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Europe, the Middle East, and the 'Arab Spring' – The Shattering of the Dream

Abstract: This article addresses relations between Europe and the countries of the Middle East and the implications of these relationships over the past two decades, through an examination of the events of the 'Arab Spring.' The Arab Spring refers to a chain of events that swept through the Arab countries from late 2010, characterized by demonstrations, violence, and civil war. This was sparked by resistance to tyrannical regimes and led to the fall of the rulers of Egypt, Tunisia, and Libya. However, Islamists were able to utilize the protesters, who sought democracy, an equal economy, and the elimination of governmental corruption, to further their ambitions. At that time, it was not clear what the new regimes would look like, but it was widely expected that Islamist elements would gain power. Europe responded positively to these events, in terms of declarations, policy, and physical involvement, from the fear that Islamist forces would take advantage of the outcomes of the protests, despite the fact that, for decades, there had been collaboration and friendly relations between Western nations and many of the overthrown tyrants. This policy of turning a blind eye to the lack of democracy and human rights violations in these countries, however, had been perceived by many as contrary to European values. On May 25, 2011, the European Union published a document admitting their failure to achieve political reforms in the neighboring Arab countries. Following the events of the Arab Spring, a new approach to strengthening the partnership between Europe and the Arab world was needed. The objectives of European policy towards the Muslim world include halting massive Muslim migration, reducing the influence of fundamentalist and radical Islam in the Middle East and among Muslims in Europe, and ensuring a supply of energy resources obtained from these countries. Meeting these challenges will be a significant step in the right direction.

Key words: Europe, Middle East, Arab Spring

Introduction

The Arab Spring, which refers to the revolutions in Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, and Yemen, the civil war in Syria, and the reforms that a number of Arab regimes initiated after protests, constitutes a significant turning point in Arab history. According to Eli Podeh, "[t]his process has not yet ended and it is not possible to evaluate how long it will continue" (Podeh, 2013, p. 6). Amidror adds to this, explaining that this "spring" eliminated at once a considerable part of the territorial arrangements that the colonial countries, Britain and France, had created after World War I, and opened the door to dark and powerful forces that had been repressed by the totalitarian regimes in these countries" (Amidror, 2015, p. 16). Livman notes that the events of the Arab Spring led to a revolution in European policy towards the regimes in the Middle East: "The leaders of Europe turned their back on these regimes and encourage and support the demonstrators and rebels" (Livman, 2013, p. 88).

The masses that went to demonstrate in the capital cities of the Arab countries and in Tehran in 2009 expressed their frustrations regarding human rights, political freedom, governmental transparency and social and economic problems. Eran notes that their demands accumulated to a multi-year full agenda that depended on a tremendous amount of financing. "Without the massive recruitment of international financial and economic institutions, the industrialized countries, and gas and oil producing companies (especially those in the Middle East), it is doubtful whether it will be possible to transform the 'Arab Spring' into a continuous process with a result similar to that reflected today in Eastern Europe, more than two decades after the fall of the Berlin wall" (Eran, 2011, p. 15).

Yadlin explains the political situation surrounding the events of the Arab Spring. In his words, "[w]e understand today that the pair of words 'Arab Spring' did not correctly describe the phenomenon that swept through the Middle East in 2011. This is not the growth of a revolution that leads to a liberal, secular, Anglo-American model of democracy" (Yadlin, 2013, p. 11).

The expectation that the Arab Spring would follow a secular, democratic trajectory was reinforced by the prevalent use of the contemporary products of the modern media – the social networks Facebook and Twitter. Sasar explains that the use of these led to the adoption of terms such as 'Facebook Revolution,' which emphasized more strongly the "integration of the societies in the Middle East in the universal processes of change such as globalization, through their increasing similarity to the West" (Sasar, 2012, p. 27).

Sasar explains that this assumption was a case of "artificial universalism" (Hashimi, 2009, in Sasar, 2012, p. 27) which is, in fact, quite far removed from reality. This erroneous viewpoint stems from the inability or lack of desire to acknowledge cultural differences.

