

BOOK REVIEWS

Andrew Heywood, *Global Politics*, Palgrave Macmillan 2011, pp. 560.

The reviewed monograph is divided into 21 chapters: “Introducing Global Politics”, “Historical Context”, “Theories of Global Politics”, “The Economy in a Global Age”, “The State and Foreign Policy in a Global Age”, “Society in a Global Age”, “The Nation in a Global Age”, “Identity, Culture and Challenges to the West”, “Power and Twenty-First Century World Order”, “War and Peace”, “Nuclear Proliferation and Disarmament”, “Terrorism”, “Human Rights and Humanitarian Intervention”, “International Law”, “Poverty and Development”, “Global Environmental Issues”, “Gender in Global Politics”, “International Organization and the United Nations”, “Global Governance and the Bretton Woods System”, “Regionalism and Global Politics”, and “Global Futures”. Additionally, a number of other matters are discussed in the book, including the changing nature of power, war and peace, faces of terrorism, and human rights and humanitarian intervention.

In the introduction, A. Heywood precisely defines the term *global politics* as a wide concept, with worldwide, international, subnational, and regional dimensions within its scope. Such multilevel approaches result in the need for using global politics as a term more suitable for understanding the complexity of the post-Cold War international relations (pp. 2–3). The book also includes an analysis of new actors on the world stage, increased interdependence and interconnectedness, and the trend towards global governance, which absolutely justifies using global politics as a term. As the author notices, “global politics encompasses not just politics at the ‘global’ level – that is, worldwide processes, systems and institutional frameworks – but politics at, and, crucially, across *all* levels – the worldwide, the regional, the national and the subnational” (p. XIX).

Similar publications are, for example, “World Politics. The Menu for Choice” (Russett, Starr, & Kinsell, 2006) or “Introduction to Global Politics” (Mansbach & Raffert, 2008). But A. Heywood’s book’s clarity and complexity of the topics presented make it stand out from all the rest.

“Global Politics” has also ordered structure and a rich graphics vesture, handy for memorising important facts, which enhances reading comprehension. It provides a list of key issues and crucial problems at the beginning of every chapter, definitions of terms in margin notes, and carefully selected references to additional bibliography and Internet resources at the end for a deep analysis. Moreover, the problems addressed are viewed from three perspectives: realistic, liberal, and critical. Some terms are deconstructed, including *cold war*, *terrorism*, *war of terror*, *humanitarian intervention*, *nation state*, or *climate change*. For instance, humanitarian intervention is deconstructed as (1) “Describing such interventions as ‘humanitarian’ cloaks them in moral rightfulness and legitimacy. The term ‘humanitarian intervention’ thus contains its own justification: the interventions in question serve the interests of humanity, presumably by reducing suffering and death. (2) ‘Intervention’ refers to various forms of interference in the affairs of others. It therefore conceals the fact that the interventions in question are, by their nature, military actions that involve the use of force and some level of violence. (3) The notion of ‘humanitarian intervention’ may reproduce important power asymmetries... The term thus reinforces the notion of modernization as westernization, even Americanization” (p. 325).

What is more, A. Heywood includes an analysis of both supporters’ and opponents’ opinions on chosen controversial issues, for example, “Does the need to counter terrorism justi-

fy restricting human rights and basic freedoms?" (p. 299). The way that they are approached leads to a better understanding of their complexity.

In the reviewed book, some dates and names are incorrect, for example, the proclamation of Israel's statehood was in 1948, not 1947 (p. 47) or Six-Day War in 1967, not 1968. Such mistakes are sporadic, especially considering the length of "Global Politics" – 560 pages. A more serious one is calling the Czech Republic Czechoslovakia in the context of 2009. Also, when analysing the perceptions and misperceptions in international relations, Heywood makes no direct reference to the fundamental book "Perception and Misperception in International Politics" (Jervis, 1976). It is only referenced in the bibliography.

A. Heywood's monograph is valuable and interesting reading material on contemporary issues, additionally situated within an interdisciplinary framework. It is worthy of note that the way the book has been written inspires further study. The underlined research problems are significant. Heywood's collection of research topics is valuable not only for students, but also for experienced scientists.

