

The Asymmetry, Disparity, Inconsistency, and Double Standards of Global Coloniality: The Case of Libya in 2011

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Abstract

The article analyses the Arab Spring protests that started in Tunisia in 2010 and spread into more than thirteen other countries across two continents. Of the more than thirteen countries affected by the Arab Spring, only four countries are analysed: Tunisia, Egypt, Sudan, and Libya. The principal objectives of this article are threefold. Firstly, the article critically explores the reasons for the uprisings in the four countries that form part of this analysis. Secondly, the article analyses the respective governments' responses to the protests in their domains. Thirdly, the article analyses the so-called international community's responses to the cases discussed. Qualitative methodology, which seeks to interpret the reasons behind the actions and responses by the respective actors during the Libyan invasion, is used. A decolonial interpretation of the events in Libya suggests a global coloniality that sought to entrap Libya and, indeed, all of the Global South. The findings are that the Libyan invasion was a targeted and selective application of legal instruments such as the Responsibility to Protect (R2P) doctrine, quasi-insulated from legal reproach because the so-called intervention was a UN-gazetted operation. As such, the UN continues to be used as a vehicle for the powerful located in the Global North to punish the weak in the Global South.

Keywords: Arab Spring; Egypt; global coloniality; Libya; NATO; Sudan; Tunisia; UN; Yemen

Introduction

This article contextualises the 2011 Libyan crisis within the discourse of the Arab Spring, while at the same time highlighting how global imperial designs took advantage of the situation to militarily invade Libya and kill its leader. What is posited here is that the Libyan crisis was re-articulated as a threat to the global colonial power configuration. As such, the United Nations Security Council (UNSC), led by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), and as the custodian of the global power structure, had to act and punish the deviant and delinquent Libya (Alexander and Rooney 2019, 170; Morris 2000, 267). Hence, the invasion of Libya was a consolidation of the global coloniality of power.

The Arab Spring demonstrations have their genesis in the Tunisian Revolution of December 17, 2010 (Osai 2013, 165). The Arab Spring encompassed various uprisings and revolts against governments that were deemed repressive, autocratic, dictatorial, and anti-progressive. As many people in the Arabic world identified with the Tunisian Revolution, the Arab Spring protests soon spilt over into Egypt and then Sudan, and also crossed continents to spread into the Middle East. Bahrain, Syria, and Yemen are some of the countries in the Middle East that were affected by these demonstrations.

The Arab Spring demonstrations had a wide reach; they affected many countries, amongst them Morocco, Iraq, Algeria, Iranian Khuzestan, Lebanon, Jordan, Kuwait, and Oman. However, this article will focus on four countries, namely Tunisia, Egypt, Sudan, and Libya. The selection is in pursuance of centring an African perspective (by focusing on four African countries that were severely affected by the Arab Spring protests). The NATO-led UN did not militarily intervene in the so-called “internal affairs” of most of the countries that were affected by the Arab Spring uprisings—not in the manner it did in Libya. It is noteworthy that at the first sight of protests in Libya, the UNSC expeditiously convened and passed Resolutions 1970 and 1973, authorising military intervention in Libya, which in turn resulted in the demise of Muammar al-Qaddafi.

What this article grapples with is that, of all the countries that were affected by the Arab Spring uprisings, Libya and Syria were the only countries where the so-called “international community” intervened militarily. This article focuses on Libya, arguing that the Libyan invasion by NATO tells of vested interests rather than a reaction to human rights abuses, a narrative which was reported particularly by the neo-liberal press. As such, it is necessary to critically delve into the very Arab Spring demonstrations that acted as a precursor to the Libyan invasion by NATO. The Libyan version of the Arab Spring demonstrations against the Qaddafi regime were the occasion to invoke and operationalise the *casus belli* that the USA, the UK, and France had had in place for a long time. It is our view that the invasion of Libya by NATO, in the context of the Arab Spring, was a targeted, *parti pris*-based, and selective application of the Responsibility to Protect (R2P) doctrine in order to achieve regime change in Libya.

The following four concepts are what guide this research. As such, some conceptual clarification is required:

- **Asymmetry:** It is our understanding that the uneven ownership and distribution of resources in the world, especially following the slave trade, colonialism, and the so-called Second World War, is a social construct that is meant to favour the Global North, especially the USA and its allies, at the expense of Africa, among other spaces and places (Chomsky 2011, 11). As such, our contention is that the asymmetry in power relations is predicated on economic might, which is the result of the economic monopoly enjoyed by the USA and its allies.
- **Disparity:** The notion of disparity is closely linked to asymmetry. As a result of the uneven distribution of resources, the adjudication and allocation of those resources are equally problematic, in that it is the rich and powerful (the USA and its allies) that decide who gets what, when, how, and why. This further disenfranchises the Global South in general—and especially Africa, the geo-locale where Libya is located—since economic wealth is in the hands of states in the Global North.
- **Inconsistency:** On a global scale, inconsistency manifests in the Global North renegeing on decisions that it made previously, and then reinstating these same decisions. Examples include the doctrine of state sovereignty, the partitioning of Africa in 1885–1886 and the subsequent era of colonialism, the (re-)admittance of Africa to the UN system in 1945, the reconsideration of the doctrine of state sovereignty, and the adoption of the R2P doctrine in 2005. This clearly illustrates that there is no principle that guides this sort of decision making.
- **Global coloniality:** As a result of colonialism, the world now has to contend with the unending patterns of thought, being, and knowledge—and otherwise—that were instituted by the powerful through their pursuit of violence and conquest.

The Arab Spring Demonstrations in Tunisia

On December 17, 2010, a Tunisian national, Mohamed Bouazizi, an ordinary street trader, committed suicide by setting himself alight. He died in protest against President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali's regime. The policies espoused by this government have been described as repressive, authoritarian, and dictatorial (Hess 2013, 254; Plaetzer 2014, 258). That event signalled the beginning of a series of protests that would later be known as the Arab Spring demonstrations. According to *The Guardian* (2011), President Ben Ali had been in office for almost twenty-three years. Some pundits argued that he had stayed in office for far too long and therefore was a dictator (Erol 2020, 150; Jules and Smaali Bouhlila 2018, 95; Wang n.d., 2). However, it can also be argued that Ben Ali's tenure in office exhibited undemocratic characteristics, as averred by Moravcski (1995, 160) and Jain (2006, 149).