Surprisingly, those who started the resistance that led to the collapse of the stable old political arrangements in the Middle East were not the forces of radical and fundamentalist Islam, despite their almost century-long struggle to establish a government based on Sharia law in their countries. According to Livman, "the resistance grew from the middle classes that had developed in recent decades, which, in light of grievous poverty and social and political distresses, succeeded in raising the banner of democracy and in defying the regimes in their countries" (Livman, 2013, p. 80).

The European Union had been pondering the question of its relations with the Middle East and North Africa since at least the beginning of the 1990s. This deliberation is derived from the dependence of the countries of the European Union on Middle Eastern oil, from the implications of stability in the region for Europe due to its geographical proximity, from the desire to play a role in its political process as a part of the construction of political security for the European Union, and from the flow of undocumented migrants from North Africa to Europe. Eran emphasizes that "in the past three decades, the European Union has created three frameworks in its attempt to resolve the question of its relations with the region; the Barcelona Declaration of 1995, the European Neighborhood Policy of 2004, and the Union for the Mediterranean of 2008. All the frameworks were intended to provide a solution to European priorities" (Eran, 2011, p. 22).

The dramatic occurrences in Tunisia and Egypt, and the ongoing events in Libya and Syria, forced the European Union to form a new strategy. According to Stein, "after

a delay, a document was drafted, entitled 'Partnership for Democracy and Shared Prosperity'" (Stein, 2012, p. 25).

Despite the importance of the principles that would guide the new partnership, Stein holds that "in the fields of values and democracy, the miserable economic situation, which greatly worsened following the events, obligates the Union to undertake greater financial-economic effort than had been made previously, in terms of grants to the region" (Stein, 2012, p. 26).

If this is the case for relations between the countries, it is even more so in the politics of the countries themselves. Against the background of a rolling back of the process of secularization, we witness the revival of traditional or neo-traditional powers in the Arab states. Political Islam, ethnicity and tribalism are again dominant, primarily in the politics of the Arab countries. According to Sasar, "it is impossible to examine all the examples of the 'Arab awakening' in its different hues – in Egypt, in Tunisia, in Iraq, in Syria, in Bahrain, in Libya, and in Yemen – and not to realize that in all of them the dominant political forces are not the forces of liberal secularization but or the stars of Facebook and Twitter, of Western media and its satellites, but more traditional forces" (Sasar, 2012, p. 33).

The guiding position of the European Union in its relations with the countries of the southern Mediterranean is the assumption that there are reciprocal relationships between Europe's security and stability and the prevailing reality in the region. The European Union will put forth efforts, within the framework of the budget limitations, to help, while the countries receiving assistance will adopt new rules which are commensurate with universal values and democracy. There is no doubt that the European Union set a high threshold for its Arab partners. According to Stein, "it could be argued that, in light of the economic crisis affecting most of its member states, the European Union will also find it difficult to meet the high expectations of its partners" (Stein, 2012, p. 27).

Europe and the Arab Countries in the Middle East on the Eve of the Arab Spring

The events of the Arab Spring caught the world in general, and Europe in particular, completely by surprise. These events caused more than a few feelings of confusion and embarrassment among European leaders, who, until these events, had thought that the relations between their countries were relatively stable. Stein maintains that "the systems of relationships between the countries of Europe and the European Union and the rulers of the Arab countries of the Middle East appeared to be stable, relying primarily on shared interests, especially financial interests, supported by treaties" (Stein, 2012, p. 25).

For decades, the countries of the West and Europe tended to be forgiving towards the repression, sometimes violent, of human rights and political freedom in most of the Arab countries. Eran asserts that "for the most part, this forgiveness can be explained by the fact that the regimes were allies of the West, although this explanation does not hold true in the case of the killing of and brutality towards Iranian demonstrators during the elections there in 2009, which received weak verbal criticism from the countries of Europe and the United States" (Eran, 2011, p. 16).

The uprisings over the years in the Arab countries inspired different, often inconsistent, responses in the Western countries. Eran adds that "these conveyed a message of double and even triple standards, of interests that superseded moral considerations and the adoption of extreme action towards the tyrannical regimes only when there is no economic or political cost" (Eran, 2011, p. 16).

