? What is the relationship between the Libyan state and the private sector? What does the private sector tell us about human capital in Libya? In so doing

this section will consider the significance of this newly formed public-private partnership as a model for Libya's new developmental strategy.

### **6.5 What has been the role of the Private Sector in English Language learning in the in Libya?**

The year of 2003-04 was the turning point for Libya as started towards privatising its public sector and liberalising its economy and obtaining membership with the World Trade Organisation (WTO) (Alafi and de Bruijn, 2010). According to George and Miles (2010), Gaddafi in 2003 had:

*“Called for the first time for the privatization of the oil industry and other sectors making another sign of openness to the outside world including international companies, Since then, privatization has progressed slowly and the Libyan government has continued to promote entrepreneurship, make credit loans from local banks more widely available and encourage foreign companies to provide capital know-how and training to local enterprises”.*

Gaddafi's statement is reflected in policy-makers recent decisions in Libya to reform the country economy in accord with neo-liberal principles by beginning to do such things as removing currency controls and improving taxation laws. In interview the previous administrator of the Labour Manpower Institution in Libya, Abodu-al Baset, told me that laws had been introduced with the aim of helping national capital investments and to attract more foreign investments. For example, the Law No. 6 of 2007 which Mr Abodu-al Baset was describing that it includes:

*“Tax and customs benefits and exemptions are aimed at transferring technology and expertise to Libya. Foreign investors were allowed to purchase lands, foreign labourers were employed and profits were transferred abroad along with several other privileges. Libya also issued a law that allows foreign banks to open branches in the country”.*

Mr Abodu-al Baset states that there has now been the privatisation of more than 360 enterprises operating in the manufacturing, agricultural and oil industries. The Libyan government also issued a decree in 2006 (Resolution No. 134 of 2006) to open the headquarters of the Libyan money market and establish a Libyan stock market. Mr Abodu-al Baset added:

*“Economic reforms, which were initiated by liberal economist Shokri Ghanem, former secretary of the Libyan People’s Committee (Prime Minister), continue with the aim of integrating Libya in the global economy and joining the World Trade Organisation (WTO). Al-Boghdadi Al-Mahmoudi, the current secretary of the People’s Committee, continues to implement these reforms which have yielded improvements in Libyan economic performance. Economic indicators are positive and the Libyan economy has witnessed growth of about 7% per annum. An economic boom over the coming years is expected due to the increase in global oil prices which will realise a surplus in the state budget”.*

These proposed reforms have come about through international negotiation with the EU and the USA and have seen attempts by both to develop improved trade links with Libya. Indeed, to this end both the EU and the USA have undertaken extensive diplomatic campaigns to transform the image of Libya in the eyes of their own business communities so that they can take advantage of a hitherto under exploited region and market. (Martinez, 2007; Porter, 2007; George and Niles, 2010) To this end the state has already begun to reorganise its relationship with society by moving towards the privatisation of state schools. For example, at present 140 of the state’s primary and high schools have become private schools under the name of The Participatory Education Institutions<sup>81</sup>. Most of these schools are adopting English language teaching as one of their main strategies. Dr Al-Zenati<sup>82</sup> has stated that the number of private schools will be increased until it reaches 396 schools in 2011 and 750

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<sup>81</sup> The Participatory Education Institutions is the name of the Libyan schools that have transformed from state’s schools into private schools.

<sup>82</sup> Dr Najy Al-Zenati the director of the National Committee of the Domestic Education in Libya was interviewed in 09/08/2010

schools in 2012<sup>83</sup>. According to the GPC Resolution No (504) of 2009 regarding the Participatory Education Institutions (PEI) Dr Al-Zenati added that:

*“This strategy of the Participatory Education Institutions has been implemented since 2009 and the privatization of education in Libya was announced and planned in 2003-4, in line with Libya’s recent political and economic strategies to privatize the public sector including education, health and social services”.*

This is in order to transform the relationship between the state and the private sector in the country. In short, it is an example of the new developmental strategy of public-private partnerships that has been adopted by the Libyan state. It also reflects the way in which very quickly class divisions in Libya will be intensified as the wealthier groups in society will seek to monopolise the private education sector. In so doing it is hoped that it will improve the quality of education offered to students, but there is clearly a limit to how far they can innovate. As mentioned earlier, a fundamental issue for the Libyan State is how far it can allow the public-private partnership to extend in terms of giving autonomy to the private sector without potentially undermining its own power and authority. Libya has already implemented its strategy of privatising the public sector including the education sector ahead of a possible membership of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) but as it stands the PEIs are not allowed to create their own curriculum, syllabus or study plans that are not also approved by the General People’s Committee for Education & Scientific Research (Otman and Karlberg , 2007; Alafi and de Bruijn, 2010). Also they are not allowed to amend existing curriculums or study subjects except through (GPCE) permission. The GPCE, however, in terms of scientific and educational necessities such as books, labs, technological equipment and facilities exempts these private institutions (the Participatory Education Institutions) from taxes. Consequently, the privatization of the education strategy in Libya is yet to be fully free in terms of curriculum, syllabus and study plans but in other ways it is being given significant economic advantages.

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<sup>83</sup> These statistics was given by Dr Najy Al-Zenati the director of the National Committee of the Domestic Education in an interview in Libya in 09/08/2010.

### **6.5.1 Libya's Emerging Private Sector and Shadow Economy: Education for the masses? Part-1**

Since 2004-5, the Libyan government has changed its governmental strategies to promote its integration in the global economy of the MOWS. In order to do this it has begun to adopt orthodox neo-liberal policies of privatisation, liberalisation and deregulation of the economy and society. Since 2002 the state has reduced its import controls enabling the private sector to freely import or export goods that were previously under the state's monopoly (NESR, 2006). This has opened the door for more competition from private companies and several types of businesses including education and training centres, and thus more investment agreements/contracts with international companies (George and Miles, 2010; Porter, 2007). In an example of that Alafi and de Bruijn (2010:12) stated that:

*“Numerous investment agreements with a number of countries have been signed so that it will encourage foreign direct investment and harmonise taxes. Infrastructure is also being modernised and free trade zones are planned. Certification requirements for trade with Maghreb countries have also been simplified“.*

Otman and Karlberg (2007: 383) add that,

*“On 12 December 2005 Libya and UNESCO signed an agreement that set up a national plan for information and communication Technologies (ICT) that will provide all higher education institutions in Libya with internet facilities including digital libraries, educational sites, and facilities for distance learning. By promoting the use of English in schools nationally, the government will ensure that scientific and technology websites are also accessible to Libyan students and researchers”.*

Thus, the new resolution of the GPCE & Scientific Research No (504) of 2009 regarding the Participatory Education Institutions came as a result of such agreements and contracts that illustrate the government's commitment to its newly espoused neo-liberal ideas. But some of

these private schools and training centres for English language still await licensing as they are said to lack the necessary quality. Critics will argue that it is more a reflection of the Libyan bureaucracy trying to hold up the privatisation programme for fear that it will undermine the old order and diminish its own power (Ahmida, 2005). Nonneman points out the instability of rentier states like Libya and the threat that liberalisation posed to them was recognised as long ago as the 1960s (Nonneman, 2001: 145). However, given the emphasis on the learning of English language in Libya and the relative slowness of the state to respond to this it is not surprising that a shadow economy has emerged where private lessons are offered informally and without state approval and therefore technically illegal. In evidence of this, Dr Abudal-Latif<sup>84</sup> the director of the private higher education in Libya concerning some of the private local and foreign education centres/firms assured that:

*“Today wherever one goes you will find different posters and advertisement for the teaching of English language by private schools, institutes and training centres, but most of them are not approved by the GPCE unfortunately. Therefore, we do not monitor these private institutions in terms of their quality”.*

He further explained that not only are many private schools, institutes and training centres waiting approval but so are a number of private foreign education institutions who are proposing to teach entirely in English such as the African International School in Tripoli. Arabic is not allowed to be used at these institutions except for serious matters that are related to the Libyan religion and culture. Most of these institutions are new to working in Tripoli and only 4 of them (see table-5.5.1.1) are approved by the GPCE.

**Table: 6.1:- The Approved Foreign Private Education Institutions in Libya**

S. N.	Name of Institution	Observations	No. of Students	No-of -Kindergarten Children
1	International Co. for Education	As per Law of Investment	555	162

<sup>84</sup> An interview was made in 10/08/2010 with Dr Abudal-Latif Kushlaf the director of the Private higher education in Libya.

2	Dunya Al-Ebdaa' Co.	Under procedure (As per Law of Investment)	175	///
3	Al-Fawz Partnership	Free Education licence	116	135
4	Aggression Martyrs	Without data	///	///

This slowness to issue licenses is a problem found throughout the periphery and semi-periphery of the MOWS. For example, Nunan (2003:595) notes of the shadow economy in China:

*“The teaching of English is emerging as a private business outside regular schools and universities, particularly in big cities such as, Guangzhou, Shanghai, and Beijing”.* He added that *“one publishing industry informant told me that her company estimated that there were 600,000 new enrolments in private-conversation schools every four to six months”* (Nunan, 2003:595).

To integrate into the MOWS requires adhering to norms and rules established by the states in that core zone. It is these states, primarily under US hegemony, that have had the power to construct the rules of trade and the international organisations that oversee it, such as the WTO. Unsurprisingly these rules and institutions tend to reflect the interests of the core states and produce a consensus around neo-liberal policies that suits the interests of capitalist firms and investors from the core. The norms and values underpinning these policies are presented as being scientific, neutral and universal in their validity for all countries in the MOWS. Echoing Fanon and Said, Wallerstein, Frank and Arrighi have all commented upon the Orientalist assumptions at the heart of these knowledge claims, assumptions that have their roots into the tradition of political economy itself, shaped by figures such as Adam Smith, David Ricardo, John Stuart Mill, John Maynard Keynes and Karl Marx (Kanth, 1999; Phillipson, 2008; and Ahmida, 2005). Human capital is an idea embedded in this power/knowledge framework that is part of the legacy of political economy. As Ahmida notes, it constructs a story that views development as taking place in stages through which each society must go in search of modernity. Until now Libya has resisted this trend but the recent embrace of new vision reforms has been to move towards acceptance of these

powerful ideas as now being valid for Libyan development. Nonetheless, as Ahmida says, at their heart they are Eurocentric and Orientalist in their assumptions and the policy prescriptions that they encourage, be they the development of 'human capital' or the need to acquire English language skills (Ahmida, 2005). These are exercises in power/knowledge that reflect prevailing power structures that have brought the MOWS into being and in which Libya has played only a subordinate part. Thus to this end Libya is embracing the same pressures and norms as China, for example, who have pursued a highly successful strategy of engagement with the core of the MOWS. Libya has the ambition, like China, of joining the World Trade Organisation (WTO) and currently holds accession status. This is something that has encouraged the private sector to invest in China (Nunan, 2003, and winters and Yusuf (2007). More to the point Nunan said (2003) on the topic of China's recent educational strategy towards ELA that:

*“In 2001 English in China was introduced as a compulsory subject in grade 3 in all elementary schools that have suitably qualified teachers. This represents a lowering of the age of compulsory instruction from 11 to 9. In primary schools there are generally two or three 40 minute lessons a week. In secondary school there are five to six 45 minute lessons. According to the informants the impact of English as a global language has been considerable”.*

**Figure 6.10: Nunan’s Table of his Summary of Findings of the Study about the Impact of English as a Global Language on Educational Policies and Practices in Asia-Pacific Region**