The Causes of, and Responses to, the Arab Spring Demonstrations in Tunisia

Plaetzer (2014, 259) points to the origins of the Tunisian revolt of 2010/2011 as being “socioeconomic grievances such as inequality, unemployment and rising food prices”, as well as the political marginalisation of the greater part of the Tunisian population. Graham-Harrison (2018) corroborates this view and avers that the increases in prices of basic commodities such as fuel and food were at the centre of the civilian protest against the Ben Ali regime. In convergence with the two aforementioned views, Al Jazeera (2015) reported that unbearable living conditions were “the underlying reasons for the demonstrations”. It is evident that the Tunisian demonstrations were a response to the economic quagmire in which the general populace of Tunisia found themselves. The Tunisians had legitimate concerns that they wanted their government to address. Therefore, after registering their displeasure and dissatisfaction through protests, the government of Tunisia, at which the protests were directed, was expected to respond and address the citizens’ concerns.

Ben Ali’s government responded to the demonstrations by using state security apparatuses, which used force and violence to suppress the dissenting voices of the citizens of Tunisia and to put an end to otherwise peaceful demonstrations (Al Jazeera 2015; Cordall 2018). The UN and the CNN postulate that about 300 people died in the protests following Ben Ali’s government’s responses to the protests, and a further 700 were injured (CNN 2011). Rettig (2011) corroborates these figures and avers, “A UN torture expert who visited the country in May reported that as many as 300 were killed and 700 injured during the revolution.” Firstpost (2012) notes that at least 383 people died in the Tunisian Arab Spring uprising.

The police claimed that their use of armed force was in self-defence (Cordall 2018). What is noteworthy in the Tunisian case is that, although President Ben Ali fled Tunisia on January 13, 2011, he initially resisted the will of the people, who wanted him “lost” from Tunisia (Al Jazeera 2015). Eventually, Ben Ali fled Tunisia and went into exile (Hess 2013, 254). This meant that President Ben Ali was absent from the country for the elections of October 23, 2011, which were followed by the passing of a “liberal constitution” on January 26, 2014 (Plaetzer 2014, 258–59).

In the view of neo-liberalism and Eurocentric modernity, during the Tunisian version of the Arab Spring uprisings the Tunisian electorate got rid of the “dictator”, in the form of President Ben Ali. Hence, today Eurocentric and neo-liberal scholarship hails the Tunisian Arab Spring uprising as a success; this is clear in the works of Plaetzer (2014, 260), Hess (2013, 255), McKernan (2018), Khan and Mezran (2015, 1), and Cordall (2018), amongst others. Ali Mazrui (Tanoukhi and Mazrui 2011, 151–52) correctly asserts that the only success in Tunisia, and to some extent in Egypt, was that there was regime change. Of course, the regime changes were imperfect in that the presidents changed, but not necessarily the systems of government that had sustained the former leaders. There is another view, according to which those systems of government that sustained the former presidents had actually been created by them. In other words, while

the faces of the leaders changed, the systems that they created and that had sustained them remained (Global Security Organisation 2019a; Global Security Organisation 2019b). Therefore, the success achieved was limited, in that the calls and advances expressed during the Arab Spring protests still endorsed the current world order; they did not disrupt the status quo of the European-centred world order. Tunisia was to remain another state that mimics Eurocentrism, a state that would remain just another country in Africa that resembles European dictates and norms.

President Ben Ali of Tunisia was framed in the same way as Qaddafi was: as leaders of authoritarian, dictatorial, and repressive regimes (Breen 2018; *The Guardian* 2011; Taylor 2017; Times Live 2018). Notwithstanding the fact that he may have had dictatorial tendencies, the framing of President Ben Ali by Western scholarship as dictatorial—as expressed by Plaetzer (2014), Taylor (2017), *The Telegraph* (2011), Firstpost (2012), Euronews (2011), and Breen (2018)—points to the problematic nature of Western scholarship, the colonial canon, and the colonial tendencies thereof. The commonality shared by the aforementioned sources is that they are all located in Eurocentric modernity. That opinion (the framing of Ben Ali and Qaddafi as dictators) reflects the thinking of pundits and media houses that are largely located in Europe and espouse neo-liberalism. This illustrates that what Western modernity does not agree with is pathologised, demonised, bastardised, and peripherised by framing it in a negative light—it is negated. As such, the framing of President Ben Ali as a dictator was a result of his style of politics, which was antithetical to the script of Western modernity regarding what democracy ought to be—not that Western modernity follows the tenets of democracy religiously itself. Hence, Western modernity assigns what stands contrary to it an identity that is negative, pathological, bastardised, and leprosed, in the process justifying condemnation of such identity. Those condemnations can be fatal, as they allow for the elimination of the condemned, as would be done with Libya’s president, Qaddafi. Césaire (1972, 2) sums up the above observation by noting that the Eurocentric worldview tends to name things, in the process demonising and objectifying that which is unfamiliar or unknown or that which it does not agree with.

Plaetzer, in his analysis of the involvement of civil society in Tunisia’s Arab Spring demonstrations, unwittingly reveals the real motive of the Tunisian revolt. His analysis speaks of the Arab Spring uprisings in Tunisia as modelled on and following the script of “the liberal ‘road map’” (2014, 259). In this light, the Arab Spring uprisings in Tunisia were used as an opportunity to implement Eurocentric modernity’s template of development, which is contained in the so-called liberal roadmap. Further, the so-called liberal roadmap had its vanguards in the form of liberal institutions and organisations. As evidenced in the work of Plaetzer (2014, 259), the neo-liberal vanguards that unwittingly ensured that the status quo of the current world order was to remain intact in Tunisia included, but were not limited to, (1) the Higher Commission for the Achievement of the Objectives of the Revolution, of Political Reform (HCAORPL); (2) Transition to Democracy (TD), led by the renowned intellectual Yadh Ben Achour,

a member of the UN Human Rights Committee (OHCHR) (IMeRA 2018); (3) the Union Générale Tunisienne du Travail (UGTT); and (4) the Human Rights League of Tunisia (HRLT).