The arrangements over the years between Europe and the regimes in most of the countries of the Middle East enabled the development of constitutional reforms and the establishment of parliaments and opposition groups, but the heads of the countries were the ones who dictated foreign, domestic, defense, social, and economic policy. In return, the countries of Europe and the West received collaboration on a range of matters, such as migration, particularly maintaining low levels of migration of Muslims into Europe, and trade and financial security, with emphasis on energy resources. Livman maintains that "the interest of the marketing of oil to Europe is a two-sided interest and sometimes the interest of the producing country surmounts that of the consuming country, and therefore this is a stable and permanent factor, without a close relationship to the regime in the state" (Livman, 2013, p. 88). Thus, Iraq in the period of Saddam Hussein, Iran after the revolution, and even radical Syria did not stop selling oil to the West, despite political tensions.

It should be noted that, before the uprising in the Arab world, the economic base data for the Arab countries in the Middle East was amongst the worst in the world. "The real economic growth in the 1980s and 1990s was three percent, as opposed to forty and a half percent in the developing economies, and in the years 1980–2010 the growth in GDP per capita in the Middle East was only one half a percent, as opposed to three percent in the developing economies" (Eran, 2011, p. 18, from the Report of the World International Monetary Fund, May 27, 2011).

The European Union proposed establishing a Mediterranean free trade zone and association treaties which would enable free trade and participation in certain European programs. According to Eran, "[t]he European Union demanded of its Mediterranean partners internal, financial, political, and legal reforms, including bringing their legislation closer to European legislation" (Eran, 2011, p. 22).

The Circumstances of the Arab Spring

The reason for the mass outburst in 2010, from Tunisia to Syria, was internal, and derived from the nature of the regimes in this area, although every country was influenced by its own specific circumstances. The dictatorial governments in these countries disappointed the general population while taking care of their own inner circle. The events of the Arab Spring and the strengthening of Islamist perceptions in the region are part of the struggle for the identity of the region and the communities living in it. According to Amidror, "[e]verything happened against the background of a loss of trust in theories, approaches, and perceptions that were imported from European culture" (Amidror, 2015, p. 17).

A young and unknown vegetable seller named Muhammed Boazizi set himself on fire in the Tunisian town of Sidi Bouzid in December 2010. The flames that killed him

spread throughout the Middle East, in the symbolic and verbal sense (Heller, Guzinsky, 2012, p. 7).

The trends emerging in the middle classes were nurtured by the modern media, which has made the world interconnected and enables events from all over the world to be viewed from any place almost instantaneously. Western technology carries messages through the Internet, Facebook, and Twitter and through computers and mobile phones, which enables the transmission of messages and immediate responses, without mediation, to masses of people (Livman, 2013, p. 81).

All the conditions for revolutions had already existed for many years. In the 1980s and 1990s, tyrannical regimes in many regions of the world were replaced: in Eastern Europe, in South America, and in East Asia. The world saw changes in many totalitarian countries, the transition to more democratic regimes, to economic growth, and to technological progress. The spread of the Internet, satellite stations, and social networks brought to a wider public, especially the middle class, the knowledge that another way is possible, that they deserve more – they deserve freedom, democracy, human rights, advancement of the status of women, employment, and freedom from tyrannical rulers. With ample justification, the Arab revolution of 2011 was called the 'Facebook Revolution' (Yadlin, 2012, p. 12).

The Arab Spring influenced the positioning and behavior of other actors in the Arab world. On the one hand, Saudi Arabia and the other conservative Gulf States woke up and acted; their rulers are conducting a more assertive policy than in the past and, in this, the anti-Iranian facet of their policy has strengthened, because of their fear that Iran is intervening in their internal domains (Brum, 2012, p. 40).

In past generations, a completely different phenomenon could be witnessed, which is also evident in the Arab Spring: the collapse of Arabism and, along with it, the rolling back of the secularization process in the Arab world. Secular politics retreated with the defeat of Arabism, and this regression is what is at the heart of the tremendous difference between the 'Arab awakening' of the previous century and that of today (Sasar, 2012, p. 32).

Why Was the Influence of the Arab Spring Weakened?

From the start, the Arab Spring awakened many hopes, and, alongside them doubts. Today, several years after it swept through five Arab countries – Tunisia, Libya, Egypt, Syria, and Yemen – and shook other countries, the euphoria has been replaced with disappointment (Horowitz, 2013, p. 1).

