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Editors: Bruce Maddy-Weitzman, Shoshana Shmulovitz

Editorial board: Alona Ferber, Brian Albert, Duygu Atlas, Hay Eytan Cohen Yanarocak

A weekly sample of news and opinions on current events from around the Middle East collected and brought to you by the Moshe Dayan Center, Tel Aviv University. [To see full article, click on title.](#)

Iraq – Tariq Alhomayed: If You Have No Shame...

Iraqi Prime Minister Nuri al Maliki, whose term was renewed based on Iranian-US approval and whose government killed approximately 14 anti-government protesters a few days ago, is now attacking the Arab Gulf states on the pretext of defending the Shia of Bahrain and is giving lectures on freedom and democracy. The lie that is the democracy of Iraq can no longer continue and it cannot be said that Baghdad has returned as an active member on the Arab scene; rather, Iraq has become an active member in the exportation of the Iranian project in the region.

Source: Asharq Alawsat (London), March 21, 2011

Regional – El-Sayed Amin Shalabi: We're Not That Different After All

The 9/11 attacks and subsequent attacks on London and Madrid created a feeling of unease in the West, with pundits predicting a showdown between Western civilization and Islam. Many Westerners assumed that pluralism and reform were incompatible with the basic nature of all Arabs and Muslims. The West has created a stereotype that was erroneous, and yet it persisted to believe it against all evidence to the contrary. The Egyptian revolution has demonstrated that human rights matter to the Arabs and Muslims just as they matter to the rest of the world.

Source: Al-Ahram Weekly (Cairo), March 17, 2011

Libya, Yemen – George Semaan: Two Different Lessons From Libya and Yemen

As much as the revolutions in Tunisia and Egypt have grown closer to their happy endings, the situations in Libya and Yemen seem to be getting more difficult and complex, thereby prolonging the peoples' suffering. It would not be an exaggeration to say that the outcome of the action in Libya and Yemen will have negative repercussions on the popular action of any of their neighbors. The Algerians, Moroccans and others cannot predict the outcome of any uprising or revolution and will have to draw the Libyan and Yemeni lessons.

Source: Yemen Times (Sana'a), March 17, 2011

Regional – Mustapha Tlili: A Democratic Mediterranean

Mediterranean countries are home to 475 million people – 272 million Europeans, including 20 million Muslims, and 200 million non-European Arabs and Jews. Popular revolutions in Tunisia and Egypt have swept away entrenched autocracies, Libya's Mu`ammar Qaddafi is fighting to regain power, and political leaders in Algeria and Morocco are scrambling to maintain authority. Can the Union for the Mediterranean (UM), the mechanism that French President Nicolas Sarkozy set up in 2008 to increase regional cooperation, step up to the challenge of reclaiming the region's past as the cradle of reason, tolerance and humanism?

Source: Daily Star (Beirut), March 19, 2011

Iran – Mshari Al-Zaydi: What Does Iran Want from Bahrain?

Current talks in Bahrain are not focused on Shiite grievances, granting more authority to the opposition, or transforming Bahrain into a constitutional monarchy. Rather, talk has turned towards transforming Bahrain into a republic. The man leading this demand is Hasan Mushaima, an opposition figure with overt links to the political Shiite revolutionaries of Iran. We are now facing an explicitly sectarian scene, which could mean the end of religious tolerance. Iran has launched an attack on the Gulf States, who have the right to protect themselves.

Source: Asharq Alawsat (London), March 20, 2011

Turkey – Soner Çağaptay: Turkey's New "Old Kemalists"

When the AKP came to power, some saw it as an opportunity to shed illiberal Kemalist traditions, such as the nationalist foreign policy line on European Union accession, as well as taboos surrounding the Armenian issue. But the AKP did not move Turkey beyond Kemalism. Instead, the party destroyed Kemalists while perpetuating old Kemalism's taboos and attitudes and abandoning its liberal ideals, such as gender equality. Hence, a decade after the AKP assumed power, Turkey has become more illiberal. The old Kemalists are out and the "new" old Kemalists are in.

Source: Hürriyet (Istanbul), March 20, 2011

Turkey – Lale Kemal: Turkey Zigzags on Libya Crisis

Almost 20 days ago Turkish PM Erdoğan ruled out military intervention in Libya, calling instead for an immediate cease-fire. Since the UN called for a no-fly zone over Libya, PM Erdoğan and the Foreign Ministry have supported the move. As a predominantly Muslim nation, Turkey's concern over NATO's military action in a fellow Muslim country is understandable, but Mu`ammar Qaddafi has been mercilessly killing his own citizens. As a NATO member and as a Muslim nation, Turkey has the responsibility to support NATO's participation in the UN-led military operation in Libya. The ruling Justice and Development Party (AKP) should display a more coherent and realistic foreign policy.

Source: Today's Zaman (Istanbul), March 22, 2011

TEL AVIV UNIVERSITY, RAMAT AVIV, TEL AVIV 69978, ISRAEL. Tel.: +972-3-6409100, Fax.: +972-3-6415802

E-mail: dayancen@post.tau.ac.il WEB-site: www.dayan.org

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