The political agenda that these institutions stood for, or endorsed, is an agenda that is underwritten by Western modernity. As is evident from reporting on the Libyan crisis, many non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and human rights organisations that reported on the Arab Spring demonstrations participated in the neo-liberal agenda of spreading falsehoods about the crises. These organisations colluded with Western countries in peddling misinformation and propaganda to create the impression that the demonstrations were violent and that an intervention was therefore imminent (Nazemroaya 2012a, 127–28). This renders the independence and neutrality of these institutions questionable, if not totally compromised. Did they act in this way out of their own volition, to pursue the agenda of reform as professed by the Arab Spring uprisings, or were these institutions simply taking instructions from their Euro–North American handlers and funders? It is this article’s assertion that the latter is more plausible. Coloniality sustains colonialism even though the latter has formally ended. The institutionalisation of colonial structures by the current world order ensures that coloniality is sustained. The institutions that are designed based on and that mimic European modernity contribute to reinforcing the current asymmetrical world order.

This work contends that the so-called Tunisian “success” is aligned with Eurocentric modernity’s reconfiguration of the asymmetrical power spectrum that constitutes the current Eurocentric world order. Ghosh (2011, 16) downplays the fact that the Ben Ali regime responded violently in quelling the local version of the Arab Spring protests, emphasising Ben Ali’s “quiet escape”. What Ghosh (2011, 16) conveniently overlooks is the fact that 383 people died as a direct result of the protests and a further 700 people were injured. More importantly, however, is that the Tunisian Arab Spring uprisings did not pose any threat to the asymmetrical power configuration that the current world order rests upon. The Tunisian version of the Arab Spring uprisings could not have made much difference on a global scale, as the government of Tunisia, unlike that of Libya, did not have control over the type of resources, in the form of oil, that the Euro–North American world depends on. Therefore, there was no need for the USA, the UK, France, or NATO—the custodians of Eurocentric modernity—to intervene in the domestic affairs of Tunisia. In the physical absence of Eurocentric modernity in Tunisia, its institutions (inter alia, the very idea of the State, the HCAORPL, the TD, the UGTT, and the HRLT) and, therefore, the vanguard levers of coloniality, were intact. In other words, while explicit colonialism had arguably ended in Tunisia, coloniality continued to exist.

Those institutions ensured that they controlled legitimacy, authority, the economy, the relaying of information and, therefore, knowledge, and the very being of Tunisians. Those institutions ensured the control of the State and other coordinates of a democratic polity by endorsing and affirming the dictates of a Euro–North-American-centric

worldview of an ideal State; if the State did not adhere to these criteria, it would be named as dictatorial, undemocratic, and so forth. Any contender in the presidential race had to be perceived as meeting the criteria created by Western modernity, and had to be endorsed by the so-called liberal institutions in order to be successful. To further consolidate this point, Yadh Ben Achour, who, as the interim president of the HCAORPL and a member of the OHCHR—while being a patriotic Tunisian—has all the hallmarks and certifications of Eurocentric modernity. The fact that Achour’s appointment to the presidency of the HCAORPL followed President Ben Ali’s flight from Tunisia has all the bearings of Eurocentric modernity’s script of a regime change agenda. The appointments of political leaders are initiated and endorsed by the Western-centric worldview, as revealed by Nazemroaya (2012a, 128); without this support, succeeding in such a high-level political race is impossible. Achour’s involvement after the ousting of President Ben Ali reduced his credibility and revealed him as a compromised and probably unaware accessory of Eurocentric modernity. At best, he unreflectively cooperated with the dictates of Eurocentric modernity.

In the framework of Eurocentric modernity, the closest there is to a credible international community is, essentially, the UN General Assembly, but the more powerful structure of the UN system is the UNSC, which endorses and works in tandem with Eurocentrism. Of course, the UNSC possesses asymmetrical power that sustains the current Eurocentric world order. As such, the Tunisian situation did not warrant the international community’s intervention. The Tunisian situation was in no way a threat to the asymmetrical, UN-crafted and -endorsed Eurocentric world order.

The Arab Spring Demonstrations in Egypt

In the case of Egypt, the Arab Spring demonstrations of 2011 also became known as the January 25 Revolution, in recognition of the date that the local version of the Arab Spring protests escalated in that North African country (Al Jazeera 2016b). Tahrir Square in Cairo became synonymous with the Egyptian Arab Spring demonstrations (BBC 2011; Tharoor 2016). Hosni Mubarak had been Egypt’s head of state since 1981. The Mubarak-led government had relatively good relations with the West, particularly the USA (Ghosh 2011, 18), which was perceived as beneficial to both countries. The USA used its ties with Egypt as a gateway to the Arabic world, while Egypt benefited from the US militarily and economically (Ghosh 2011, 18; Tharoor 2016). It is this article’s contention that, although there was mutual cooperation between the two states, their relationship was asymmetrical in favour of the USA. Like most countries in the world, Egypt depended on the USA more than the USA depended on Egypt.

The Causes of, and Responses to, the Arab Spring Demonstrations in Egypt

Plaetzer (2014, 261) argues that the causes of the Egyptian Arab Spring uprisings were similar to those of the Tunisian case. He attributes the outbreak of the demonstrations to the discontent among the “dispossessed” masses of Egypt, a situation fomented by

the corruption and maladministration of arms of government by the Mubarak regime. Hess (2013, 255) cites socioeconomic inequalities, corruption, high unemployment (particularly among the youth), and the diffusion of false information through technological channels as the main drivers of the Egypt Arab Spring uprisings. Al Jazeera (2011) corroborates the aforementioned views and adds that Egypt's version of the Arab Spring protests was a result of government failure to address key economic, health, and social issues. Like Tunisia's Ben Ali-led regime, the Mubarak-led regime in Egypt now had to respond to peaceful protests.

The Mubarak-led regime responded to the local version of the Arab Spring protests by violently quelling the dissent. State resources and forces were discharged to deal with the protests, resulting in the use of force. Elliot (2011, 22) argues that the demonstrations for constitutional reforms in Egypt were "combated with deadly force". Al Jazeera (2011) reported that about 150 people died during the Arab Spring protests in Egypt, and a further 2 000 people were injured. Rettig (2011) reveals that, according to the Egyptian Commission Report, about 846 Egyptians lost their lives as a result of government clampdown on the Arab Spring protestors. Rettig (2011) further states that according to the Egyptian Commission Report, "about 6,400 people were injured through acts of government violence, such as police vehicles intentionally running over citizens".