It is important to understand that, in contrast to the optimism and naiveté that assumed that the power of the social networks and the masses deployed through them cannot be stopped, in the Middle East and in the Arab countries there are stronger social networks than Facebook or Al-Jazeera (Yadlin, 2012, p. 13). The social networks of the mosques where the Arab masses go five times a day, the welfare, education, and relief network, the *Da'wah*[1] of the Muslim Brotherhood, which supplies the needs of the poorer popula-

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[1] *Da'wah* is the activity of Islamic organizations for charity, social assistance, and education, as a part of the effort to garner public support for the goals of the movement. The word literally means "issuing a summons" or "making an invitation;" in the Islamic context the intention is the call for belief in

tion, are what decided the elections in Egypt and in Tunisia. It is old 'hardware,' stronger than the modern software (Yadlin, 2012, p. 13).

Every country is a different ethnic, religious, social, and economic mosaic, with its own political tradition and history. In every country, there are two channels of influence. One is the wider, more generalized channel influencing whole populations, such as tyranny or the aspiration for freedom that spread through new technology rapidly and to large audiences. The other is the deeply-ingrained channel unique to every country, driven by factors such as ethnic groups, religions, relations between rich and poor, history, legitimacy, and so on (Yadlin, 2012, p. 13).

The family, the tribe, the ethnic group, and religion became focal points, in the place where the state had stood since the fall of the Ottoman Empire. The political system that forced itself on its citizens and had kept destructive forces contained completely vanished in large parts of the Middle East (Libya, Syria, Yemen, and Iraq are the more prominent countries in this group) (Amidror, 2015, p. 16).

In a number of cases, the masses succeeded in removing the rulers. However, it is clear that their great success is the setting of a new basis for political discourse in the Middle East, with the involvement of the citizens, the temporary central government and the government that would take its place after elections in the different countries, and civil society in all its sectors, including the media, which drew encouragement and reinforcement from the citizen's willingness to clash with the government (Eran, 2011, p. 20).

While the events of the Arab Spring led to the removal of four leaders from power, in Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, and Yemen, in other places, such as Algeria, Jordan, Morocco, and Kuwait, the demonstrations did not lead to regime change. In one country, Syria, the bloody civil war has lasted several years, taking the lives of tens of thousands of civilians. It would be a mistake to attribute all the events identified with the Arab Spring to one type of development. There is a difference between the countries in which the events were characterized by mass opposition to dictatorial regimes and those in which protests deteriorated into a violent struggle to the point of civil war where different groups of influence fight over power (Kenig, 2013).

It is possible to conclude that the uprisings of the Arab Spring since the beginning of 2011 did not cause the rise of extreme Muslim regimes in the region, but facilitated the rise of new democratic or pragmatic Islamic regimes in Tunisia, Libya, and perhaps Egypt, while other old conservative and pro-Western Islamic regimes held on with varying levels of success, namely the royal families in Morocco, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, and Bahrain. Moreover, these Islamic regimes object to and even fight with the fanatical Muslim groups operating in their countries, such as Al-Qaida, the Salafis, and different jihadist groups, as well as militant Shiites in Yemen, Bahrain, and Lebanon (Meoz, 2013, p. 39).

Observers and interpreters in the West who were surprised at the strength of the Islamic victory in the Arab revolutions can give a series of explanations or excuses for

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Allah. The institution of *da'wah* is central to the activity of the Muslim Brotherhood and its emissaries around the world, in essence indoctrinating the people and giving the Islamic movement popular support. It is a part of the aspiration of the Islamic organizations to create an Islamic state, but, since these organizations are not interested in a violent uprising which would force Islam on the population, they aim to foster a gradual social change that will lead to popular support for Islam.

this phenomenon, which are intended to continue to deny the obvious: Egypt, and other societies of the Middle East, are pious, religious societies to some degree. The public in these countries believe in the Islamic message, which is known to and the same for everyone, coming from people who speak in the name of faith. Those who suffer and who are lacking something believe that, with the help of the Islamic parties and Allah, they will be relieved of their unbearable poverty. Therefore, these parties are very attractive and accepted by the large section of the population that identifies with them (Sasar, 2013, p. 36).