**TABLE 2**  
**Summary of Findings**

Country	Grade level and age at which English is introduced as a compulsory subject	Frequency of instruction	Impact of English as a global language
China	Grade 3, Age 9	Primary school: 2–3 40-minute lessons/week; secondary school: 5–6 45-minute lessons/week	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• age for compulsory English lowered from 11 to 9 in September 2001</li> <li>• English teaching emerging as private business</li> <li>• English becoming increasingly significant as university entry requirement</li> <li>• English enhancing promotional prospects in the workplace</li> </ul>
Hong Kong	Year 1, Age 6	Primary school: 4–6 hours/week; secondary school: 7–9 hours/week	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• overwhelming concern in government and business sectors that Hong Kong will lose economic advantage if English language skills are not enhanced</li> </ul>
Japan	First year, Age 12	Junior high school: 3 50-minute lessons/week	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• from 2002, primary students increasingly exposed to English, especially listening and speaking</li> </ul>
Korea	Grade 3, Age 9	Grades 3–6: 1–2 hours/week; Grades 7–9: 2–4 hours/week; Grades 10–12: 4 hours/week	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• compulsory English lowered from age 13 to 9</li> <li>• huge financial investment in teaching English</li> <li>• concern with negative effects on national identity due to early introduction of English</li> </ul>
Malaysia	Age 7	Primary school: 90 minutes/week; secondary school: 4 hours/week	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• concern with decline in educational standards and competitive economic advantage</li> <li>• fear of impact on national language</li> </ul>
Taiwan	Grade 1, Ages 6–7	1–2 hours/week	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• compulsory English lowered from Grade 5 to Grade 1</li> </ul>
Vietnam	Grade 6, Ages 11–12	Grades 6–9: 4 45-minute lessons/week; Grades 10–12: 3 45-minute lessons/week	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• English compulsory from junior high school (ages 11–12)</li> <li>• English plays central role in education and employment</li> <li>• English proficiency now required for most professional employment</li> </ul>

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### **6.5.2 Libya’s Emerging Private Sector and Shadow Economy: Education for the masses? Part-2**

The new private higher education institutes have obtained their initial authority from the GPCE and they are required to be monitored s by the general institutes at the GPCE for their performance and results. As a result, Libyan families and students (mostly from the middle classes and the elites) have been encouraged to use the private education schools/institutions

where high quality educational facilities are better resourced while the state's universities by comparison lag behind (Otman and Karlberg , 2007).

**Table: 6.2: The List of the Approved participatory Higher Education Institutes in Libya Obtaining Initial Exercise Permission From the Supreme Committee for Participatory Training and General Institutes Commissioned to Supervise Them and Approve Their Results**

S. N	Institute	Area	Specialization	Supervising Institute	Area
1	Yawm Al-Wafa'	Tripoli	Computer	Electronic Professions	Tripoli
2	Al-Farouk	Tripoli	Computer/Business Administration		
3	Ayat Al-Akhras	Tripoli	Computer/Business Administration	Al-Mihan Ashamila 2 <sup>nd</sup> March	Tripoli
4	Ain Shams	Tripoli	Computer/Business Administration		
5	2 <sup>nd</sup> March for Computer	Tripoli	Computer		
6	Al-Khadra	Tripoli	Computer	Medical Professions	Tripoli
7	Tripoli Medical professions	Tripoli	Labs.		
8	Al-Isra'	Tripoli	Computer	Preparing Trainers	Tripoli
9	Rusol Al-Hadara	Tripoli	Computer/Business Administration/Accountancy	Al-Mihan Ashamila – Ashomokh	Tripoli
10	Al-Dia'	Tripoli	Computer		
11	Al-Afaq	Tripoli	Computer/Business Administration/Accountancy	Financial & Admin. Professions	Tripoli
12	Minbar Al-Ma'rifa	Tripoli	Computer/Business Administration	Mechanic Professions	Tripoli
13	Zahrat Al-Andalus	Tripoli	Computer		
14	Moh. Jamal Al-Durrah	Tripoli	Computer	Industrial Technologies	Tripoli
15	Al-Masar	Tripoli	Computer/Business Administration/Accountancy	Admin./Financial	Tripoli
16	Ibn Manzour	Surman	Computer/Business Administration/Accountancy	Al-Mihan Ashamila	Surman
17	Al-Mustaneer	Annikat	Computer	Mechanic Professions	Nikat

		Al-Khams			Khams
18	Al-Ikhlās	Nalut	Computer/Business Administration	Al-Mihan Ashamila	Al-Hiraba
19	Computer Technologies	Al-Mirqib	Computer/Business Administration/Accountancy	Al-Mihan Ashamila	Tarhona
20	Administrative Financial	Tarhona	Business Administration /Accountancy		
21	Al-Motafawiq	Sirte	Computer	Al-Mihan Ashamila	Sirte
22	Al-Bayann	Ajdabia	Computer/Business Administration	Al-Mihan Ashamila	Ajdabia
23	Al-Bayyena	Benghazi	Computer	Computer Technologies	Benghazi
24	The Higher & Medium	Benghazi	Computer		
25	10 <sup>th</sup> March	Benghazi	Computer		
26	Ain Shams	Benghazi	Computer/Business Administration	Preparing Trainers	Benghazi
27	Saqar	Benghazi	Computer/Financial Management		
28	Al-Murshid	Benghazi	Computer/Financial Management		
29	Al-Ali for Technology & Modern Admin. Sciences	Benghazi	Financial Management	Al-Mihan Ashamila	Benghazi
30	Al-Kitab	Al-Butnan	Computer/Business Administration / countancy/Civil	Financial & Admin. Professions	Butnan

**Table: 6.3: The Names of the Approved Universities Belonging to Private Sector in Libya and Allowed to Teach English Language and the No of Students studying there (Fall 2009/2010)<sup>85</sup>**

S.N	University	Department	No. of Students
		Business Administration	434
		Accountancy	107

<sup>85</sup> Total of Students at the academic semester Fall 2009/2010 (2924) Student

<b>1</b>	Arrifaq (Tripoli)	Law	181
		Computer	189
		Architecture Eng.	163
		All Approved Departments	1074

<b>2</b>	United Africa (Zawia)	Law	459
		English Language	190
		History	19
		Business Administration	250
		Arabic Language	53
			All Approved Departments
<b>3</b>	Africa (Benghazi)	Law	192
		English Language	66
		Business Administration	102
			All Approved Departments

<b>4</b>	Allibiya Al-Dawlia for Medical Sciences (Benghazi)	Basic Medical Sciences	16
		Medicine	257
		Oral surgery medicine	173
		Pharmacy	53
		Medical Technology	None
		Nursing	None
			All Approved Departments

Free education in Libya through the state or the private sector is compulsory till the end of the grade 9 where the high school and tertiary education are not obligatory for students, yet it

is strongly promoted by the government. Fees for the private education sector for the primary and secondary stages at the PEIs are shared between the families and the state, while at the private higher education institutions the situation is quite different. For example, although the Higher Education Studies Academy in Tripoli is a semi-private higher education institution students have to pay fees in order to complete their postgraduate studies and to enjoy this academy's facilities. The ideal of free education in Libya as a means to promote social equality, an old ideal of the revolution, is now effectively abandoned.

### **6.5.3 Private Sector view on Libya's 'New Vision' Strategy**

Reorganising the relationship between the private sector and the public sector in Libya was one of the main new vision governmental strategies adopted in the period 2003-4 (Porter, 2007; Martinez, 2007; George and Miles, 2010, Vandewalle, 2008). This recent strategy towards the private sector in Libya has encouraged new and different projects, companies, firms and private education institutions to be established in the country. For the emerging private sector a number of structural problems have to be dealt with urgently if they are to build their confidence in the new Libyan economy. As Simon and Teal (1998:17) have indicated most of the developing countries of Africa are working hard to develop their human resources and invest in their human capital by sending their graduates to study in Europe and America. Yet, unfortunately the expected benefits of those graduates are mostly not for the benefit of the sending states, but for the benefit of receiving states. Because the developed countries offer them higher salaries and a good standard of working environment which could turn them into skilled labour for the benefit of the developed countries. Simon and Teal have quoted Jaycox's observation when he stated that "*There has been an amazing brain drain from Africa. The rest of the world has benefited from this, but it has not been to the benefit of Africa*" (Jaycox, 1993:73 cited in Simon and Teal, 1998:17). They added that:

*"It has been estimated that about 100,000 foreign experts work in Africa, whilst some 100,000 skilled African work in Europe and North America. These skilled Africans are typically doctors, research scientists and university teachers. Such an exchange of labour has positive aspects, but in general the emigration of many of highly educated from is of concern given the scarcity of such people in the continent. Although*

*government pay for most of the cost of higher education, the emigration of graduates means that their countries do not benefit from these investments. Often these graduates are replaced by hiring in expatriates at great cost (typically, higher wages are necessary induce people to work in foreign countries)” (Williams, 1994 cited in Simon and Teal, 1998:17).*

Thus far the private sector are at best sceptical about the extent to which the Libyan government can embrace its reform programme without undergoing profound social and political changes, which in themselves might present problems for the governing classes.

## **6.6 Conclusion**

This chapter's has examined the Libyan government's new vision strategies for modernising the Libyan state, economy and society in order to ease its integration in the MOWS. What is has shown is the problematic nature of these developments for the Libyan government and the obstacles that stand in the way of Libya embracing neo-liberal policies. Despite the fact that the Libyan state has immense power over society it lacks the infrastructure of a classic modern bureaucratic state and therefore it is having to do two things at the same time: build such a state which is bound by coherent rules and regulations rather than by patrimonial-clientelism relations, and make the transition to a neo-liberal economy in accord with the demands of the MOWS. The structural obstacles to this are rooted in the culture and ideology of the Libyan revolution and its material practices since the revolution occurred as well as the powerful tribal culture that still dominates large sections of Libyan society. Thus it is proving very difficult to transform Libya quickly and easily as it lacks the state infrastructure needed to undertake such a task in a way that enables the state to retain its legitimacy. The big question here is with regard to the consequences for Libyan state, economy and society of these policies. As the private sector grows and frees itself from state control it is not just providing an alternate source of economic development but also of political power. To what extent can the authoritarian-populist Libyan revolutionary state co-exist with alternate sites of power in Libya? And yet if it wants to attract FDI these moves towards privatisation of the economy would appear to be essential, presenting the government with a major political dilemma. Underneath this is the as yet unanswered question, will these policies, the development of ELA as central to Libya's human capital and the integration into the global economy of the MOWS, aid Libyan development? The next chapter will offer an answer to

this by comparing Libya's position with those of other states in the MOWS who have already gone down this path.

In the context of world-systems analysis Libya's position is a classic example of the incorporation of the periphery by the core. Having used its vast oil resources to resist this process since the revolution the structural dynamics of the MOWS (economic, political-military and cultural) have created an environment in which the radicalism of the Libyan governments ideology of 1969 looks increasingly reactionary by the C21. Espousing national independence (cultural and political) seems out of touch with the globalising tendencies that have emerged since the end of communism. When even vast countries and economies such as China and India are compelled to embrace neo-liberal capitalism then it is hardly surprising that a small country in the periphery such as Libya is eventually driven to do the same. But the policies adopted by the Libyan government represent a compromise between neo-liberalism and the need to retain a strong state, to protect the regime itself as much as the population subjected to free markets and their social consequences. Whilst India and China have the political-military, economic and cultural power to take a strong directing role in the integration of their economies in the MOWS, the comparative weakness of the Libyan regime, stripped of its Third Worldist rhetoric and alliances, is apparent.