Ghosh (2011) unwittingly reveals the double standards embedded in Eurocentric modernity. The structures of control of Eurocentric modernity that were used included, but were not limited to, the mass media. Ghosh (2011, 16) argues that the Mubarak regime's response to its local version of the Arab Spring demonstrations was "broadly peaceful". However, the Mubarak regime's response to the protests cannot be classified as peaceful; this narrative is problematic, because it could never account for the 150 deaths and more than 2 000 people who were injured. Rather, what this misrepresentation by Ghosh (2011, 16) reveals is that where it suits Western-centred modernity, facts are twisted and some overlooked; in other situations, facts are bolstered, underscored, and blown up to suit the Eurocentric worldview. The fact is that the Mubarak regime also used force in response to the local version of the Arab Spring protests. Egypt's response was similar to the Tunisian response, just as it was similar to the Libyan response. Violence and state force were used in response to the respective local versions of the Arab Spring protests, yet the reporting emphasises some situations and, by the same token, overlooks and under-reports other facts. This is the problematic nature of Eurocentric modernity—it is laden with double standards.

As in the Tunisian case, the involvement of civil society organisations in the Egyptian Arab Spring uprisings raises many questions. The USA's foreign policy made monetary provision for Egypt's army and for several civil society organisations; as a result, those organisations were tolerated by the Mubarak regime (Plaetzer 2014, 261). The Egyptian army therefore would have been loyal to some degree to the USA, as its funder and, possibly, its handler. Similarly, the civil society organisations could not possibly be

indifferent to the USA's foreign interests in Egypt; they were certainly not loyal to the Mubarak regime either.

A national army represents the highest form of state security apparatus, and if that apparatus becomes compromised by way of foreign sponsorship, as was the case with the US sponsorship of the Egyptian army, then it is conceivable that a foreign force, the USA in this case, is actually in charge. Ghosh (2011, 18) confirms this observation when he argues that in Libya, “unlike in Egypt ... the Obama Administration ha[d] no leverage”. In the case of Egypt, it is that foreign force (the USA) which this article contends constitutes coloniality in the highest form. Because of the calibre of the Egyptian state institution controlled by the USA (the Egyptian army), what is at issue is not only coloniality, but also coloniality of power, as the USA controlled the very expression and means of Egyptian sovereignty: the army and its arsenal. This means that, if the USA decided it was time for regime change in Egypt—the recipient of its sponsorship—not even President Mubarak could have resisted, because the president's arsenal and source of power were funded by the USA; this curtailed Mubarak's offensive or defensive options. The USA had an unwarranted, but calculated, say in the internal affairs of the Egyptian military and therefore the State. That scenario encapsulates how the coloniality of power operates; it permeates the fabric of a society and civilisation. As such, resistance to the forces that perpetuate coloniality of power would actually come from within the colonised polity.

Civil society organisations are not apolitical organisations: they champion and propagate particular causes that are sometimes very political in nature; the same can be said of their spheres of operation and their scope and reach. The funders of civil society organisations normally have some control over the scope of influence of these organisations. Thus, civil society organisations can become proxies of their funders. The USA and the Eurocentric world order are notorious for using underhanded avenues, such as the funding of particular civil society organisations and NGOs, to effect regime change agendas, especially in Africa (Fafchamps and Owens 2006; Sehloko 2018; World Bank International Youth Foundation n.d.). The use of financial power through the funding of civil society organisations reduces the sometimes noble work of such organisations to Trojan horses of their funders. The control of the agendas of civil society organisations through funding is tantamount to the coloniality of power, as it speaks to the levers of control of the economy.

Eurocentric modernity's double standards were again exposed in the Egyptian case following the ousting of Hosni Mubarak. Subsequently, in July 2013, a military coup d'état was carried out by the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood, displacing President Mohammed Morsi, who had been democratically elected to replace Mubarak (Plaetzer 2014, 261). The Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood subscribes to two basic principles (Plaetzer 2014, 261; Rosen 2012, 61). The first is a desire to adopt Sharia law as the basis from which to regulate and administer state affairs (Ghanem 2016, 12). For the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood, this is contingent on the idea that State and religion are

indistinguishable. The second principle is a quest to “unify Islamic states and free them from foreign imperialism” (Ghanem 2016, 12). The unity of Islam is at the centre of this ideology, which explains why the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood perceives “any single Arab country as just one small part of a large Islamic empire (or caliphate) stretching from Spain to Indonesia” (Ghanem 2016, 12).

Suffice it to note that the so-called NATO-determined “international community” did not intervene in Egypt in the same manner as it did in Libya in 2011. Yet, arguably, the fundamental tenets of democracy were disregarded during the military coup in Egypt. In the military coup d’état in Egypt following Morsi’s takeover of power from Mubarak (Al Jazeera 2018; Plaetzer 2014, 261), General Abdel Fattah el-Sisi unconstitutionally wrested power from Morsi, and yet no international community militarily intervened in that situation. If it were well meaning, the so-called international community, which really is the global NATO (Nazemroaya 2012b, 17), would have intervened in Egypt in defence of democracy and so-called human rights, particularly in 2013. It is evident that in the case of Egypt, as a state captured by the USA, the Western-centric modernity agenda was not at stake, as it was in Qaddafi’s Libya. The coup d’état was an inconvenience, but not a catastrophe for Western Eurocentric modernity, because the internal fight for power in Egypt was less significant—it did not disrupt the matrices of global coloniality. The Egyptian version of the Arab Spring protests and its aftermath were of no consequence to the asymmetrical Eurocentric power configuration of the current world order. Egypt had no means or resources to effect meaningful change to the Euro–North-American-centric conception of power, unlike Libya, which had oil. As the Egyptian case, unlike the Libyan case, did not threaten the current world order, in the framework of modernity intervention and invasion were not necessary. If anything, the Egyptian case proves the asymmetry in power relations, as exemplified by the USA’s involvement in Egypt’s national army and defence force.

The Arab Spring Demonstrations in Sudan

The Sudanese citizen protests against the Sudanese government, in solidarity with the Arab Spring uprisings, have come to be known as the Sudanese Intifada.¹ The Sudanese protests were directed at the National Congress Party (NCP) regime, led by Omar Hassan al-Bashir (McDoom 2011). It is notable that al-Bashir’s regime was accused of genocide and was indicted by the International Criminal Court (ICC) (Rosen 2012, 57). The Arab Spring protests in Sudan began in January 2011; they were led mainly by young people (Abdelaziz 2011). Medani (2013, 37) concurs with these observations and opines that the protests were led by women and men who were “in their late teens, twenties and thirties”; some were students, others were unemployed. Like Qaddafi, al-Bashir had come into power through a bloodless military coup d’état on June 30, 1989

1 The Intifada Revolution (December 1987) was the first Palestinian revolution of resistance against Israel’s occupation (Lockman and Beinun 1989, 81).

