

annual rainfall does not exceed 1 inch and temperatures vary in extremes: Ghadames is the hottest (106 degrees Fahrenheit), as well as the coldest (38 degrees Fahrenheit), town.

These physical constraints are overcome by a strong regional master planning policy based on urbanization and water self-sufficiency, financed through oil revenues.

As of the 1960s, the three geographical regions of Tripolitania (northwest), Fezzan (southwest), and Cyrenaica (northeast) were linked by road to each other. At the end of the 1970s, the asphalted Libyan road system was 2,500 miles long; it multiplied sixfold in the ensuing fifteen years until the oil counter-shock. By 1985 asphalted roads linked all populated areas.

Eighty percent of Libyans live along the coast and the population density is only 2.6 people per square mile (compared to 31 per square mile in the United States). Consequently, the Libyan regime attempts to balance the different parts of its territory to benefit regions in the interior of the country by creating administrative cities and by diversifying the economies of medium-sized cities already possessing basic infrastructure in health, education, and housing. Thus Libyans are no longer Bedouin or farmers but mainly city dwellers (88%), half of whom live in one of the two largest cities, Tripoli (1.3 million inhabitants) and Benghazi (660,000 inhabitants).

Faced with critically needed groundwater resources, a limited average annual rainfall of 2.2 inches, and the absence of permanent water tables, Libya's Great Man Made River Project has become the most important fossil water extraction and transfer program in the world. This project will be completed by 2010, enabling the pumping of 2 billion cubic meters of water per year at a cost of \$30 billion. Its life expectancy will probably not exceed fifty years, but will give Libya a delay during which other, more long-term options will be developed.

The modernization of Libya since its independence is undeniable: population has grown fivefold to about 6 million (6,036,914 in 2007) and up to 7 million including foreigners; school attendance has gone from 20 percent to 100 percent; the number of farm workers (7%) has been divided by a factor of 10; since the early 1980s the child-birth rate per woman has fallen from 7.5 to 3.2,

and the Human Development Index is the highest in Africa (64th in 2000).

Although Libya has found an original path to development, the various projects begun in the mid-twentieth century have yet to be completed. In the coming decades less economic dependency on oil revenues (that make up 30% of gross national product), a more diversified list of foreign trading partners (60% of imports are from the European Union, Libya's primary trading partner resulting from U.S. sanctions taken against Libya in 1982), a better balance between regions, and surmounting its need for water are all on Libya's horizon.

*See also* Qadhafi, Muammar; Socialism and Postsocialisms.

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#### SOCIETY AND CULTURES

Libya became independent in 1951 and consists of three geographical provinces: Tripolitania, Cyrenaica, and Fezzan. In 1963 King Idris I combined the three provinces, inhabited by Arabs, Berber and Tuareg, into a centrally administrated united state. This was a difficult task because the three provinces had different tribes, interests and goals, contrasting ethnic compositions, and different geographical conditions and histories. The inhabitants of the Fezzan, the Tuareg, were conscious of prior autonomy and dissociated themselves from the north. Characteristic for the Sanusi-led monarchy was the integration of tribal elements with the political role of a few influential families who dominated Libya between 1951 and 1969. With the

beginning of the oil exploration in 1959, the political elite began to enrich itself enormously, exacerbating the social tensions between them and the rest of the population, living on a subsistence level. Socioeconomic problems multiplied, including depletion of resources, migration from the countryside, increasing urbanization, missing education, and insufficient health services. After 1969, Muammar Qadhafi tried to unite the three provinces not only politically and economically but also on an ideological level, creating a Libyan national identity beyond tribal, ethnic or religious differences. Nevertheless local conceptions of affiliation are integrated into the supralocal construction of the national identity.

### NATIONAL IDENTITY AND LOCAL IMPLICATIONS

Qadhafi's revolution on September 1, 1969, set in motion major political and social change. Qadhafi sought to establish an ethnically homogeneous national state with four characteristics:

1. In prerevolutionary Libya, the country's Arab tribes, the majority of the population, held political power. Qadhafi sought to place the ethnic minorities on an equal footing: Berber (Imazighen) in Tripolitania and few in Cyrenaica, and the Tuareg (Imuhagh/ Imajeghen) and Tubu (Teda) in Fezzan. On a religious level, he also placed the Ibadi Muslim minority on an equal footing with the Sunni majority.

