

Good research paper on libya parliament

[Law](#), [Constitution](#)



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Introduction

After coming to power through a coup in 1969, Muammar Gaddafi abolished the Libyan Constitution in the 1970s and introduced a self-acclaimed political philosophy based on the Green Book (Hilsum, 12). The Libyan parliament and the whole country, therefore, came under Gaddafi's autocratic rule until his death in 2011 during the Libyan Civil War.

The Libyan parliament was not democratic. The parliament was made up of 2, 700 indirectly elected representatives of the Basic People's Congress (BPC). At the national level, the equivalent of parliament was the General People's Congress (GPC). The GPC was the people's parliament and was made up of Gaddafi's relatives and friends. Although Members of Parliament were elected, the elections were never free and fair and as such, the parliament was never democratic (Choice Reviews Online).

Parliament did not have the powers to check the powers of Gaddafi and the member did not answer to the people for any decisions they or the president made. This was so because Gaddafi never ruled the country according to its constitution but rather according to the rules of his Green Book. The constitution creates the structures that ensure that MPs are accountable to

their people and when Gaddafi scraped the constitution, he removed the accountability of the MPs from the people (Hilsum, 13). Gaddafi held a big influence of the members of the GPC through numerous appointments, and the formation of a strong secretariat. The secretariat, which was made up of 600 local basic popular congresses, was always pro-Gaddafi and as such, parliament could never hold Gaddafi or the parliament to account.

The Libyan parliament represented the whole of the Libyan Society. The country's smallest unit of government, the Basic People's Congress, consisted of all people who had attained majority age. The BPC selected the regional and district congresses which were represented by the General people's Congress at the top. Although there were many representatives in Gaddafi's parliament, his autocratic rule and disregard for the constitution caused the representation of the people to be questionable (Hilsum, 14). Gaddafi appointed many people from his hometown of Sirte including several relatives and children. As such, the high numbers of the GPC did not represent equal representation of all people in the Libyan society.

The people of Libya did not have the right to be elected and to engage their parliamentarians. The people's participation in the ruling of their country was minimal. The people's participation in the governorship of their country tumbled the moment Gaddafi chose to rule using a self-acclaimed Green Book rather than the people's constitution. Although representative of all people in the country, the BPC met only thrice per year to discuss local business and to select people to fill the committees (Africa Research Bulletin). On paper, this seemed like the best way for people to participate in the governorship of their country but behind the scenes, the people could

not dare criticize the government. Although Gaddafi created, a scene where the people seemed to participate in their representation they only did so to support his policies and never to correct or suggest any issues contradicting his plans and leadership style.

The banning of political parties by Gaddafi also points to dictatorship and suppression of democratic representation and participation of the people. The fall of Gaddafi in 2011 has now ushered in a democratic era in Libya and parliament now operates as a separate arm of the government from the presidency although in a transition capacity.

Conclusion

The rise of Muammar Gaddafi to power in 1969 killed democratic representation of the people through a people-driven parliament. Gaddafi abolished the constitution and imposed upon the people a set of self-acclaimed policies commonly known as the Green Book. Although the then parliament had about 2, 700 people, Gaddafi's dictatorial rule killed the democratic representation of Libyans. Their participation and ability to hold their parliamentarians to account faded and so did their democratic representation through free and fair elections. The fall of Gaddafi during the Libyan Civil War ushered in a new era where the country's parliament now operates democratically under a constitution.

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