(Al Jazeera 2010). It is therefore not surprising that the West negated, demonised, bastardised, and pathologised al-Bashir in the same manner as Qaddafi and Ben Ali, by framing them as dictators that needed to be “cleansed”. Medani (2013, 37) underscores that female students particularly played a crucial role in the Arab Spring uprisings in Sudan. The Sudanese Arab Spring uprisings were inspired by the protests that were simultaneously going on in neighbouring Tunisia and Egypt.

The Causes of, and Responses to, the Arab Spring Demonstration in Sudan

Just like its neighbours, Sudan’s protests were aimed at the country’s leadership, which was accused of hampering people’s “freedom” and of being responsible for the escalating prices of fuel, food, and other “key commodities” (Medani 2013, 37). The Sudanese people were essentially demanding “the fall of the regime” and “liberation” from the regime of al-Bashir under the banner of the NCP. They were protesting against the hampering of basic freedoms such as freedom of expression and speech, freedom of association and freedom of movement (Medani 2013, 37). Rosen (2012, 57) corroborates the view that Sudan dealt heavy-handedly with protestors and highlights that of all the countries that experienced the winds of the Arab Spring protests, Sudan’s regime was “the most oppressive and violent”. Kushkush (2013) adds that government corruption exacerbated the appalling socio-economic circumstances in which the majority of Sudanese were living, thereby providing impetus for the revolt against the government.

Stated differently, the perception that was prevalent prior to the local version of the Sudanese Arab Spring protests was that the al-Bashir government had failed to rule and govern. Another factor that precipitated the Arab Spring revolt in Sudan was that the prices of basic commodities such as flour, cooking oil, sugar, and other household necessities had become increasingly exorbitant (Kushkush 2013). In other words, the local version of the Arab Spring protests in Sudan had the same reasons or rationale as the Arab Spring protests in other places.

The Sudanese government’s response included clamping down on protestors, leading to the death of a university student, Mohamed Abdelrahman, who was studying at the Omdurman Ahaliya University in Khartoum. A victim of police brutality and violence, Abdelrahman was celebrated and venerated as a hero of the struggle; support for him was expressed on social media, for example by this Facebook post: “You are our martyr Mohamed Abdelrahman” (McDoom 2011). Abdelaziz (2011) highlights that police responded brutally and violently by beating students involved in protests with batons and firing teargas at them. Medani (2013, 37) states that the security forces violently “quashed the demonstrations”; they indiscriminately beat women. What is conspicuous is that the al-Bashir regime responded heavy-handedly to the protests. Ironically, unlike in Libya, the NATO-led international community, under the banner of the UN, did not intervene in the domestic affairs of Sudan.

Medani (2013, 37) opines that part of what the protestors demanded was the “implementation of wide-ranging neoliberal economic reforms”. The mere mention of the idea of “neoliberal reforms” spells out the real motive of the Sudanese Arab Spring uprisings, and whose script the uprisings were following. It is this article’s contention that the Sudanese citizens called for freedom, and for state-controlled fuel and food prices; however, Western modernity controls and dictates “economic reforms”. Western modernity reconfigures economies around the world to adhere to its dictates. This is coloniality of power, in that modernity controls the levers of the economy of a given country, in this case Sudan. Yes, no doubt the economic reforms would have benefited Sudan’s citizens, but the levers of control of that script rested in Western modernity. While it was Sudan’s citizens who led the protests against al-Bashir’s regime, it is also argued that modernity authored that script and that, as such, the Sudanese Arab Spring uprisings did not reflect the volition of the Sudanese citizens, but rather that of Western modernity.

The international community did not intervene in Sudan’s internal affairs, despite the fact that al-Bashir’s regime responded violently to quell the protests (Medani 2013, 37). It is ironic that the international community did not view the Sudanese situation in the same light as it did the Libyan situation. No UNSC resolutions were issued and no foreign military intervention was initiated in Sudan, despite a similar set of conditions as those that were prevailing in Libya at the time. Why was that? The real reason is that al-Bashir was not a threat to the global power configuration; his life was of no consequence to Western modernity. Put differently, al-Bashir’s existence as president of Sudan did not pose a threat to the interests of the USA, the UK, and NATO alliances. Sudan, unlike Libya, which had oil, had no resources to effect meaningful change to the Euro–North-American-centric global order. Sudan did not threaten any of the Western-centric world’s levers of control of the economy, of gender and sexuality, or of knowledge and information; neither did Sudan’s existence have any effect on the control of authority aspect of the global power matrices. Therefore, according to Eurocentric modernity’s script, al-Bashir was just an inconvenience in so far as the internal and domestic affairs of Sudan were concerned; al-Bashir was a manageable nuisance, and at worst, he posed a threat in the form of ethnic conflict or civil war, neither of which concern Eurocentric modernity. In the frameworks and conception of Eurocentric modernity, ethnic conflict, tribal wars, and civil wars are the preserve of the African polity—they are to be expected in Africa, for they are characteristic of the zone of non-being. As such, modernity wants to sell the story that Africa is a place of strife, disease, hunger, war, violence, genocide, drought, lack, and poverty, a zone where non-humans reside. Africa is supposed to be the exact opposite of the Western world, particularly Europe, which is presented as a place of plenty, civilisation, abundance, progress, development, human rights, peace, and accord. Therefore, Sudan’s version of the Arab Spring uprisings served to evince this *African* story of war, lack, barbarity, lack of development, and so forth.

Rosen (2012), faithfully parroting Eurocentric modernity's script, labels al-Bashir an "Arab dictator" who, like other Arab dictators, had to come to his last days in office. Rosen (2012, 57) notes that the al-Bashir regime was the "most oppressive and violent of those that have come under the winds of the Arab Spring". It is notable that the framing of al-Bashir as dictatorial is located in Western modernity, as expressed by proponents such as Rosen. The apparent contradiction in Rosen's admission is the following: If the al-Bashir regime was indeed the most oppressive and violent, why did the NATO-led international community under the banner of the UN not intervene in Sudan, as they intervened and invaded Libya which, according to Rosen's line of thought, was only moderately violent? It is evident, therefore, that the Sudanese Arab Spring demonstrations posed no threat to the colonially established, asymmetrical power configuration, and therefore warranted no military intervention nor consequence.