## **Chapter 7: Evaluating the Evidence: Libya, ELA and the Global Economy**

### **7.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents a comparison between Libya and its new vision policies and what has been achieved by other countries that have pursued ELA as a developmental strategy in the MOWS. Given Libya's commitment to integrating itself into the global economy is there evidence to support the view that investing in its human capital will make a significant difference to Libya's ability to attract foreign capital? More to the point, will it help to reduce Libya's unemployment rate which currently stands at around 25-30 % (Alafi and de Bruijn, 2010; NESR, 2006) In order to assess the utility of these policies I will draw upon data published by the major financial and developmental institutions: the World Bank (WB), the United Nation Human Development Reports (UNHDR), the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the Nation Economic Strategy Report (NESR).\_Are language skills a key factor in attracting investment? Are they more important than other factors such as the kind of raw materials a country possesses, location, size of domestic market, and size of population and so on? What has happened in Libya so far since the new vision programme was introduced? In answering these questions it also offers a way of addressing the problems raised by Fanon, Said and world-systems writers such as Amin, Frank and Wallerstein: to what extent do these policies merely serve to reinforce Libya's economic and cultural dependency on the core? To what extent can Libya progress within the MOWS? In order to answer these questions I will consider the experiences of India, Malaysia and Tunisia with regard to the role of ELA in their social and economic development.

World-systems analysis is often compared with and seen as being in opposition to comparative models of sociology or political science, the latter construct models of the international that take nation-states as the building bloc of the international system. By contrast WSA works on the basis of the system as a whole (see chapter 2) and therefore comparisons are made both between nation-states as fixed entities but are more complex. Nation-states are units of a world-system shaped by a range of processes (economic, political-military, cultural, social) that at any given time divide the system into zones (core, periphery and semi-periphery). To abstract nation-states from the system is to both reify them and present a form of methodological nationalism (see chapter two) that treats nations and states as fixed entities rather than tracing their long-term historical and structural evolution within

the world-system. Thus the purpose of comparison in this chapter is not to treat Libya, Malaysia, China and India, for example, as discrete nation-states establishing inter-state relations, rather it is to situate their emergence and development in relation to their spatio-temporal relation to the MOWS. When were they incorporated into the MOWS? Under what circumstances? What are their relative strengths and weaknesses in relation to the power of the states in the core of the MOWS? These are the key questions for WSA. And what is clear is that in comparison to most other Third World countries that have been incorporated into the MOWS Libya's full incorporation has come very late and much to its disadvantage. Libya lacks the resources (ironically), population density, military and economic power to exercise much leverage in the shaping of the MOWS. The emphasis on policies of human capital and in particular ELA is perfectly understandable under these circumstances and reflects the Libyan state's relative weakness and lack of options. What this chapter shows is that these policies are unlikely to generate the kind of modernising changes that the Libyan government desires. Overturning long-term structural problems of economy and society have proven to be intractable problems for many rentier states that have been integrated fully into the MOWS much earlier than Libya.

## 7.2 Globalisation and English Language Acquisition

In 2009 Dr Habiba<sup>86</sup> the spokeswoman for the United Nations Information Centre (UNIC) in Libya told me that: "*Libya currently is in dire need of English language skills as it is the language of development whether people (the policy-makers) agree or disagree*". Her claim was that there were many examples around the world that illustrated the importance of English language for development. She added:

*"Pakistan and India are rapidly developing in science, especially in technological science. Their development processes success is due to their excellent human resources and their knowledge in English language. Beside other factors, English language is the key factor for development wherever we are"*.

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<sup>86</sup> The spokeswoman of the United Nations Information Centre-Libya was interviewed in 2009.

This view is not a universally held though. There are important questions about the extent to which English is an ‘added value’ for development in terms of materials and economic resources, in other words, of educational value. According to Canagarajah (2003) the teaching of English language has become a controversial activity worldwide. Phillipson (2001) suggested that the spread of English in those countries and many countries of the MOWS today represents both the strong socio-economic desire of those former colonies to integrate themselves with the MOWS, and the indirect expansion that serves the territorial, political and cultural interests of the Core nations over the rest. For Phillipson this “*means a western-dominated globalisation agenda set by the transnational corporations and the IMF, and the US military intervening, with or without a mandate from the United Nations, whenever ‘vital interests’ are at risk*” (Phillipson, 2001:192). However, apart from the fact of the political-economic interests of the Western nations via the spread of English languages in its ‘*spheres of influence*’, Coleman (2004:17) claimed:

*“Even in France, where foreign policy for so long fought to maintain French as an alternative lingua franca before adopting a protective multilingualist stance, there is now acceptance of the need for more English-medium university courses, and even acceptance of English as lingua franca”*

Coleman suggests that the reason behind the dominance of the English language today is due to it being *inseparable from globalization* (Hüppauf 2004 cited in Coleman, 2004:02). This drive towards the acquisition of English is reflected in the OECD’s report on globalisation which says that OECD (2006:13):

*“National borders no longer matter as much as they used to. Signs of globalisation can be seen everywhere from the rapid worldwide spread of technology to the increasing tendency of students and academics to go overseas to study and work”.*

In effect, it is not only the former colonies such as India which are using English for their economic development; it is a trend throughout the MOWS and a structural development within it. For example, countries from Asia such as China, Japan, and Taiwan, and countries that represent a part of Europe such as the Ukraine, are highly concerned to develop ELA (Nunan, 2003 and Tarnopolsky, 2000). Similar to Libya, the Ukrainian government now puts the ELA as a key factor for achieving its goal of integration into the MOWS. This is in part a response to the impact of the current global economic crisis on the Ukrainian economy. Tarnopolsky (2000:616) corroborated this:

*“The Ukrainian authorities set the integration of the country into the world community and international economy as one of their primary tasks in protecting and developing an independent Ukraine. Such goal is impossible without many people who have a good mastery of foreign languages (FLs), especially English”.*

Skills development programs have become the major aspect for national growth and global economic integration for countries worldwide where IT and English language skills come as the most important factors. How, then, have other countries in the MOWS fared in pursuing ELA as a factor of development and what are the implications of this for Libya’s new vision strategies?

### **7.2.1 India: ELA as a Means of Promoting Development**

In terms of history, the English language was certainly not used as a foreign language for development in India. The reasons for that lay in its experience with British colonialism where English was the language of the government and recognised as a symbol of political power. According to Hohenthal (2003) English remains the official language in India with equal status in practice to Hindi. Regarding the Hindi language Hohenthal tried to explain the problems that made it quite untenable in the country since he said that:

*“There were, however, several problems with selecting Hindi, and since the protests were often violent (e.g. the riots in Tamil Nadu in May 1963, protesting against the imposition of Hindi), the government wanted to adapt a policy which would help to*

*maintain the status quo. Firstly, Hindi is not evenly distributed throughout the country; e.g. in Tamil Nadu, in the south, only 0.0002 per cent of the people claimed knowledge of Hindi or Urdu, whereas in the northern states this figure can rise up to 96.7 per cent. Secondly, it was thought that the speakers of other languages would be offended by its selection; other Indian languages, for example Tamil and Bengali, had as much right to be national languages as Hindi. The other Indian communities felt they would be professionally, politically and socially disadvantaged were Hindi given the central role. Thirdly, Hindi was thought to need vocabulary development before it could be used efficiently as a language of government. In spite of these problems, Hindi was chosen as the national language in the constitution, and English was to be replaced by Hindi in fifteen years' time. However, due to the continuous opposition in the south, this replacement was not politically possible. In 1967 a law was passed which allowed the use of both Hindi and English for all official purposes - and that situation still exists'' (Fasold 1984: 24 cited in Hohenthal, 2003, chapter3).*

Although many political and nationalistic pressures support Hindi as the national language, it is English, in practice that enables different groups In India to communicate and coordinate their activities (Hill, 1969; and Alan and Shahid, 2007). Unlike Libya, India was directly integrated into the MOWS by British colonialism which had a profound effect on its development since the C16 and rendering it subordinate to the interests of the British Empire for that period. Strong cultural, political and economic links were established, primarily to Britain's advantage but which now have been used by India's burgeoning economic elites for their own interests. As one of the BRIC countries of the semi-periphery India has several distinct strategic advantages as it assumes a more prominent role in the MOWS, advantages that are found in the other BRIC countries: A large population, vast capital and human resources, vast natural resources, a strong military and significant domestic market. Thus India serves as a contrast with Libya in the MOWS, possessing many crucial factors that Libya does not. To what extent are these other factors the key to India's success rather than its ELA?

According to Hohenthal (2003) before India was colonised by the British Empire there were several reasons that contributed to the spreading of English to the extent whereby it became

the official language of the country. He divided those reasons into two phases which are: (1) the Missionary phase in the 18th century by the Christian missionaries; (2) the Indian's demand to learn English where Indian scholars mostly were encouraging this trend as a movement towards modernity. There was a belief that by learning English people would achieve scientific western development. Certainly, the Orientalist's were one of the main proponents of this phase that contributed to establishing English in India. According to Hohenthal (2003) this gradually developed since a letter was sent from Raja Rammohun to Lord Amherst in 1823 which was presented as an evidence of the local demand for English. Raja believed that English in India would provide Indians with the key to all knowledge. He was also keen on using government funds to adopt employees from Europe that were talented and educated so that they, in turn, would educate the people of India in mathematics, natural philosophy, chemistry, anatomy and other sciences.

English became the dominant language of government and administration in India during the phase of the British Empire, establishing strong cultural links between Indian and British elites. Three factors, in particular, contributed to the spread of English: (1) the different local languages and cultures in the Indian society which paved the way for Orientalist's (intellectual power) were a hindrance to government and administration. English could transcend these differences; (2) British colonialism governed India using both military and intellectual means. (3) English began to be viewed as synonymous with development, modernity and progress, a theme that Sklair notes persists today in countries like Jamaica (Sklair; 1994) Gradually, this factor was enhanced by both Indian scholars and the Orientalist's who played a great role in legitimising British rule. For example, Lord Macaulay was the one of the main figures in this regard of being in favour of the spread of English. He contributed to enhancing bilingualism in India with the idea that Indian languages would be enriched by English, learning scientific and literary expression. To emphasise his Orientalist credentials Lord Macauley added: "*I have never found one amongst them who could deny that a single shelf of a good European library was worth the whole native literature of India and Arabia*" (Kachru 1986: 07 cited in Phillipson, 2001:189). Phillipson (2001:189) observes of this that:

*“The colonial exercise was not merely about conquering territory and economies, but also about conquering minds. For Macaulay and generations of colonialists the purpose of British education for Indian leaders was to produce a class of persons, Indians in blood and colour, English in taste, in opinion, in morals and in intellect.”*

On the British Empire’s Orientalist strategies Pennycook (1994), following Said and Phillipson, said that Orientalism was not “*somehow a good and innocent project that only had the right of colonised people at heart*” he added:

*“although Orientalism is usually considered more sympathetic towards the local languages and cultures than Anglicism, it acknowledged the superiority of Western literature and learning, and it was a means to exercise social control over the people, and imposing of western ideas”* (Pennycook, 1994:102).

Further, he notes that:

*“although Macaulay is credited the most influential individual on the language question, the issue is more complex than simply Macaulay arriving in India, writing the minute on education, and then heading off back to England with having English firmly transplanted in the colony. In his view, then, it is important to understand that Macaulay just articulated a position which had been discussed for a long time already* (Pennycook 1994: 77).