The Arab Spring, or the Arab Awakening, is a revolution without leadership. It is difficult to give the names of the heads of the revolution. There was no charismatic figure who led the revolution. The revolutions in Tunisia, Libya, Syria, Yemen, and Egypt broke out without a clear ideology. When the Muslim Brotherhood and the Salafists took over the revolution, it began to have an ideological framework – political Islam. Both in the countries where the revolution was completed and in those where there is still fighting, the source of political authority and the ideology that will lead social and economic change is not clearly defined (Yadlin, 2012, p. 12).

The Influence of the Arab Spring on Different Countries

The events of the Arab Spring in essence began in Tunisia in December 2010, when a young Tunisian peddler was humiliated by a policewoman and his goods were taken from him, which drove him to set himself on fire because of the great frustration and powerlessness he felt against the destructiveness of the regime. This event led to clashes and violent protests against the regime. A short time after the event and the demonstrations that began in Tunisia, similar events began in neighboring Algeria, albeit less intense than Tunisia. From there, it was a small step to demonstrations in Jordan and Egypt.

Egypt, the largest Arab country, found itself at the beginning of a tremendous wave of protests when many demonstrators began to gather and to protest, primarily in large cities, demanding that President Hosni Mubarak be removed from office (Kenig, 2013). The events centered on Tahrir Square, the heart of the capital city of Cairo. Shortly after the outbreak of riots on Tahrir Square, they spread to Libya and Yemen. In Libya, the demonstrations began in the city of Benghazi and focused on resistance to the dictatorial rule of Muammar Qaddafi, who had been the leader of Libya since 1969. Quickly, the events transformed from violent demonstrations against the regime to an all-out civil war, which lasted for about eight months in 2011 (Kenig, 2013). In Yemen, tens of thousands of demonstrators took to the streets to protest against the difficult economic situation, rising unemployment, and government incompetence. Quickly, demands were made for the resignation of the President, Ali Abdullah Saleh, who had ruled the country with an iron fist since the late 1970s. In Kuwait, the demonstrations began in February 2011 and lasted, with intervals, throughout the entire year. The emphasis here was on protesting against the government's conduct and the economic situation, which resulted in the resignation of the Prime Minister in November 2011. Syria was one of the last countries to be influenced by the events of the Arab Spring, but, it turned out, the impact

on this country was to be the most problematic. The wave of protests in Syria began in March 2011 (Kenig, 2013) to continue to this day, and the regime of President Bashar Al-Assad is mercilessly killing people in order to stay in power, while being supported politically, economically, and militarily by Russia and Iran.

The political and social upheaval that the regimes in the Arab world experienced during the so-called Arab Spring led to a strengthening of radical Islamic movements and the appearance in the region of a new type of terrorist organization, which began with the emergence of Al-Qaida and reached its climax with the rise of the Islamic State. Overall, five regimes in Iraq, Yemen, Libya, Egypt, and Tunisia were brought down through internal uprisings or outside interference, and another regime in Syria is under severe threat. However, sufficiently strong and stable regimes have not yet been established to replace the regimes that fell (Kam, Bendata, Dekel, Heller, Shwitzer, 2015, p. 77).

The events of the Arab Spring shattered the old order in various countries in the Middle East. Lebanon is notable by its absence in this process. In essence, Lebanon was witness to the political end of the forces that stood behind the 'Cedar Revolution' and the rise of the pro-Syrian government influenced significantly by Hezbollah. However, although political life in Lebanon did not change as a direct result of the events of the Arab Spring, it would be inaccurate to conclude that the regional upheavals did not leave their mark on Lebanon as well (Bendata, 2012, p. 55).

It does not matter what the reasons for the Arab Spring are, and most of them lie in identity issues, political problems, the violence of the regime, economic problems, and the collapse of the state, along with negative implications for the Middle East and beyond. These expressions of conflicts pertaining to identity are not only the outcome of the Arab Spring. They constitute an inseparable part of the political history of the Middle East in the modern era, which is filled with saddening chapters of discrimination and repression, sometimes violent, against populations who differ in some important way from the dominant political faction in a given country (Kam, Bendata, Dekel, Heller, Shwitzer, 2015, p. 80).