The Arab Spring Demonstrations in Libya

On February 15, 2011, the Libyan version of the Arab Spring protests began. The BBC (2013) states, "Libya's uprising began in February 2011 after security forces in the eastern city of Benghazi opened fire on a protest." While this statement is misleading, it is valuable to note that, indeed, February 15, 2011 was the beginning of the local version of the Arab Spring protests in Libya (Campbell 2013, 67; Ghosh 2011, 16). About 3 500 people died as a result of the Syrian Arab Spring protests, compared to the death toll of about 1 000 people during the Libyan Arab Spring protests (Rettig 2011). Rettig (2011) argues that "before the NATO mission to protect rebels began in mid-March, reports suggested that Qaddafi's forces had already killed over a thousand people". The NATO invasion, ironically explained as preventing deaths, in fact resulted in the deaths of about 30 000 people (Al Jazeera 2016a; Campbell 2013, 30; Khan 2016; Rettig 2011).

As has been demonstrated in this article, Qaddafi's response was similar to those of other regimes (in countries which were not invaded) in that he resisted the protests against his government's failure to find amicable solutions to the plight of the Libyans. In other words, the Qaddafi regime's response to the Arab Spring protests in Libya was not unique. Qaddafi's regime responded with force to its local version of the Arab Spring protests. However, Libya's response to the protests was to have consequences in Libya and internationally. The Ben Ali regime in Tunisia resisted the protests by unleashing state security forces to quell the rebellion. The Mubarak regime in Egypt suppressed citizen protests and used state-sponsored force to quell the protests. Similarly, the al-Bashir regime in Sudan crushed citizen protests by unleashing state security forces on protesters. Furthermore, the regime of Ali Abdullah Saleh in Yemen equally responded with violence to its local version of the Arab Spring protests. The Isa al Khalifa regime's response was that of violent resistance to the peaceful protests (Ghosh 2011, 16). Suffice it to note that, with the exception of Libya, in all the countries that were affected by the Arab Spring protests the respective governments' violent responses elicited no consequences from the so-called international community. Yet, at

the first sign of protests in Libya, the UN, through the tripartite alliance of the UK, France, and the USA, expeditiously convened and passed UN Resolutions 1970 and 1973, which made it possible for the international community, led by these three countries, to interfere and invade Libya. The international community's reaction to the Libyan government's response to its local version of the Arab Spring protests is what is divergent in the context of the region's Arab Spring protests generally.

The framing of Qaddafi as a dictator, tyrant, and despot by Western media—as evidenced by a view expressed by Ghosh in *Time* magazine (2011, 16) and by neo-liberal scholarship—pathologises, bastardises, and demonises Qaddafi, therefore legitimising his elimination. The very pathologising of the other by Western media, while it purports to be the canon and only legitimate source of information and knowledge, demonstrates an insatiable thirst to control knowledge and information. The branding of Qaddafi as an outlaw was done in preparation for and in justification of his impending elimination. Suffice it to note that while the regime change agenda in Libya was effected militarily, all structures of control of Western modernity were involved in the massive campaign against Qaddafi. Campbell (2013, 67) confirms: “Western intelligence services that had cooperated with Qaddafi were now stroking propaganda against him and mobilising the media to argue that there was imminent massacre of civilians in Benghazi.” The manipulation of mass media platforms of communication and the dissemination of news and information by Britain's BBC, France's France 24, and the USA's CNN in the wake of Qaddafi's massacre was especially notable. This is a manifestation of the levers of control of knowledge and information, which is a fundamental part of the coloniality of power. These three news outlets were on overdrive with anti-Libya and anti-Qaddafi propaganda and rhetoric.

The Causes of the Arab Spring Demonstrations in Libya

Following the revolutions in Tunisia and in Libya's immediate neighbour, Egypt, Libya's own uprising soon ensued over a crisis of governance. Hweio (2012, 112) highlights that the social unrest and uprising in Libya started on February 15, 2011, with simultaneous protests across several Libyan cities, but particularly in the eastern part of Libya, Qaddafi's home turf. The protestors cited government corruption and favouritism as well as regionalism as primary factors fuelling the Libyan Arab Spring protests (Abdessadok 2017; Serafimov 2012). Libya stood in need of political reform and transformation to a democratic society (Hweio 2012, 112). Some literature points to the dictatorial tendencies of Qaddafi himself and his government as the primary cause of dissent in Libya (Allouche 2017). Others cite human rights abuses that were inflicted on ordinary Libyans by the Qaddafi-led government (Serafimov 2012). There is a myriad of reasons and causes for the Libyan version of the Arab Spring protests.

The Libyan Government's Response to the Arab Spring Demonstrations

Ghosh (2011, 16) notes that Qaddafi personally issued a notice to Libyans that his rule was not to “succumb to revolutionary rap songs, Facebook pages and nonviolent demonstrations”. Like most countries that experienced Arab Spring protests, Qaddafi's regime dispatched state security personnel in preparation of eventualities that normally occur in such events. Hweio (2012, 112) avers that the Libyan regime responded violently to the demonstrations, which were initially peaceful. However, the demonstrations suddenly turned violent as Western powers and some Arab countries funded and sponsored Libyan rebels with guns and ammunition to consolidate the Western-centric *casus belli* in Libya (Campbell 2012, 59; Nazemroaya 2012a, 127–28). In other words, Western powers planted the so-called rebels and provided them with guns and ammunition in order to create the impression that a civil war had ensued, thereby creating the grounds for a military invasion of Libya (Gazzini 2011, 2–3).

The Killing of President Muammar al-Qaddafi

Gazzini (2011, 3) explains that Qaddafi's convoy was fleeing Sirte, after a battle against Western-sponsored and Western-planted Libyan rebels, when a remotely piloted missile was fired at Qaddafi's convoy “from a US Air Force base in Nevada, [compelling] the [Qaddafi] loyalist convoy of 75 vehicles to disperse”. Gazzini (2011, 3) further reveals that after the strike by the remotely piloted missile, NATO issued commands to a jet under the captaincy of the French to release “two 500-pound bombs” that charred “a dozen vehicles and [killed] at least 25 loyalists”. It is presumed that this second attack left Qaddafi exposed and injured, such that he had to walk on foot to seek refuge at a makeshift shelter nearby. It is here where the Libyan rebels found him and killed him. The armies of NATO, the USA, the UK, France, and Qatar all had a hand in the killing of Qaddafi (Gazzini 2011, 3). After the fact, the then interim premier, Mahmoud Jibril, offered contradictory explanations as to who had killed Qaddafi. The first statement he issued was that Qaddafi had died in an ambulance en route to a medical facility. However, this statement was refuted by the ambulance driver, who indicated that when he attended the scene, he “did not try to revive [Qaddafi], because he was already dead” (Gazzini 2011, 2).