He added that “*the Indian bourgeoisie was demanding English-language education as much as the missionaries and educators, seeing knowledge of English as an essential tool in gaining social and economic prestige*” (Hohenthal, 2003). But English today economically and socially spreads itself as language worldwide, a process fuelled by what is usually termed globalisation, the elimination of barriers between nations (Tornroos, 2002; OECD, 2006). However this remains an unequal exchange as the spread of global English is supported by

the cultural, political and economic power of the states in the core of the MOWS and in particular by the USA as the hegemonic state. For countries in the periphery and semi-periphery and even for non-English language speaking countries in the core of the MOWS, the process of ELA appears to be ineluctable. But this process is not necessarily of benefit to all citizens in the core countries, even in the UK itself. A recent report by the British Council suggests that as more people globally acquire English language the advantage that its exclusivity confers on the UK citizens begins to disappear, for example. The report's author David Graddol notes as around 2 billion people now speak English globally that:

*“This trend has major implications for the UK where many people do not speak another language with any great proficiency. When we are in competition economically, educationally or culturally, conversing in English alone is no longer enough.” The report found that English is not taught as a foreign language in many countries, including China and India. Instead it is seen as a “basic universal skill.” In China, 60% of primary school children learn English and more people in India and China speak the language fluently than anywhere else in the world” (Taylor, 2006).*

However, Phillipson (2001) says that English language succeeded in India as a result of the dependency relations between British and its colonies where the education system was the keystone of so-called ‘professional imperialism’. Phillipson added that: *“Professional imperialism triumphs even where political and economic domination has been broken. The knowledge-capitalism of professional imperialism subjugates people more imperceptibly than and as effectively as international finance and weaponry. The possibility of a convivial society depends therefore on a new consensus about the destructiveness of imperialism at three levels: the pernicious spread of one nation beyond its boundaries; the omnipresent influence of multinational corporations; and the mushrooming of professional monopolies over production. Politics for convivial reconstruction of society must especially face imperialism on this third level, where it takes the form of professionalism” (Illich 1973: 56–57 cited in Phillipson, 2001:194).* Phillipson noted that:

*“The connection between higher education in India and the western academy undeniably exists – it is not only historical and paradigmatic but is also a continuing relation of dependence and support in matters of scholarship and expertise, material aid, the training of personnel, the framing of syllabi, and pedagogical methods”* (Rajan 1992b: 141 cited in Phillipson, 2001: 194).

Phillipson has commented on Rajan’s statement that it *“fits the pattern of professional imperialism that Ivan Illich warned against thirty years ago”* which legitimises the linguistic and cultural universe of ‘English’ in the post-colonial countries and their educational institutions as a tool of development. Based on that, English today is the most spoken language in India, especially at the field of education and business. Since India today is *“ranked the third largest English speaking population in the world besides US and UK”* in terms of density of population speaking the language (Rajesh, 2009). But the question is how has the English language affected India’s development in the MOWS? In response to this question Phillipson (1992) emphasised that English *“failed to help former colonies”* in terms of their development, especially in places like Africa and India, because of the structural relationship of dependency between the core nations and the periphery and semi-periphery countries,

*“the export of English to formerly colonized countries has not paved the way to modernity and prosperity, as was foreseen by at least some planners in the post World War II era. Far from being a neutral medium allowing for international communication and access to the technology of developed countries, English has served the political, cultural, and economic interests of the principal colonial powers, Great Britain and the U.S., at the expense of local and national development in third world countries”* (Phillipson, 1992 quoted in Moritoshi 2001:3-4)

He believed English would be successful in helping the periphery countries’ development only when the core shares its technological and scientific advances with its former colonies, and not to extend the economic and technical gap between both of them (Moritoshi, 2001). But in the context of the dependent relations that structure the MOWS between core, periphery and semi-periphery, this is unlikely to be easy for the dependent countries to attain.

The states and corporations of the core have no interest in surrendering their intellectual patents freely to the states in the rest of the MOWS. The whole nature of so-called trade related intellectual property rights (TRIPS) has arisen precisely to prevent this happening (Shiva, 2001). The control of technology and the knowledge that underpins its development and ownership is a central power relation in the MOWS that can only be wrested from the core by countries like India over time and through a strong state seeking to build up its domestic technology and research infrastructure. Given its vast size and wealth India has the resources to do this in a way that Libya does not (Dreze and Sen, 2002). While Phillipson and Moritoshi hold this point of view, Patibandla and Petersen (2002) agreed that global English has contributed to India's economic industries like its emerging software industry which represents itself as one of the biggest international competitive high-tech sectors in the MOWS. They attributed the high growth and competitiveness of this industry to "*the low cost of scientific and engineering manpower with English language skills widespread (Hanna, 1994; Heeks, 1996)*" (Patibandla and Petersen, 2002:1561). Patibandla and Petersen (2002: 1562) added that:

*"At present, India's educational institutions annually generate between 75,000 and 80,000 software professionals of varying technical skills with proficiency in the English language. About 16,500 engineering graduates are produced by the formal institutions and the rest by the private training institutes. This pool of skilled labour is supported by some of the world class research institutions such as the Indian Institute of Science in Bangalore, the public sector firm the Bharat Heavy Electronics, and a half dozen Indian Institutes of Technology".*

Moreover, Rajesh (2009) suggested that English language has contributed also in the flourishing of Indian literature and generating well-known writers in India like:

*Arundhati Roy, Vikram Seth and Salman Rushdie were able to make a strong foothold in international arena. Arundhati Roy won the Booker Prize for her novel "The God of Small Things". Salman Rushdie won the Booker Prize for "Midnight Children". It is good to see many new Indian authors bringing out books on Indian culture and literature".*

Thus India has benefited in a number of ways through its ability to use the widespread knowledge of global English as a means to attract investment into the country and through having a strong state to direct investment into new high-tech industries which with India's relatively low-cost wages means that they can more than compete with states in the core. So the picture is complicated. To some extent global English in India has given the country a definite advantage at this phase of the MOWS by enabling India to produce goods and services in the global economy that are both essential to the core and produced in the English language

### **7.2.2 Malaysia: ELA as Means of Promoting Development**

Like India, Malaysia is a former British colony and its experience with the English language has not stopped since then (Hanapiah, 2002). Malaysian society contains more than one community: Malay, Chinese, and Tamil with Chinese as the biggest. These three different communities give the cultural diversity to the country where language is one of its aspects. By 1950 educational facilities were provided by British colonialism for different types of schools that were to be established to reflect the three communities. Hence, the education system in Malaysia was the starting point at which British colonisation began and helped the spread of English language across the country.

Thus, like India, Malaysia was incorporated into the MOWS directly through British colonial occupation from the C18 onwards which again has bought it advantages and disadvantages over time in terms of its ability to control its own development. According to Hanapiah (2002) the number of Malaysian students enrolling in English schools during the colonial period was very low because of the high fees that were required in order to attend those schools, a problem reinforced by the fact that most schools were based in the capital while most people still lived in the countryside. This colonial experience was shared by Libyan's too during the Italian occupation as learning the Italian language was mainly available for the richer Libyan elite, while the majorities were studying so-called Al-Koutab. Apart from the differences between the two types of colonialism (Italian dictatorial) and (British cultural), the situation regarding students' enrolment at those colonial schools was similar in Libya and

Malaysia. However, after Malaysia became independent English language continued to spread for a variety of reasons. Perhaps the most important factor was the role that was played by the mass media, which includes national radio, television programs, newspapers, and English films/movies. These media forms were dominated by the English language which, in the words of Hanapiah, led indirectly to the promotion of social tolerance and unity among the Malaysian society regarding English language, and thus its spread (Lent, 1974; Lee, 1999; Hanapiah, 2003) The other factor behind the endurance of the English language was that it was given a high priority by the government as a second language for the country (Chio, 2004). Despite some resistance to this in favour of Bahasa Malaysia as the national language for the country, English began to take over everyday activities including such things as road and traffic signs, and advertisements. Paralleling the Libyan experience there was a sudden about turn by the Malaysia government that saw the suspension of ELA from 1970 to 1990 (Nunan; 2003; Chio, 2004). However, this strategy came to be viewed as insular and unhelpful for Malaysia development and in 1990 there was a gradual reintroduction of ELA in Malaysia schools and universities (Lee, 1999; Chio, 2004). Today English is the medium of communication along with Malay, and it is the language that unifies the country (Hanapiah, 2002:04). Hanapiah argues that English has several important developmental functions that are essential for promoting growth and development in Malaysia in different fields. These include: business, employment, education, politics, tourism, law, media and translation. He added that:

*“Businesses and organizations have understood the importance of English as a tool required for business expansion, image building and sometimes it becomes as a matter of survival in today’s era of globalization where local businesses are constantly facing intense competition both from local counterparts and foreign companies. Therefore, business strategists and organizations have taken some efforts or initiative to improve their command of English”.*

Hanapiah (2002: 65) used the Ampang Puteri Specialist Hospital – a private hospital in Kuala Lumpur - as a good example of the role of English in business area since he said:

*“Recently the hospital management launched a “Let’s Speak English” campaign with the objective to motivate staff to learn and inculcate confidence in speaking the language. The management is planning activities for the staff to enhance the level of English proficiency so that English can soon be its primary medium of communication. Besides, the use of English at the hospital helps improve the organization’s image in the eyes of the public”.*

The above statement by Hanapiah illustrates accordingly the importance of English language as it has taken on a status whereby it becomes impossible to get skilled posts without it. English, again, has become synonymous with progress, modernity and globalisation as the logical outcome of the process of modernity. To illustrate this point in 2000 more than 39’000 Malaysian graduates were unable to find work because of their lack of English language skills, a pattern replicated in Libya, of course (Hanapiah, 2002). In evidence of that Hanapiah (2002:06) has quoted the Minister of Education, Tan Sri Musa Mohamad, as saying: *“employers did not just look at one’s qualification but also factors like personality, potential, English proficiency and experience”*. We can see then how ELA has become a fundamental part of the nation’s stock of human capital, a process that Libya is only beginning to undertake now after its long isolation from the global economy. The experience of students in Malaysia is stark, if you don’t gain recognised English language qualifications your career prospects will be limited. Like Malaysia which has sought to pursue developmental policies based around a strong state and protectionist measures, including on capital flows, Libya is now moving in the opposite direction as it embraces neo liberalism and abandoning such controls. That said the state is also reducing its role in the Malaysian economy and is, again like Libya, trying to diversify its economy (Chio, 2004).

Parallel to the vision 2019 for Libya (see chapter 3) that was created by the NESR a vision 2020 was created in 1991 by the National Economic Program for Malaysia to accelerate its development. The vision of 2020 is an ambitious goal<sup>87</sup> for the country to become a fully developed nation. Regarding this vision Nunan (2003:602) claimed that:

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<sup>87</sup> *“This works in line with its strategic, long-term master plan to be at par with other developed nations in the world by the year 2020. Transfer of knowledge and technical skill occurs essentially through the provision of better education and training courses. At universities and polytechnics, students are exposed and taught various disciplines of knowledge in science and technology. Apart from reading English references, sometimes teaching is also being conducted in English both by local and foreign instructors. For training purposes, particularly when staff or workers are sent abroad to Europe,*

*“It was only during the 1990s that the government realized that the loss of English would adversely affect economic development. Deterioration in the standards of English is seen as a major obstacle to the aspiration that Malaysia be declared a developed nation by 2020”.*

The English language was a significant factor in the development of Malaysian human capital, leading the Malaysia Prime Minister to say that:

*“In the development of our human resources, our private sector has the most important of roles to play. Train your own manpower. Equip them for their changing tasks. Look after their interests. Upgrade their skills. Manage them well. And reward them for their contribution”.*

With consideration to Malaysia’s developmental efforts in particular regarding skills development, it is worth noting that this vision (2020) not only reflects the Malaysian government’s aspiration for prosperity and a competitive economic development, also it hints to the acceptance of the norms and rules of the core of the MOWS since the main aim of this vision is to make Malaysia a developed nation by the year 2020 (Lee, 1999). Thus the Malaysian experience supports the idea that English language can be an important factor in social and economic development, but only in the context of a host of other factors such as a strong and directing state, protectionist policies in trade (particularly in finance) and a government that is authoritarian in outlook, placing national developmental goals before individual liberty. These were policies of a specific time and place in the evolution of the MOWS (Samman and Al-Zo’by, 2008), the extent to which the Libyan government could now copy them seems most unlikely, particularly given that the emphasis of the new vision strategies is against protectionism towards a more liberalised economy.