Europe and the Arab Spring

The reasons for the close relations between Europe and the countries of the Middle East are many and diverse, but the most important are related to the development of the new global order, which led to the weakening and collapse of some of the actors in the Middle East. One direct result of these events was a change in attitudes in Europe towards the countries of the Middle East.

One of the most important developments in Europe's relations with the Middle East is the Barcelona Declaration, which led to the creation of a network of treaties. These treaties were forged in the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (EMP) and further developed in 2007 with the establishment of the Union of Mediterranean States (U-MED), strengthening the partnership between the regions. Aspects of the European Neighborhood Policy (ENP) towards the Middle East were added (Livman, 2013, p. 85).

The relationships formed included diverse trade agreements, accompanied by obligations on the part of the countries of the Middle East to refrain from promoting radicalization that would influence and even endanger the interests of Europe. One of the most

important issues which had to be dealt with was illegal migration, which constitutes a demographic threat to Europe. This was expressed in the Barcelona Declaration and Euro-Mediterranean Partnership in November 2011.

Europe cooperated with the different regimes in the Middle East so as to create the appearance of a balanced system of relationships, based on collaboration in a variety of areas, including security and terrorism, energy and migration, with emphasis on the migration of Muslims to Europe. In the framework of the events of the Arab Spring, some European countries began to re-examine their dealings with the regimes in the Middle East and even began to encourage protests against these regimes.

Since 1992, the Common Foreign and Security Policy of the European Union (CFSP) has been directed at the risks that derive from the illegal international migration, which include human trafficking, crime, and radical Islamic terrorism. The number of migrants to Europe increased by 25% in the period 2006–2008 (Herm, 2008). The dilemma with which Europe was required to deal was multidimensional, and was expressed in the fear of long-range missiles, radical Islamic terrorist organizations, illegal migration, crime and human trafficking organizations (Heisbourg, 2003; Kemp, 2003; Hollis, 1997; Youngs, 2006).

In contrast to the more aggressive approach of the United States towards the phenomena of radical Islamic terror in the Middle East, the European aspiration is to create shared inter-regional security. The approach of the United States sometimes endangered the partnership agreed upon in the Barcelona Declaration (Gillespie, 2003, in Livman, 2013, p. 86).

After the events of September 11, 2001, and the increasing activity of radical Islamist organizations, collaboration between the countries of Europe and the countries of the Middle East increased (Volpi, 2008).

Looking to the future, the European Union will need to express its opinion on the future of the regional framework, or in other words, the Mediterranean Union established in 2008 on the initiative of President Nicolas Sarkozy. Even if the tasks assigned to the organization and the budgets at its disposal are not yet known, it is clear that the change in policy will require a change in the way that the organization functions (Stein, 2012, p. 26).

It should be emphasized that, alongside the efforts to deal with the political upheavals, the EU was forced to cope with the bloodshed in Libya against a backdrop of a Libyan ruler who refused to relinquish his position. The main obstacles to achieving an agreement, both in the framework of the EU and in the framework of NATO, to level sanctions were the decision of the President of France, Nicolas Sarkozy, to unilaterally recognize the revolutionary council as a legitimate government, his willingness, alongside British Prime Minister David Cameron, to embark upon military action, and the decision of Germany to abstain from the vote in the Security Council on a proposal for military action – all these demonstrate the difficulty faced by the EU in the formation of a joint foreign and security policy.

Conclusions

Did the Arab Spring bring with it real democratization in the Arab world? In a few countries, it is apparent that there was no real change in the level of democracy. Other countries (with Syria the most prominent) are still stuck in the middle of a violent con-

flict, the outcome of which is uncertain. In addition, with regard to the three countries for which these events show real democratization, Tunisia, Libya, and Egypt, it is necessary to be cautious not to draw firm conclusions. The complicated transition of the Arab countries from autocratic secular regimes to more open and democratic forms of government is far from complete, and it must still overcome two important challenges (Kenig, 2013).

In Egypt, for example, the issue of the economy is the most important, and its long-term impact is vital. Almost every Arab country must attain real economic growth to ensure jobs for the young people who are joining the labor force. The Arab uprising stopped any growth in its tracks. Egypt and Syria are suffering from economic regression: tourism has stopped, the flow of investment from abroad has stopped, public expenditure has risen along with increases in subsidies, and foreign currency reserves are dwindling. The economic situation of Egypt has considerably worsened (Yadlin, 2012).