As indicated by Gazzini (2011, 3), Campbell (2012, 125), and Hweio (2012), the opposition fighters in Libya were armed by foreign forces. Hweio (2012, 112) avers that it was this “armed opposition” that would “quickly form the Transitional National Council (henceforward, TNC)” that would usher in “democratic” reforms in the new Libya. This development is telling in itself; the so-called opposition, whose arms had been foreign-sponsored in a bid to topple Qaddafi, is the same opposition that constituted the TNC. According to Gazzini (2011, 4), the then French president, Nicolas Sarkozy, “met the fledging TNC leaders at the Elysee Palace on March 10 [2011] and surprised everybody (including the opposition themselves) by granting them official recognition as the sole legitimate representative of the Libyan people”. France having set the precedent, other European countries, as well as the USA, followed suit. Suffice

it to note, however, that the power to recognise governments does not exclusively belong to Europeans.

This reveals that the foreign forces sponsoring those rebels were actually in charge of the regime change agenda. As such, the regime change was not necessarily in the hands of Libyans, nor did it indicate, necessarily, the volition of Libyans. France, a European force representative of Eurocentric modernity, was actually in charge of the regime change in Libya. To further highlight this fact, three days after the demise of Qaddafi, on October 23, 2011, the TNC publicly committed to ensuring that democratic elections would take place within eight months (Hweio 2012, 113). Needless to say, at the time of writing (2021), elections in Libya are yet to be conducted. It is convenient for Eurocentric Western modernity to have chaos and disorder in Libya. In the absence of order, there is no accountability. If there is no accountability, European countries, particularly the UK and France, and the USA can syphon Libya's oil without having to account to the Libyan population or to their own populations in their domains. Therefore, democratic elections that would benefit and stabilise Libya would be inconvenient to Eurocentric modernity. Libya, as it is in Africa, the zone of non-being, must be seen to be chaotic, a failure, disorderly, uncivilised, war-ravaged, diseased, and in need of European saving and a European messiah.

Analysis of the Arab Spring Demonstrations in Libya

The singling out of the Qaddafi-led regime's response to its local version of the Arab Spring protests tells of the long-standing regime change agenda that was in place, awaiting a *casus belli* for implementation. The *casus belli* was to be the Arab Spring protests in Libya, apparently driven by Libyans themselves. The misconstrual of certain utterances by Qaddafi, who spoke of "fighting to the end" (Ghosh 2011, 18) in defence of the state of Libya, proved to be problematic. However, Qaddafi's utterances, which seemed to threaten some parts of the population in Libya, were not wrong in themselves. As a state leader, Qaddafi had to defend the sovereignty of Libya and Libyans. His utterances were misconstrued by the UK, France, and the USA to mean that the Libyan population was in imminent danger. Yet, Qaddafi was justifiably speaking against Western imperialism in Africa (Tanoukhi and Mazrui 2011, 151).

Qaddafi's position of resisting imperialism in Africa and the Arab world is important for African civilisation. While Qaddafi identified himself as a Berber first, Mazrui (Tanoukhi and Mazrui 2011, 150) insists that "Qaddafi is the first major leader of an Arab African country who regarded himself as an African first and an Arab second". The importance of Mazrui's assertion regarding Qaddafi's positionality is that it is rooted in how Qaddafi saw and understood himself, as an Arab of Berber origin first, but primarily as a Berber who was rooted in Africa, whose geo-locale was Africa. To this effect and in defence of Qaddafi, Mazrui tells of Qaddafi's regard of "his African constituency as more sincere and carrying greater promise for fulfilment than his solidarity with the Arabs" (Tanoukhi and Mazrui 2011, 151). Qaddafi himself is on

record asserting his African heritage and identity. At the opening of the African Union in July 2011, he argued (Campbell 2013, 19):

The European experiment is of no use to us ... the area known as North Africa should be Africanised. Either it will be an anomaly, and will therefore have no future. As an inhabitant of North Africa, I have always rejected the Barcelona agreement, which regards North Africa as part of the Middle East, with a vocation to integrate with Europe. This is a conspiracy against the integrity of Africa. They have said to me the Barcelona agreement and cooperation with the European Union will be to Libya's advantage. They want to draw us in and make use of us, through the Barcelona agreement, to dismember the African continent, stealing North Africa to make it join with the European Union. This is unacceptable. In any case, look at what has already become of the Barcelona agreement. It is in a comatose condition and could well disappear.

Qaddafi was right in asserting his locus of enunciation, which is Africa. It is of paramount importance to think from one's location; this action (of thinking from one's locality) counters the argument embedded and disguised in Western modernity, which presents itself as the canon, as the standard for all information or knowledge either of the self or of anything else. Given the history of European colonialism in Africa, Qaddafi was justified in defending Africa's position in the world and advancing Africa's interests. It was Africa's interests that Qaddafi defended against a monolithic and gigantic Eurocentric, imperial NATO, led by the USA, the UK, and France. As evidenced by the work of Chomsky (2011, 8, 11), Qaddafi's assertions of centring Africa were antithetical to the rationale of the US National Security Council (NSC) Document 68. Similarly, as emerges in the work of Kukushev (2010), Qaddafi's defence of a unitary Africa further countered the rationale behind the 1995 Barcelona Agreement (Euro-Mediterranean Conference 1995)—for which four African countries had sent representatives to the conference: Algeria, Egypt, Morocco, and Tunisia. The Barcelona Agreement primarily pursued a Eurocentric political and economic agenda. The centring of Africa by Qaddafi, as demonstrated by Huliaras (2001, 11) and Zoubir (2002, 35), reflected his positionality. It proved problematic to the long-standing regime change agenda of the USA, the UK, and France in Libya. Unsurprisingly, the Western canon omits and silences such dynamics in its reportage and analysis of the Libyan situation as regards the Arab Spring protests.