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*Australia, United Kingdom or United States of America, preliminary, they are always been equipped with certain basic English language training skills” (Hanapiha, 2002:03).*

### 7.2.3 Tunisia: ELA and Post-Colonialism

As a neighbouring Maghreb country Tunisia has shared important experiences with Libya but a crucial difference: it was a French colony where French became the dominant language and cultural identity. As a consequence Tunisia underwent a different colonial process with the traditional French model of direct control and cultural assimilation (Perkins, 2004). Unlike the Libyan government since the revolution, Tunisian governments have had a far more pragmatic approach to ELA as a tool of development (Battenburg, 1997). In fact this is an important issue of division between them. Ruling elites in Tunisia have been Westernised and integrated into military, political and economic power structures of the MOWS that have seen them reliant upon support and protection by the core in their capacity to rule (Amrani, 2011; King, 1998). In return Tunisia's elites gave the states in the core consistent political support and a subjugated population, particularly during the period of the Ben Ali Presidency. Tunisia's ruling elites put their relations with the core and their desire for stability, power and wealth before any Tunisian popular nationalist aspirations, confirming Fanon's fears that a colonial bourgeoisie would simply be replaced by a nationalist one. Libya, by contrast, underwent a revolution that was both populist and nationalist, alternating rhetoric of pan-Arabism and pan-Africanism, and echoing Fanon's ideology of resistance to colonial power, none of which was likely to build Libya's relations with the state's in the core beyond a certain limit, most obviously the need for oil. In this respect the differences between Tunisia and Libya with regard to ELA has its roots in the post-colonial experience of the two countries: Tunisia's elites were a classic 'comprador classes placing the interests of themselves and the ruling elites in the core before that of their own people (Parenti, 1995; Phillipson, 2008; and Wallerstein, 2006). Said observed ruefully how the representatives of the PLO, for example, shed their revolutionary nationalist ideology in favour of embracing neo-liberalism '... people who in the past were Fanonists a matter of a week ago and have now changed and become advocates of Singapore and open markets and development. They do nothing for the real mass of the Palestinians, who are landless peasants, stateless refugees, ...' (Said, 1994b). A similar transformation seems to have befallen Libya's ruling elites as it embraces the new vision strategy.

In contrast with Libya post-colonial Tunisian political and economic elites were happy to see the country integrated into the MOWS in return for support from the Western states in the core. Under President Ben Ali, Tunisia adopted the kind of neo-liberal policies now being

advocated by the Libyan government and sought to retain an increasingly authoritarian form of government. The Ben Ali era (beginning in 1987) has been marked by nepotism, corruption and increasingly brutal forms of governance, the military and police directed against the civil population and in particular independent Trade Unions (Toensing, 2011). The adoption of neo-liberal policies and authoritarian government makes sense in Tunisia's case because the consequences of its economic policies were to create mass unemployment, poverty and social unrest. Only an increasingly authoritarian government could contain this social mix. Libya, of course, has an authoritarian government and high unemployment but much stronger social development (health, education) than Tunisia. Whether this is enough to enable the government to cope with the introduction of the new vision policies and their likely social consequences is to be determined but in some respects Tunisia might be where Libya's current policies are taking it in the MOWS: a diverse economy which develops tourism, manufacturing goods for markets in the core, perhaps production of agricultural goods for export, and with increasing social inequality and poverty.

In Libya, by contrast, the ideology of the revolution was in part rooted in the ideas of those like Fanon who had a clear and critical view about the relationship between language, identity and colonial power. Language could not simply be a neutral tool and the revolutionary regime shared this view. Thus in part Libya's uncertain development in the MOWS in its post-colonial period reflects its resistance to the norms and rules of the world-system. In this respect Libya has more in common with other post-colonial countries that sought to resist these rules and norms and who subsequently became subject to varying forms of punishment by the states in the core, such as Cuba, Nicaragua under the Sandinistas, Vietnam and Angola. In each case the nationalist-populist rhetoric of the post colonial government tended to lead to particular state forms, often embracing a mixture of libertarian rhetoric ('a peoples council', for example) with a state that sought increasingly centralised and authoritarian control over its society, however fragile this control. The consequences of this for Libya have been profound and Dr Habiba<sup>88</sup> the spokeswoman at the UNIC in Libya tried to explain why those strategies adopted by the Libyan government regarding colonial languages were problematic by a comparison she made between Libya and Tunisia that:

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<sup>88</sup> The spokeswoman at the united information centre in Libya was interviewed in 31/03/2009.

*“Tunisia introduces French language starting at stage 3 in primary level; hence, they don’t face any problems with these languages at their universities and to enter the job market. Therefore, Tunisian graduates become highly qualified and successful in terms of their human resources, especially academically”.*

Dr Habiba’s views on the advantages of learning a foreign language for development were supported by Hanabiah (2002) since he suggested that:

*“Successful graduates at the university level, specifically those who achieve first class degrees, are people who have a very high level of mastery in English. This is because they certainly need to read and subsequently analyze a lot of reference books which are mostly written in English and complete assignments. The more they read they develop better understanding and writing skills and thus their performance in academics is probably getting higher”.*

Tunisia introduced ELA into its education system during the period when Libya was under an international embargo (1993 - present) as a response to its needs and aspirations. According to Daoud (1996:599) Tunisia added English to its curriculum because of the growing demand for it worldwide *“as the means of access to the modern sciences, technology and economic development”*. While, Battenburg (2003) claimed the recent governmental strategies towards English in Tunisia suggest the decline in French and its influence regarding political and economic development. Although Tunisia along with the other Maghreb countries (Algeria and Morocco) has been thought of as a francophone bastion, a competition between English and French in Tunisian educational institutions and programs seems to be taking place (Battenburg, 2003). The trends suggest that ELA in Tunisia might be displacing the traditional hold that the colonial language French has over the country.

Daoud (2003:604) said of these trends in Tunisia that *“to make people truly operational in English, the educational system must develop sound ELT/ESP programs that are driven by clear goals and objectives, delivered by competent reflective teachers, and sustained*

*systematic formative evaluation*". He emphasised the role that would be played by properly trained and qualified English teachers in English departments at the undergraduates and postgraduates levels in Tunisia where teachers become an agent of social change and competitiveness (Daoud, 2003). Furthermore, Battenburg (2003) in his analysis of Tunisian developmental strategies placed ELA alongside commensurate factors such as its location and atmosphere, its nearness to European markets, and its human resources, all of which, of course, could apply equally to Libya. Daoud (2003:604) emphasised the Tunisian government's role towards its human capital and institutions as a critical factor (government's encouragement) since he said: "*there is a political will to gear both institutional and human resources towards promoting English as the language of economic, scientific, and technological development*". Again, the experience of Tunisia illustrates how far behind Libya has fallen in this aspect of development and the urgency with which a coherent government agenda needs to be implemented. But as with Malaysia the question remains to what extent ELA has been crucial in Tunisian social and economic developmental policies? The answer would appear to be that it has, as is the case with Malaysia, been one part of a number of policies, a necessary policy but not sufficient in its own right, to enhance Tunisian development. And this, of course, does nothing to diminish Tunisia's dependent relationship with the core of the MOWS, indeed, it only highlights it. Whilst Tunisia has enjoyed uneven development (when measured in terms of social equality) in return it has been clearly subordinated to the interests of states in the core of the MOWS who arm, offer political support and economic aid to a highly authoritarian but nonetheless pro-Western government, as long as it continues to serve their interests. Tunisia's ruling elites do not espouse the anti-Western rhetoric that we can see from former Malaysia Prime Minister Mahathir Mohammed, for example. Libya has already begun to move down this path in taking an overt position alongside the West in the 'war on terror' and in seeking to control the flow of migrants from Africa into Europe. Such trends seem likely to increase in the years ahead if the new vision strategy is to be pursued seriously.

#### **7.2.4 Libya and the New Vision Policies**

In keeping with other countries in the periphery and the semi-periphery the Libyan government is actively seeking to strengthen the relationship between educational research and business interests as set out in its NESR plan for 2004. According to the NESR (2004:119) "*the LBES/GCR ranks Libya 97<sup>th</sup> out of 111 countries in university/industry*

*research collaboration indicating a serious weakness in the link between the education system and the needs of the economy*". Thus this is an effort on the part of the state to coordinate the educational system with the needs of the job market. To this end the NESR has identified three sectors that are the most vital sectors for the diversification of the Libyan economy: tourism, information and communication technology, and construction. For example, according to the NESR (2004:148) *"an effective telecoms sector will lower the cost of business and bring new people to the workforce and help foster Libya's connections with other nations"*. Regarding the construction industry it stated *"Libya provides a good complement in both oil and gas and tourism sector, and is a critical growth sector as the economy expands and develops if developed well, it also represents a huge employment opportunities for Libyans"*. All of these sectors are in dire need of Libyan graduates with high quality ELA.

Each of the examples in this chapter makes a case to suggest that ELA as a measure of human capital is now seen as a fundamental part of any developmental strategy for a non-English speaking state in the world-system. As the level of competition for attracting global capital investment intensifies it places increased and often contradictory pressures on government policy. For example, the need for governments to minimally satisfy the needs of their population by providing welfare services as opposed to the needs of global capital which often want government to cut public spending on exactly those programmes. It is exactly the impact of these neoliberal policies and their polarisation of society that has led to the Jasmine revolution in Tunisia and elsewhere and which seems to represent a profound shift in the political culture of the MENA (Canagarajah, 2003). The Libyan government is undertaking these strategies at a time when many other governments are under pressure for having chosen to support the needs of capital rather than the needs of their national population. Against a backdrop of 30% unemployment this seems a very difficult strategy to follow if the situation elsewhere in the MENA is a guide.

### **7.3 Libya's Incorporation into the MOWS**

If Libya is to take advantage of its commitment to promoting its human capital as a means of reintegrating into the global economy of the MOWS this can only be, as we have seen with other countries, in combination with a number of other factors. These key factors are: location, size of population, raw materials, and the other recent factors like tourism, and

human capital. What is clear from the example of other states in the periphery and semi-periphery that have pursued ELA strategies as part of their social and economic development is two-fold:

1. ELA is a necessary but not sufficient component of modern developmental strategies as global English has become the dominant language of the MOWS and the global economy.
2. Any developmental policy pursued by a country has to take into account the historical and structural evolution of the MOWS (Wallerstein, 2010). There can be no meaningful ahistoric and generalised model of development as such an approach (exemplified by liberal views on development and modernisation) fails to understand the nature of power and hierarchy that underpins the development of the MOWS, producing the dependent relations between core-periphery and semi-periphery that structure the MOWS (Fine and Milonakis, 2008). Or as Gul and Pesendorfer put it, *'populating economic models with "flesh-and-blood human beings" was never the objective of positive economics'* (Fine and Milonakis, 2009: 1). Libya's one redeeming strength, and it is an important one, is its oil resources which are strategically vital to the core of the MOWS. Its weaknesses when compared with, for example, the BRIC states of the semi-periphery: its small population, lack of military strength, late entry into the MOWS under terms and conditions that are not designed to enhance Libyan independence or development, its small domestic market, its geographical location in easy reach of the states in the core. All of these factors are essential when considering the circumstances of particular states in the MOWS. The conclusion to be drawn is that Libya's opportunities for controlling its development, are extremely constrained for these reasons.