In the long term, after solving its immediate structural, cultural, and economic problems, the Arab world will be required to prove that it is no different from other countries and that a free and democratic society, which respects human rights, is possible there too. Such a change has not occurred in the history of humankind for many years, and we are only at the start of a process that will take many years, albeit hastened by the media and modern technology (Yadlin, 2012).

The European Union and its member states, since the beginning of the events of the Arab Spring, have adopted a policy that is supposedly different from the past in light of the popular uprisings, a policy with the purpose of replacing the authoritarian regimes. They supported the regimes' opponents and the aspirations to establish democracies, despite the Islamist tendencies in the background, to the point of active involvement of NATO forces in Libya (Livman, 2013).

Developments on the question of outside military intervention, since the beginning of the Arab Spring, indicate that public opinion in the Western countries still has reservations about further military interventions in the Middle East, especially that involving ground forces. The turbulence in the Arab world will continue to create situations in which outside military intervention will be a necessary component of preventing further chaos or brutal repression that will harm civilian populations. The likelihood of international military intervention rises when strategic considerations that support intervention are added to the humanitarian crisis, and the assessment is that the level of risk is reasonable (Brum, 2012).

The starting position that guides the European Union in its relations with the countries of the south Mediterranean is the assumption that there are reciprocal relationships between the security and stability of Europe and that of the Middle East. The Arab Awakening brings the region into a period of transition, the end of which is not in sight. The European Union will put forth efforts, within the constraints of budgetary limitations, to help, under the condition that the countries receiving assistance will adopt new rules that are consistent with universal values and democracy. The scope of the assistance will be directly related to the progress in the implementation of reforms in these areas. All that remains is to wait and see how much the European Union will insist on the fulfillment of the conditions it has set, some of which were part of its policy before the upheavals (Livman, 2013).

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Europa, Bliski Wschód i „arabska wiosna" – zawiedzione nadzieje

Streszczenie

Artykuł omawia stosunki między Europą i krajami Bliskiego Wschodu oraz konsekwencje tych relacji w ciągu ostatnich dwóch dekad, poprzez analizę „arabskiej wiosny". Określenie „arabska wiosna" odnosi się do serii wydarzeń obejmujących demonstracje, przemoc i wojnę domową, które przetoczyły się przez kraje arabskie od końca 2010 r. Wywołane przez siły oporu wobec autorytarnych reżimów doprowadziły do upadku przywódców Egiptu, Tunezji i Libii. Protesty zwolenników demokracji, zrównoważonej gospodarki i likwidacji korupcji rządowej udało się jednak wykorzystać do swoich celów islamistom. Wprawdzie nie było wówczas jasne, jakie nowe reżimy przejmą władzę, ale powszechnie oczekiwano, że będą to siły islamistyczne. W kategoriach deklaracji, polityki i zaangażowania fizycznego Europa zareagowała na wydarzenia arabskiej wiosny pozytywnie w obawie, że wyniki protestów mogą zostać wykorzystane przez siły islamistyczne, mimo że przez dziesięciolecia państwa Zachodu łączyła z wieloma obalonymi tyranami współpraca i przyjazne stosunki. Polityka przymykania oka na brak demokracji i łamanie praw człowieka w tych krajach była jednak często postrzegana jako sprzeczna z wartościami europejskimi. W dniu 25 maja 2011 r. Unia Europejska opublikowała dokument przyznający, że nie udało jej się przeprowadzić reform politycznych w sąsiednich krajach arabskich. Po wydarzeniach arabskiej wiosny konieczne było wypracowanie nowego podejścia do wzmocnienia partnerstwa między Europą a światem arabskim. Cele europejskiej polityki wobec świata muzułmańskiego obejmują powstrzymanie masowej migracji muzułmańskiej, zmniejszenie wpływu fundamentalistycznego i radykalnego islamu na Bliskim Wschodzie, a także wśród muzułmanów w Europie, oraz zapewnienie dostaw surowców energetycznych z tych krajów. Sprostanie tym wyzwaniom będzie znaczącym krokiem we właściwym kierunku.