<b>Great Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya (Libya)</b>	
<b>Population:</b>	6,036,914 (2007 est.)
<b>Area:</b>	1,759,540 sq. km (1,093,327 sq. mi.)
<b>Official language:</b>	Arabic
<b>Languages:</b>	English, French, Italian, Arabic
<b>National currency:</b>	Libyan dinar
<b>Principal religions:</b>	Sunni Muslim 97%, other 3%
<b>Capital:</b>	Tripoli (est. pop. 1,300,000 in 2006)
<b>Other urban centers:</b>	Benghazi
<b>Annual rainfall:</b>	Around 100 mm (4 in.) on the coast to less than 25 mm (1 in.) further inland
<b>Principal geographical features:</b>	<i>Mountains:</i> Tibesti Mountains (range), Djebel Al Aawaynat, Bikku Bitti, Haruj <i>Other:</i> Libyan Desert, Arkenu craters
<b>Economy:</b>	<i>GDP per capita:</i> US\$12,300 (2006)
<b>Principal products and exports:</b>	<i>Agricultural:</i> wheat, barley, olives, dates, citrus, vegetables, peanuts, soybeans, cattle <i>Manufacturing:</i> iron and steel, food processing, textiles, handicrafts, cement <i>Mining:</i> petroleum
<b>Government:</b>	Independence from U.N. trusteeship, 1951. Constitution, 1969, amended in 1977. First operated as a constitutional and hereditary monarchy. Changed to military dictatorship after coup d'etat in 1969 by the Revolutionary Command Council. Unicameral General People's Congress (GPC; members elected indirectly through a hierarchy of people's committees). Head of government elected by GPC. For purposes of local government, there are 31 municipalities.
<b>Heads of state since independence:</b>	1951–1966: King Idris 1969–: Colonel Muammar Abu-Minyar al-Qadhafi (de facto)
<b>Armed forces:</b>	Service is conscript and voluntary. <i>Army:</i> 45,000 <i>Air force:</i> 22,000 <i>Navy:</i> 8,000
<b>Transportation:</b>	<i>Rail:</i> Libya is in the process of building a railway system. <i>Ports:</i> As Sidrah, Az Zuwaytinah, Marsa al Burayqah, Ra's Lanuf, Tripoli, Zawiyah <i>Roads:</i> 83,200 km (51,698 mi.), 57% paved <i>National airline:</i> Libyan Arab Airlines <i>Airports:</i> International facilities at Tripoli and Benghazi. There are more than 100 smaller airports throughout the country. Libya has 2 heliports.
<b>Media:</b>	<i>Al Jamahiriya</i> is the national newspaper, published in Arabic. The Libyan Jamahiriya Broadcasting Corporation provides radio and television service. 19 radio stations, 12 television stations.
<b>Literacy and education:</b>	<i>Total literacy rate:</i> 82.6% (2006). Education is free and compulsory for 9 years. Postsecondary education is provided by 12 universities, including Al Fateh University in Tripoli and Garyounis University in Benghazi, and more than 80 technical and vocational institutes.

2. Although Qadhdhafi sought to promote socio-economic equality, language differences remained. Arabic is the Libyan national language, and the Berber languages are considered dialects. Qadhdhafi considers Libya a part of the Arab nation, so the Berber languages, like the spoken Hausa of the southern Fezzan, continue to be spoken but have never been officially recognized.
3. Qadhdhafi's Libyan national idea was followed by a decrease of the tribal influence. Qadhdhafi rejects tribes as political units, since he considers them, like political parties and classes, as inimical to the sense of Libyan nation. Tribal structures nevertheless still plays a major role in Libya. Nonetheless, in the 1990s Libya experienced a "phase of retribalization" that manifested in a formal recognition of leading tribal personalities and their institutionalization in the form of the People's Social Leadership Committees, consisting of tribal chiefs and heads of families. These committees function as local authorities and mediate local disputes as long as they do not conflict with national regulations.
4. Qadhdhafi has declared that the "family" is the basis of Libyan society. This statement is embodied in the "Green Book," Qadhdhafi's manifestation of his political, economic, and social ideas. The family offers social protection to the individual, embodies and roots it in the supraordinate national system, and indoctrinates the Muslim and tribal conceptions of society, the moral basis of the nation.

#### INDICATIONS OF LOCAL CONCEPTIONS

In spite of Qadhdhafi's efforts to create a national society of equals, major differences remain important. Despite the sedentarization of nomads, a commitment to universal education, and increasing urbanization, social and tribal stratification persists. Urbanization has increasingly ended the spatial separation of social classes, so that families with free or noble origin and descendants of former slaves now can live door at door and nomads find themselves in close proximity with townspeople. Children from different social strata are put together in schools, and Arabs from the north find themselves pulled to the south since the state promoted intra-Libyan migration for employment reasons. Tuareg and Berber now work side by side

with Arabs, women enter the job market, craftsmen participate in local administration, and descendants of former slaves can attain leading positions. The spatial as well as the social aspects of the prior system of social stratification is rapidly breaking down. This process is not without problems and is the reason for increasing tribal tensions and disputes, especially as traditional ideas of hierarchy continue to play a major role in marriages.

*See also* Ethnicity; Family; Organization; Languages; Arabic; Qadhdhafi, Muammar.

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#### HISTORY AND POLITICS

The Libyan Arab Popular and Socialist Jamahiriyya, the official name of the state of Libya, is a self-declared revolutionary state governed by an organization of popular committees and congresses with a rich oil-based economy. This regime is the creation of what most Libyans call the First of September revolution. It originated on September 1, 1969, with a group of young pan-Arab officers in the Libyan Royal Army, led by a twenty-seven-year-old charismatic officer named Mu'ammar Abu-Minyar al-Qadhdhafi. Inspired by the earlier example of Egypt's Gamal Abdel Nasser, Qadhdhafi overthrew the monarchy of King Muhammad Idris al-Sanusi in a bloodless coup d'état. The twelve junior officers were the central committee of a secret organization within the Libyan army called the Libyan Free Unionist Officers Movement. Renaming itself the