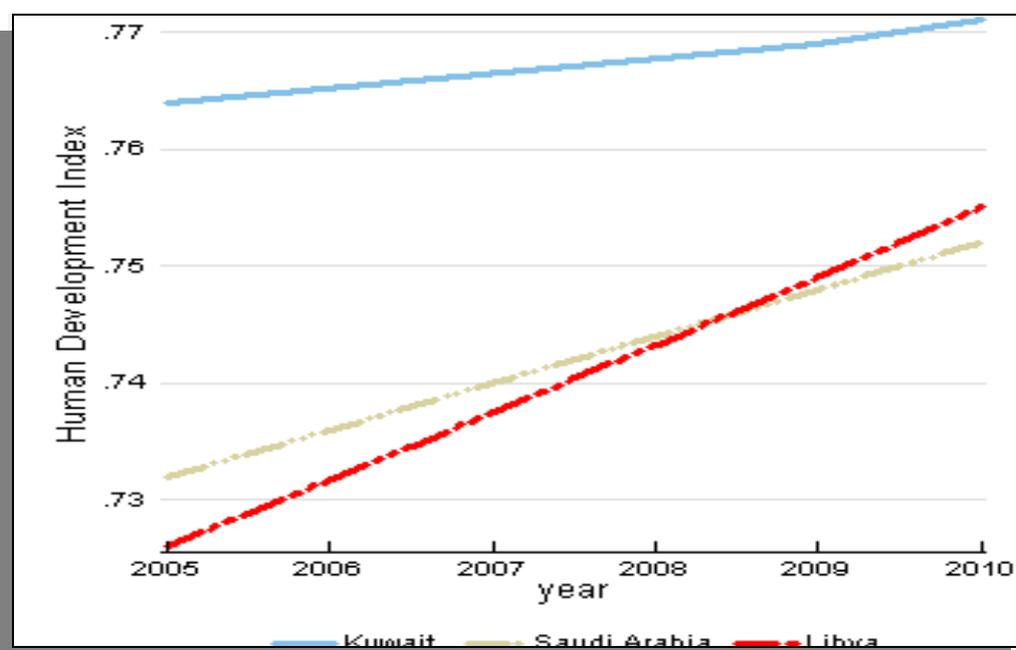
What factors does Libya have that can support its new vision policies though?

### **7.3.1 Location and Natural Resources**

Libya is well located in North Africa with access to Europe, Africa and the Middle East. Libya remains rich in two strategically important global natural resources (oil and gas) that potentially give it access to capital with which to diversify its economy. In comparison with many other African countries, then, Libya is in a good position to develop rapidly if it can pursue policies that allow it to do so. The UN Human Development Report (2010:03) indicates that *"Between 2005 and 2010, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya's HDI value increased from*

0.726 to 0.755, an increase of 4 per cent or average annual increase of about 0.8 per cent” considering long-term progress that can be useful to assess Libya in contrast with its neighbours both in terms of geographical location and HDI rate. In example of that, the report was referred to countries which are close to Libya in HDI rank, and location and population size like Tunisia and Jordan, Libya placed at 53<sup>rd</sup> out of 169 countries while they (Tunisia and Jordan) had HDIs ranked 81<sup>st</sup> and 82<sup>nd</sup> respectively. Thus, Libya between the periods of 2005 to 2010 has achieved a high score in its Human Development Index<sup>89</sup> not only compared with its close neighbours but also with oil rich countries such as Saudi Arabia and Kuwait.

**Figure 7.1: Trends in Libyan Arab Jamahiriya’s HDI 2005-2010<sup>90</sup>**



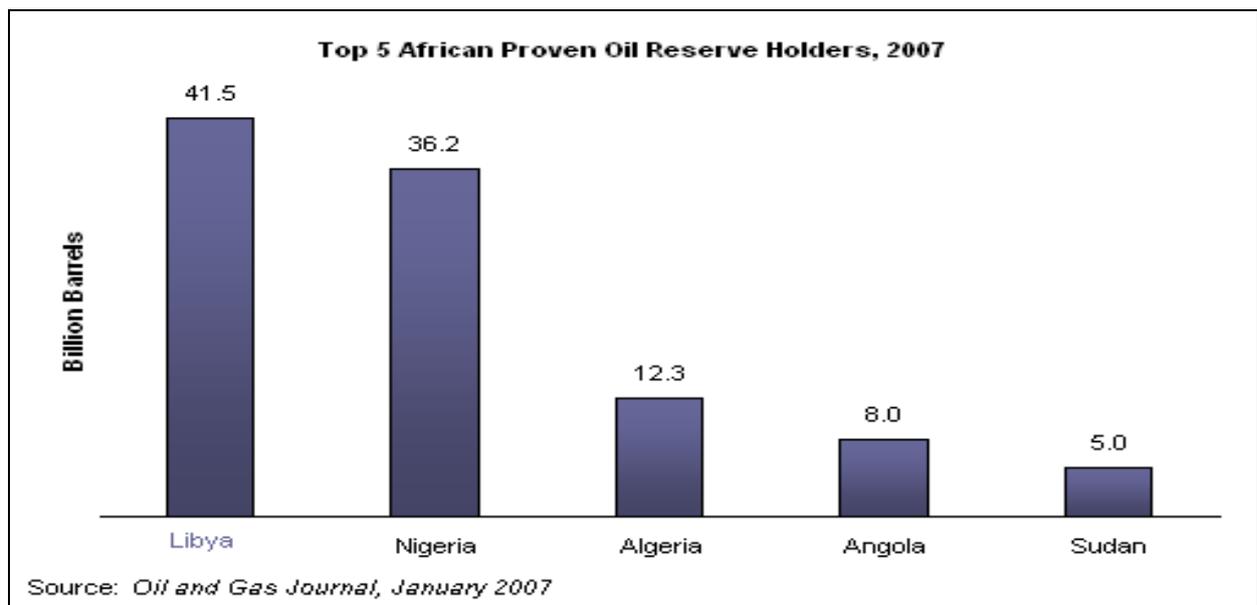
Since 1969, the government has invested in crude oil and this has become the dominant factor of Libya’s economic-social development (Vandewalle, 1998). This remains a mixed blessing, however, as even President Gaddafi has conceded, as it has led to a severely unbalanced economy. The 1970s saw state-directed investment in Libyan infrastructure, as Frank (1980: 222) notes: “*The greatest increases apart from petroleum were in the public sector. Transport and communications, mostly roads, public administration and defence, education*

<sup>89</sup> Today the UNHDP (2010) places Libya above the average of 0.593 for countries in the Arab states in general, and above the average of 0.717 for high human development countries in particular.

<sup>90</sup> This figure is from The United Nation Human Development Report UNHDR (2010).

*and health all expended fast*". The capital for this was mainly the result of revenue for the oil industry. Libya has become a major oil producer worldwide and one of Europe's biggest oil suppliers via the State-owned National Oil Corporation to its customers mainly: Italy, Germany, Spain, and France. The following graph shows Libyan oil reserves in contrast with the other African countries in terms of its proven oil.<sup>91</sup>

**Graph 7.1: the Top African Proven Oil Reserve Holders-2007**



According to Otman and Karlberg (2007) Libya since 2005 has benefitted from the rising trend in international crude oil prices which have brought growth to the country's economy. Since then the government has adopted its new vision strategies aimed at both "*diversifying the economy away from overdependence on hydrocarbons*" where the FDI in both energy and non-energy sectors (like tourism) is estimated at US \$6.9 billion compared to global FDI, projected to reach US \$1 trillion in 2006 (Otman and Karlberg, 2007: 403).

However, simply increasing oil production does nothing to diversify and strengthen Libyan economy and society. Thus, although the Libyan government has opportunities to integrate

<sup>91</sup> The graph was taken from the EIA, US Energy Information Administration Report on 08/11/2010.

into the MOWS it will remain utterly dependent on its oil revenues to achieve its broader social and economic goals for the foreseeable future. As the 2006 NES report says:

*“For a country at Libya’s stage of development, the attraction of foreign direct investment (FDI) can be a very powerful tool to upgrade the sophistication of companies operating in the country. Foreign investors bring new knowledge, management techniques, and multiple linkages to foreign markets, not just capital. The challenge is to provide an environment in which the operational practices of foreign companies ‘spill over’ to domestic companies existing or newly-started for example, by supplying the foreign owned operations or by being managed by Libyans with experience from working in these foreign companies” (NESR, 2006: 22-23)*

### **7.3.2 Tourism**

In terms of tourism Libya seems to have the same advantages as other parts of the Maghreb with which to attract European tourists. Libya has a wealth of places representing the traditional part of the Roman era (see fig-2.3.1) Punic, ‘Carthaginian’ in the west of the country for example and to the Greco-Roman era in the east of Benghazi (WBC Report, 2007). The Minister of the Libyan Foreign Investments, Mr Al-Zilitni claimed that the country should concentrate more on developing its economy via the best usage of its location and generating a tourism industry. He added that: *“the comprehensive geography and landscape of Libya which varies from huge desert, long sea coast, and civilized cities; all, can be used in business and tourism”*. The problem again, for Libya when viewed in MOWS terms is that tourism is an industry that is notoriously unstable and which in an economy like Libya’s does little to lessen or even significantly improve its dependency with the core. In short, as has been seen in many other countries, commodified global tourism is an industry that both reflects the dependency of economies in the semi-periphery and the periphery, such as Libya’s, and which reinforces it (Chase-Dunn and Grimes, 1995). Tourism is dependent upon the ability of the Libyan government to attract tourists with high disposable incomes and they will tend to be from the Core. Again, given Libya’s current economic and social position tourism seems an unavoidable industry to promote, despite its drawbacks.

**Fig 7.2 Some of Places Representing the Traditional Part of Libya**



Saif Al-Islam suggested that the government should play the main role in providing a relative high ground for national and foreign investments. He added:

*“In order to complete the planned tourism in the following: transfer of funds, and clearly determine the exchange rate, and restricting alcohol consumption and the development and adoption of plans and tourist clear to investors etc. also, the state need to provide maximum quality of services to tourists such as: Safety and modern infrastructure, promote the use of foreign language in the country” (Saif Al-Islam, 2002: 214).*

In order for tourism to develop, then, it requires an investment in ELA as ‘global English’ is the language of global tourism. Without it Libya will not be able to compete effectively with the other Maghreb countries for tourist revenues. According to Zaptia (2009) the tourism projects that have been introduced by the government and foreign investors are expected to create 10’000 new jobs over the next decade, not a huge figure. However visa difficulty for tourists<sup>92</sup> and the lack of the English language skills still act as deterrents to tourists to Libya when compared with neighboring countries such as Tunisia, long established as an example of the (safe) exotic orient for the Western tourist market.

<sup>92</sup> According to the NES report (2006: 86) “Libyan visas are extremely difficult to get, both for business and leisure visitors, taking between 1 to 4 weeks to be processed. Although some ‘fast-track’ processing has recently been put in place for large groups of leisure tourists travelling with approved operators, there is a long way to go—North African countries issue these on arrival. This reduces the attractiveness of Libya as a tourist destination, both for the tour operators and the tourists, and restricts the potential increase in tourist traffic”.