Through his assertion of his African positionality, Qaddafi alluded to the instrumentalisation of treaties, agreements, and international legal instruments, such as the R2P doctrine and international humanitarian law, by imperial powers for their own power pursuits. Qaddafi was actually exposing how Western-centred coloniality operates in reconfiguring its power matrices. The Barcelona Agreement was meant to partition the North African region and join it with the Arabic world for the purposes of unifying the Arabic region with Europe. In other words, the Barcelona Agreement sought to Europeanise North Africa via the Arab world. Qaddafi was not one to fall for this ploy. This was even more reason for Western modernity and coloniality to loathe Qaddafi—he could see through the mask and charade they put up.

The response by the international community to Libya's version of the Arab Spring protests demonstrates an asymmetrical, targeted, vilifying, and selective response. Rosen (2012, 57) describes the NCP's regime in Sudan as the most repressive regime of all the countries that were affected by the Arab Spring protests. Yet there was no international intervention in Sudan. This shows that the invasion of Libya was a *prima facie* case of the long-standing regime change agenda of the West. The West, in its collective, awaited a convenient *casus belli* to launch the attack. There is clear uniformity in the responses of the international community in the cases of Tunisia, Egypt, Sudan, Yemen, and Bahrain. The common thread is that there is non-intervention in the domestic affairs of sovereign states. But then there is a sudden variance in the response when it comes to Libya, because Libya stood antithetical to Western domination and Western control of the power matrices and levers that perpetuate coloniality and modernity.

On February 20, 2011, Qaddafi's son, Saif al-Islam, cautioned of the impending danger that would accompany his father's forceful departure from office, or his elimination or demise. He "warned that the country would regress into tribal wars and turn into a place where 'everyone wants to become a sheik or an emir'" (Ghosh 2011, 19). Al-Islam's warnings were dismissed as a case of "sour grapes" and did not receive much attention. Instead, in the typical style of Eurocentric modernity, prominence was given to views such as those held by Abdelnabi Yasin, a Libyan citizen and writer who was in self-imposed exile in Athens, Greece, at the time. He dismissed al-Islam's forewarnings and rebutted al-Islam's view; instead, he argues, "We are not the medieval society that Saif described" (in Ghosh 2011, 19). Hweio (2012, 112–13) validates al-Islam's warning to Libya and the world when he says, "Qaddafi's regime ended when Qaddafi was captured in his tribal homeland of Sirte and killed by the opposition fighters on February 20, 2011." Al-Islam was right in that without Qaddafi, Libya descended into tribal wars and conflicts. The chaos and vacuum of leadership to date bears testimony to it.

Professor of political science Fathi Baja was one of the protestors who denounced Qaddafi's rule, and was active in the Benghazi region. He now forms part of the committee that leads Benghazi city. He argues that the revolution was about the "creation of a modern Libya, freedom and democracy based on a pluralistic society, based on human rights, participation of all parts of Libya in creating their government and their institutions" (in Ghosh 2011, 19). The chaos that would visit Libya, from the first day in 2011 that the US, French, British, and Qatari armies engaged in combat with Qaddafi's forces can still be still felt today (Campbell 2012, 100; Gazzini 2011, 3). To this date (2021), there is no credible national government in Libya that is recognised by all Libyans, let alone the so-called "international community". The chaos that has manifested was foretold by al-Islam; needless to say, his warnings were negated and dismissed as "dire prophecies [that] are typical of failing regimes" (Ghosh 2011, 19).

The Real Motive of the NATO-Led Invasion Unmasked

The Libyan invasion by NATO forces was a calculated plan by the USA, the UK, and France to effect a long-standing regime change agenda to topple Libya's then president, Muammar al-Qaddafi. The Arab Spring protests were the political context within which the NATO invasion of Libya was carried out. The USA, the UK, and France had scores to settle with Qaddafi's Libya following the downing of Pan Am Flight 103 over Lockerbie, Scotland; the downing of UTA Flight 772 over the Niger desert; and the bombing of the La Belle disco in Berlin, Germany, among other incidents. The perceived close ties between Tripoli and Moscow, a nemesis of the USA, precipitated animosity towards Libya on the part of the USA and its allies. Libya's proposal of a gold-backed single African currency would have created competition for the US dollar. Libya advanced the development of a communication satellite, via the Regional African Satellite Communication Organisation (RASCOM), which was set to compete with global mass media corporations. These developments were bound to challenge the very praxis upon which the current world order rests. As Qaddafi could not be trusted by this world system, there was no telling how he would use the resources at his disposal to challenge, with reasonable success, the current asymmetrical, biased, hierarchised, patriarchised, and racialised world order.

This article has demonstrated that during the Arab Spring protests, all the respective governments responded violently to the protestors in their domains. Yet the so-called and loosely defined "international community" did not intervene in any of the affected countries, with the sole exception of Libya. This further consolidates the view of a long-standing regime change agenda on the part of Western modernity, pursued by the trio of the UK, France, and the USA. The selective application of R2P, through UNSC Resolution 1973, reveals the arbitrariness of the "international community". This casts doubt on an already embattled set of international norms such as R2P, humanitarian intervention, and humanitarian law.

Conclusion

The assassination of Qaddafi was made possible because of the intervention of the USA, the UK, and France in the domestic affairs of Libya. While this in itself may not have been the end they had in mind, it certainly explains why Libya is in disarray today. These three powerful states managed to invade Libya and eliminate Qaddafi because they wield uncurbed and immoderate power in the current UN-endorsed world order. They were able to influence the UNSC to take a hurried decision that legally insulated their imperial intentions from reproach when they invaded Libya. This also speaks to the very issue of these powerful states' influence in creating a world order where the weak are constantly bullied and policed by the powerful. The powerful states do as they please, without any consequence from institutions such as the UN, because the powerful control these institutions too, as was the case when the trio invaded Libya. The Arab Spring demonstrations in Libya were hijacked by the USA, the UK, and France in order

to effect regime change, as Qaddafi had proven to be a force to be reckoned with for the Euro–North-American-centric world.

The influence of these states on the world order gives credence to our argument that it is global coloniality that these powerful states had as an end goal. The current world order was thus reconfigured by weakening Qaddafi’s Libya, because it had made great strides in untangling itself from the clutches of global coloniality. Had the UN-endorsed world system worked fairly and partially, it would not have been only Libya that was militarily invaded and had its leader killed during the Arab Spring protests, would it?

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