According to the Tourism Investment and Development Board (TIDB) this industry since 2005 has attracted more than US (dollars) 3bn in committed investment (TIDB, 2005 cited in NESR, 2006). The private sector is seen as the main driving force of Libyan tourism and the goals for tourism are: to establish a good quality of international and national tourist services/operations; support business people to visit/conduct business in the country; improve air access, such as Al-Buraq Airline Company that verified the influx of new private entrants providing internal air links across the country; and establishing tourism related infrastructure like hotels, roads alongside with financial infrastructure (credit cards acceptance, and ATMs) (Alafi and de Bruijn, 2010; George and Miles, 2010; WBC's Report, 2007).

### **7.3.3 Human Capital: Long-term Goals?**

Libya has the highest Human Development Indicators in Africa as the UNHDR (2006-2010) indicates<sup>93</sup> and its goal of economic diversification was set out in interview by the Minister of the Libyan foreign investments Mr Al-Zilitni who added:

*“With such resources Libya could minimize dependence on the oil sector by 50% within the coming ten years. The aim is to reduce dependency by 80% over the next 20 years. . To achieve this we need to have an accurate planning system and to develop our human capital resources, setting up structures and roles, enhancing our infrastructures and finally organizing our political strategies”.*

These goals are, of course, very ambitious and it is hard to imagine that they can be fulfilled given what is required for them to become attainable. What becomes apparent is that ELA is not in itself sufficient to enhance Libya's developmental strategy, but it is a necessary part of a comprehensive strategy that includes infrastructural and human capital development. ELA is an unavoidable developmental strategy for any non-English speaking country in the MOWS that seek to become a functioning part of the global economy; to avoid embracing it risks under investment and exclusion from attracting FDI. Equally it is clearly not in itself a

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<sup>93</sup> *Libyan Arab Jamahiriya's HDI is 0.755, which gives the country a rank of 53 out of 169 countries with comparable data. The HDI of Arab States as a region increased from 0.398 in 1980 to 0.590 today, placing Libyan Arab Jamahiriya above the regional average*

sufficient quality to generate economic growth and foreign investment. Many countries in sub-Saharan Africa have strong English language histories as part of their subjection to colonialism, but in general the region is viewed as the poorest and least economically vibrant in the world (Okolo, 2005; Chiswick, 2000; Appleton and Francis, 1998). To attract capital in the MOWS requires that a country in the periphery and semi-periphery has to have an economic, ideological or militarily strategic importance for the core or the distinctive qualities of the BRIC. As Alice Amsden has shown, this combination of factors was behind the growth of the so-called ‘Asian Tiger’ economies after WW2 (Amsden, 1992). Arguably Libya, too, has strategic importance for the core given its vast oil and gas resources. The question remains, though, as to the terms on which this relationship will develop.

#### **7.4 Room for Manoeuvre?: To what extent can Libya benefit from its incorporation into the MOWS?**

According to the OECD (2006:13) “*economically, globalisation means that national economies are increasingly plugged into each other and into the world economy*”. Whereas the NESR (2004:30) stated that:

*“The prosperity of its citizens is the ultimate benchmark for the success of a country’s economic policies and reflection of its underlying competitiveness. Measured on GDP per capita, adjusted for purchasing power, Libya has registered strong prosperity performance over the last few years, with capita income of about USD 11,000. It is among the most prosperous countries in its peer group and has registered solid growth, outpacing a number of comparable countries in the region”.*

Having said that it is clear that thus far there has been a low level of activity in this liberalisation process on the part of ordinary Libyan citizens. Historically the Libyan economy has been divided into two unequal and unbalanced parts: an energy sector of high value but low employment: and a non-energy sector (mainly the public services) which has low value and high employment. It is this long-term historical and structural imbalance in the economy that the government is now trying to redress by devising policies in cooperation with non-Libyan economists and advisors (Vandewalle, 2008, Porter, 2007; Martinez, 2007).

The problem that Libya faces is the same as any country in a similar situation, how to shift the balance of an economy where there is already mass unemployment without worsening the situation and potentially jeopardising the whole process? This is a particularly pressing problem when one considers that the Libyan economy before 2004 was entirely owned and controlled by the state following the country's distinctive *Green Book* philosophy (Ahmida, 2005; and Alafi and de Bruijn, 2010). According to Nasser (2003: 37) the government had enjoyed total authority over:

*“Imports or exports of a company and even a company's location and many senior appointments to Libyan companies are in the hand of the politicians and civil servants. As result Libyan companies as public enterprises are very sensitive to any change in the government's policies regarding economic, social and political issues”.*

This model for organising an economy is antithetical to the neo-liberal policies that have underpinned global economic integration since the early 1980s and so it became apparent that rapid reforms would be needed in order for Libya to become more coherently integrated into the MOWS. Hence the introduction of the new vision policies.

According to a report by the Central Bank of Libya (CBLR, 2008:40) recent years have shown signs of improvement in the Libyan economic performance. For example, in terms of the most important indicators of foreign trade since 2005 the report illustrated that:

*“The Libyan exports in 2005 rose with 49.4% to about LD 31.1 billion, compared to LD 20.8 billion in 2004. This rise is generally attributed to a rise in oil exports that account for 97.3% of total exports with 30.3 billion in 2005 compared with LD20.1 billion in2004 as a result of a significant rise in world oil prices in 2005 and an increase in the exported quantities. Foreign trade statistics, published by the National Information Agency, indicate that about 97.3% of Libyan exports are metallic fuel and other related fuel (oil exports), while other exports represented only 2.7%. It should be noted that this situation exposes the Libyan economy to international oil markets fluctuations and their direct effect on all domestic economic and social variables”.*

The report also indicates that the Central Bank of Libya today supervises more than 42 private commercial banks in the country, and contributed to the privatization of Libya's large banks. According to Alafi and de Bruijn (2010:12)

*“Two new private commercial banks and one private regional bank were licensed in 2002. BNP Paribas acquired 19 percent of Sahara Bank in August 2007, with immediate management control and option to purchase additional shares of up to 51 percent within 3-5 years, Wahda Bank was acquired by Arab Bank in February 2008 under similar terms. Some key strategic companies are still earmarked for privatisation, particularly Libyan airlines, public telecommunication company, Brega Petroleum Company, and electricity distribution network. The stock exchange was established in 2006 and by end-2007, seven companies (mostly banks) were listed with a capitalisation of LD1.2 billion”.*

The long-term structural problems facing the Libyan economy and society would appear to leave little room for the government to maintain its relative independence from the West as it integrates into the MOWS. Already the new vision policies with their emphasis on human capital development and ELA all indicate the extent to which the Libyan government is already constrained, and accepting that constraint, in terms of its control over social and economic policy.

### **7.5 Conclusions: What conclusions can we reach from the Experience of other Countries in Evaluating Libya's Strategy for Promoting ELA?**

Ahmida (2005:84) observed that as a state Libya *“continues to refuse to learn from its mistakes, viewing criticism as treason or conspiracy. This attitude in turn fosters brain drain, depriving the government of able professionals to deal with a complex international system”*. Nonetheless since Ahmida wrote this in 2005 there have been many developments in Libyan policy that suggest that its policies are changing, and dramatically. Whether this is an indication that they are learning from past mistakes remains to be seen.

This chapter presented a comparison between Libya and its new vision policies and what has been achieved by other countries in the periphery and semi-periphery of the MOWS that have pursued the ELA as a developmental strategy. What the experience of other countries reveals is the difficulties facing Libya in its attempts to open up its economy and society in accord with the neo-liberal rules and norms of the global economy in the MOWS. ELA is not in itself a sufficient factor to guarantee development but it is increasingly a necessary one. The two related issues that the Libyan government and society face are: to what extent can they embrace and adapt to these neoliberal policies without simply reinforcing their dependency upon the core of the world-system? In short, does the neo-liberal developmental model bring a degree of autonomy to Libya or merely heighten its structural weakness with regard to the core? Other large-oil producing countries provide a salutary lesson here. Saudi Arabia and Algeria are both ruled by elites that are utterly dependent upon the Core, mainly in the form of US aid, for military and political support (El-Najjar, 2001). Their vast oil revenues have actually served to intensify their dependency on the core. The second issue faced by the Libya government and society is that of orientalism. To what extent are the neo-liberal policies that Libya has to adopt merely a neo-Orientalist discourse serving to legitimise the power of the core in the MOWS in general and Libya in particular? We will address these crucial questions in the concluding chapter.

The possibilities for Libyan development in the MOWS seem fraught with dangers and major structural obstacles. Given the ossified nature of the governing regime and its patronage form of governance since the revolution, the undoing of this system threatens its legitimacy in a serious way. The new vision policies are dependent upon the good faith of the core and those seeking to invest in the newly liberalising Libyan economy and society. But such integration does not rest simply on matters of economic trust. There are always political-military and strategic questions that can direct and influence these processes and there is no doubt that the Gaddafi regime is not popular amongst governments in the core, no matter the overtures it has made in recent years to becoming a willing and subordinate part of the core led MOWS. The comparisons made in this chapter are intended to show the limitations of Libya's policies and the way in which the structure of the MOWS severely limits its options. Developing factors such as human capital, ELA and tourism are unlikely to generate the kind of economic development the Libyan regime needs if it is to both transform Libyan economy and society and at the same time maintain its own legitimacy. As Chang (see chapter two) made clear,

there is little evidence to suggest that education, by itself, is likely to generate significant economic growth for countries. Whatever the commitment of the Libyan government their resources are nothing compare dot the vast sums committed by countries such as China, South Korea and India to the very same policies. And these countries have had important strategic, political and economic advantages over Libya that stretch back decades. Libya's new vision policies are more likely to see it return to the regional norm of the MENA, a country shaped by growing inequality, the erosion of public services and welfare, and an economy increasingly deponent upon investment and tourism form the core. Given its relative structural and temporal entry into the MOWS and the lack of a wider political movement to overturn this system, this seems a realistic assessment of Libya's immediate future.

## **Chapter 8: Conclusions**

### **8.1 Libya at the Crossroads**

The thesis initially was built on two inter-related concerns: the first was with the role that ELA strategies were playing in the Libyan governments 'new vision' strategies for social and economic development; the second was with the implications for Libyan society of its integration into the MOWS. What are the opportunities open to the Libyan government and people to transform the social and economic basis of their society in a way which works to their own advantage rather than simply enhancing Libya's already dependent relationship with the core?

In order to answer this I have presented an argument that seeks to situate Libya historically and structurally in the context of the evolution of the MOWS. Only in this way can one adequately evaluate the strategic possibilities open to Libya in the MOWS. The thesis proceeded as follows:

### **8.2 Language and Development in Libya**

Looking back to the history of foreign languages in Libya during and since colonialism the first thing that emerges is that **(1-1-a)** Libya successfully preserved Arabic as the only official language in the country. **(1-1-b)** Arabic is the symbol of all Arabic nations' identity, but for Libya it has become also a tool for resisting the foreign colonial languages that would make dependency relations with the West deeper. **(1-1-c)** Historically Libyan and Western relations have been limited and antagonistic since the September 1st revolution 1969. **(1-1-d)** The education system has become the key mechanism for the Libyan government in preserving and producing Arabic as the language of knowledge and culture instead of paving the way for the foreign colonial languages and knowledge. This policy was in order to prevent the Libyan education system from helping to serve the Western core states imperial goals, a practice pursued by governments elsewhere in the Maghreb, as mentioned earlier. **(1-1-e)** In Libya since the 1<sup>st</sup> September revolution the education system is ruled by the government providing free education for all Libyans but with government control over what can be taught and learned. **(1-1-f)** Before 1986 foreign language learning was taught only as a unit for the secondary school and university students. But, since 1986, the Libyan government went further to establish a policy to stop the teaching of foreign languages

including English at all levels of its education system. **(1-1-g)** This decision theoretically was partly driven by Arabic nationalism resisting the Western influence in the region whether it is military, political, and economic or, in this case, cultural. Practically, the decision was as a result of hostile relations between the Libya and the West, mainly the USA. **(1-1-h)** The situation became worse in terms of diplomatic relations between Libya and the West after the international embargo was imposed on Libya in 1993. Thus, the second thing that comes out from the first chapter of language and development in Libya is **(1-2-a)** is these two experiences (the decision and the sanctions) to a great extent have affected the Libyan economy and society, when coupled with government policies, to deprive Libyan students of knowledge of global English. This, in turn, has added an important structural weakness to the Libyan economy which the new vision policies are now trying to address.

## **8.2 Human Capital: English Language Skills in Libya**

**(2-1-a)** 2004 has been the turning point of the Libyan government policies as the government abandoned its long-standing ideological commitments in its new vision policies to embrace neo-liberal principles and attempt to integrate Libya into the MOWS. **(2-1-b)** International sanctions were lifted on the country in 2003-4, and the teaching of foreign languages policy has been re-introduced. However, by interviewing a number of representative people from the state, the private sector, students and the British Council, it is apparent that whilst **(2-2-a)** Libyan graduates are in dire need for global English skills thus far policies remain disjointed and there is significant internal opposition from the state bureaucracy as well as culturally amongst parts of the Libyan society. In the new global economic environment Libya has been encouraged to develop its human capital in order to take advantage of job opportunities, and thus empower its economy by the liberalisation of its job markets. Thus, **(2-4-a)** during the study human capital development is considered not only as a new vision policy but also as a question of power as revealed in the works of Said, Fanon and Wallerstein. Human capital is part of an orientalist discourse that underpins the spread of neo-liberal ideas about how to organise an economy and to pursue development, under the guise of a neutral scientific knowledge. However, as Said, Fanon and Wallerstein have made clear, power in the MOWS is increasingly about the production and control of knowledge as well as more traditional forms of power such as violence. If human capital is part of an orientalist framework that tries to force the periphery and semi-periphery to discipline themselves in line with the

interests of the core, what chance is there that it can work to the advantage of a country like Libya? My conclusions have been that in terms of their strategic choices the Libyan government faces a massive contradiction in its policies. Accepting human capital development as part of a neo-liberal discourse that valorises profit and the private sector over human needs is not a risk-free strategy for the Libyan government. Therefore the second finding was **(2-4-b)** there are contradictions among the Libyan governmental strategies in that while the government espouse a commitment to maintaining social equality at the same time they are pursuing economic strategies designed to produce the very opposite. If Tunisia is an example of the consequences of such policies, or Algeria, we can expect to see much social unrest in Libya over the coming decade as inequality and poverty increase.

### **8.3 Libya in the MOWS**

**(3-1-a)** The Libyan government has introduced strategies to develop its human capital so as to integrate itself in the global economy of the MOWS. However, this inevitably brings with it cultural changes as young Libyans, in particular, embrace modern Western consumer lifestyles that are far removed from the experiences of the post-revolutionary generation. Most young Libyans interviewed felt that ELA was vital to their futures, a perception that was widely shared. There was little critical understanding of the limitations of ELA as part of a broader developmental strategy in the MOWS when compared with the experiences of other countries. The perception that learning global English will enhance development was more an act of faith than a rational assessment of Libya's position in the MOWS. This view was shared with equal enthusiasm amongst most, but not all, government officials too. Proving the relationship between ELA and employment in the Libyan job market is therefore seen by the government and international agencies as the first step in finding solutions to unemployment in the country. **(3-2-b)** In addition the government realized the importance of establishing the relationship between ELA and attracting both foreign investment as well as enabling Libyan citizens to acquire jobs with foreign firms moving into the country. As was shown in the thesis, there are many important factors that suggest that Libya's social and economic opportunities in the MOWS will be severely limited, not least by the lateness of its integration into the system which is on terms that it cannot control or easily influence when compared to the BRIVC countries or the Asian tigers.

#### **8.4 State Strategies for Promoting ELA in Libya**

(4-1-a) Privatization of the public sector has been encouraged by the state and become one of the new vision governmental strategies towards promoting private enterprise (Alafi and de Bruijn, 2010). (4-1-b) This has opened the door for more competition from private companies as several types of businesses including education and training centres, and thus more investment agreements/contracts with international companies and organisations promoting FDI and modernising the country's economy (Otman and Karlberg, 2007). (4-1-c) English language has become a crucial tool for those foreign companies dealing with the country especially within the private sector. (4-2-a) The Libyan government pursued the privatisation of the educational sector and to this end created (4-2-b) the Participatory Education Institutions which came about as a result of those governmental policies of modernisation. (4-3-c) The role of human capital itself in Libya still seems to be a complex idea and a problematic concept in that it is a part of an Orientalist discourse regarding development. In theory the (4-3-d) new policies of neo-liberalism presented under the guise of a neutral, universal science of development present Libyan state and society with an opportunity to embrace liberal freedoms and development. In practice what seems more likely is that it will do (4-3-e) little more than make its economy ripe for further and deeper economic dependency on foreign capital whilst opening up its society to social change of a kind that is affecting other MENA countries.

#### **8.5 Libya, Human Capital and the Global Economy**

(5-1-a) The specific social and historical context as well as the geography, natural resources, position and entry in the MOWS, size and breadth of population and country, are all factors that have been taken into account when comparing Libya with other countries in the periphery and semi-periphery with regard to the impact of ELA policies on social and economic development. Although Libya has one overwhelming and important strength, its oil resources, it faces numerous obstacles to its transformation in line with the new vision strategies. The evidence of other countries suggests that you simply cannot generalise about and abstract ELA as a factor of development, as neo-liberal human capital theory does. Only when it is situated in the historical and structural context of a particular state in the MOWS

can you begin to make sense of the utility of ELA for social and economic development. For this reason, and although Libya's oil is of crucial geo-political and economic importance to the core, it is not easy to see how ELA will aid Libya without a wider transformation of its governing institutions, not least of its state which remains problematically authoritarian and corrupt. Libyan government and society are at a crossroads and it is difficult to see how the new vision strategies will achieve the stated goals of reducing Libyan dependence on oil by 80% in 10 years. This is hyperbole designed to convince a domestic audience as well as foreign investors. The other factor to be wary of is the extent to which the states in the core really want a more open, liberal and democratic Libya. After all, they have long-standing and beneficial relations with governments that are just as authoritarian as the Libyan government, in the MENA and elsewhere. There may well prove to be a mismatch between the new vision goals of the Libyan government and the interests of the Western states in the core who have no particular reasons to support the Gaddafi regime. In the end the success or failure of the new vision strategies may well rest upon the actions of the Libyan people rather than those undertaken by either the government or foreign investors.

#### 8.6 Theoretical Conclusion: Libya and the MOWS

The limitations of Libya's policies have been made apparent in this thesis. In chapter two I gave an outline of the developmental state model which makes the case that Third World countries can develop more effectively by abandoning free trade policies and allowing a strong state to direct economic and social development by restricting the market and democracy. However, what I argued was that the developmental state model is not a generalisable model across the MOWS but itself reflects that specific structural and historical circumstances of particular states at a specific time in the MOWS. South Korea could develop in the manner that it did and in relation to the US economy precisely because its economic 'success' was more important to the US administrations in the 1960s as an ideological and political opposition to communism in East Asia. A strong, militarised and authoritarian government dependent upon the US economy and military for support was hardly an example of an independent state as developmental state theory would have us believe. On the contrary, this was a highly dependent core-periphery relationship and it was the dependent relationship that allowed the South Korean regime to make the policy choices that it did, knowing that it would receive US backing as long as it stayed in the Western camp during the Cold War. Thus the brutal suppression of civil society and pro-democracy

movements into the 1980s was perfectly acceptable to the core. This is the real nature of the developmental state model.

The Libyan economy and society faces fundamentally different circumstances as it is integrated into the MOWS. The era of globalised capitalism, US led global military power and an almost universal acceptance of neo-liberal capitalism has meant that the choices open to the Gaddafi regime as it pursues normal relations with the core are very unfavourable. They are policies composed by the states of the core and their main international financial institutions (IMF, World Bank, WTO, major banks) and as such they reflect the attempts by those institutions in the core to intensify their own capital accumulation. The needs of Libyan citizens are at best of only secondary importance.

What this thesis has shown is the way in which Libya's position in the MOWS has developed over the course of the C20, at times presenting the appearance of a relatively independence state, but always structural constrained by the demands of the MOWS. It has only been its rentier status that enabled Libya's government since the revolution to pursue such policies. There is an irony here, of course, in that what were once seen by its supporters as virtues of the Libyan revolutionary government (pro-Third World rhetoric and policies, defiance of neo-colonialism, relatively progressive social goals [though driven by a highly authoritarian state]) have now become the vices that have led it to embrace the MOWS and neo-liberal capitalism. Whilst other rentier states of the MENA adopted swiftly to a subordinate neo-colonial relationship to the core after securing their independence Libya sought to take a different path and at least initially encouraged other Third World states to go with it in resistance to the neo-colonialism of the core. It is easy now when looking back to the period from the early 18960s to the later 1970s to view the rhetoric of the post-colonial countries of Africa and the Middle East as being naïve. After all, most of those states, as Fanon acutely observed, replaced a colonial bourgeoisie with a national one that ultimately represented a change of rulers and exploiters for the general population, not independence. But it would be cynical to dismiss the rhetoric of the time as being simply opportunistic. On the contrary, what the period since the early 19670s reveals is the long-term structural power of the MOWS (political-military, economic and cultural) to absorb dissent and transform it into compliance. In Libya's case this has taken much longer than for other states but without the support of a clear international political alternative to the logic of the MOWS there was always going to be a limit to Libya's resistance.

Oil was a problem for the Libyan economy but in a more complex way than for almost any other rentier state in the MOWS. Oil dependence produced a classic rentier state with authoritarian government, uneven development, and bloated public sector and patron-client relations. At the same time and in Libya's case almost uniquely, it enabled a revolutionary government that embraced the Third Worldist goals of pan-Arabism and pan-Africanism to support and promote revolutionary change in the Third World. The fact that much of these revolutionary changes produced highly authoritarian governments is another of the ironies of Libya's recent history. The reproduction of authoritarian rule was precisely what Fanon warned against and precisely what Said has written about in his works on the Palestinians and what Wallerstein has explained in his work on the MOWS.

Of course, as Said has made abundantly clear, much of the criticism of the Gaddafi regime in Western scholarship is orientalist in the extreme, unable to accept or even see that the revolutionary opposition to Western neo-colonialism had any basis in fact. Thus Gaddafi is portrayed as mad, crazed and so on, Libya as a pariah state and a threat to world peace. The reality has been that since the revolution Libya has been very popular in much of the Third World both for the material support it has given to those resisting the core and because of its own anti-colonial rhetoric and defiance. The fact that scholars in the core cannot recognise the reality of their relationship to the rest of the MOWS gives much credence to Said's work on Orientalism. Nor is this an attempt to erase the failings and abuses of the Gaddafi regime, as I have noted throughout this thesis. Rather it is to illustrate that portrayal of the Gaddafi regime entirely reflects the power-knowledge conception of Orientalism found in the work of Fanon and Said. Governments in the Third World can be as abusive and brutal as they wish as long as they remain allies to the core. It is only when they resist the core that their authoritarianism becomes a problem that becomes the object of fierce criticism in the Western media and scholarship. But for Libya the cost of this limited independence, symbolically powerful, politically and economically limited, has been high and its integration into the MOWS promises to be a painful transition.

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