"Global Politics" is addressed not only to students pursuing a programme in political science or international relations, but also anyone interested in various aspects of global politics. The book is a rich and valuable source of information and an exciting read. The book also offers a unique opportunity for a better understanding of the complexity of the contemporary world steering through a variety of opinions, attitudes, and approaches, which encourages creative study.

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Anna Wojciuk, *Dylemat potęgi. Praktyczna teoria stosunków międzynarodowych*, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego, Warszawa 2010, pp. 286¹.

Owing to the dynamic development of the contemporary scientific discipline of international relations, studies on their theories enjoy growing popularity. It is also the case in Poland. Despite the fact that domestic scholars specializing in international relations have not brought many original theoretical concepts to the field, systematic attempts to interpret international phenomena can be observed. In numerous cases, they are based on more or less popular views of American researchers, which constitutes a considerable flaw for some scholars. In 2010, the relatively modest, albeit constantly expanded achievements in this field on the Polish publishing markets were complemented with Anna Wojciuk's book entitled: "Dylemat potęgi. Praktyczna teoria stosunków międzynarodowych" ("Dilemma of power. A practical theory of international relations"). It is the first Polish publication which made an attempt at a holistic presentation of such notions as power, force and authority. The author analyses their importance through the prism of selected concepts of international relations – which are often erroneously called theories (it is a mental shortcut repeated in nu-

¹ *Dilemma of power. Practical theory of international relations*, Warsaw University Publishing House.

merous publications devoted to theoretical issues). The book is an up-to-date monograph using the state-of-the-art world literature on the issue of power in international relations. It is a publication discussing views on the strengths of representatives of schools which are considered to be the most important in the field of international relations and, which is also important, polemics between them. This book constitutes a specific summary of the domestic achievements in this area and opens the way to further theoretical research. The original attempt at ordering the existing knowledge on the subject undertaken by Anna Wojciuk deserves special attention.

Polish scholarly achievements in this respect, are not the greatest, however, they are certainly worth noting. Roman Kuźniar's book entitled "Polityka i siła. Studia strategiczne – zarys problematyki" ("Politics and strength. Strategic studies – outline of issues")² is in all certainty one of the most important publications of Polish authors bringing up the issues of strength and power in international relations. Strength is presented here primarily as the basic tool of the strategy undertaken by the state. Leszek Moczulski's publications³, who presents an analysis of the notion of power from the point of view of the geopolitical school, are also worth mentioning Józef Kukułka's⁴ and Ryszard Zięba's⁵ books, who represent the view that an increase in strength may be considered one of the most important objectives of a state's foreign policy, are also important works from this field. Also Edward Haliżak⁶ and Dariusz Kondrakiewicz⁷ contributed significantly to the discussion and research on one of the most frequently discussed principles in international relations, i.e. the balance of power. The achievements of Janusz Symonides⁸ cannot be omitted here, particularly considering his analyses of legal limitations of the use of military force in international relations. Also, in-depth studies in the research of the long cycle theory conducted by Teresa Łoś-Nowak⁹, Mirosław Su?łek¹⁰ and an analysis of issues connected with system supercycles performed by Andrzej Gałganek¹¹.

Polish experience in the research of the issue of power shows that this subject has been undertaken quite readily. Especially after system changes, Polish researchers of international relations became interested in this interesting subject. There are at least two for this. The first of them is incomparably greater freedom of conducting theoretical research and, which is not without importance, much easier access to foreign publications presenting current views on international relations. However, there were studies devoted to quite detailed issu-

² R. Kuźniar, *Polityka i siła. Studia strategiczne – zarys problematyki*, Warszawa 2005.

³ L. Moczulski, *Geopolityka. Potęga w czasie i przestrzeni*, Warszawa 2010.

⁴ J. Kukułka, *Międzynarodowe stosunki polityczne*, Warszawa 1982.

⁵ *Wstęp do teorii polityki zagranicznej*, (ed.) R. Zięba, Toruń 2004.

⁶ E. Haliżak, *Struktura układu sił międzynarodowych a aktywność zewnętrzna państw*, w: *Państwo we współczesnych stosunkach międzynarodowych*, (eds.) E. Haliżak, I. Prokopiuk-Rysińska, Warszawa 1995, pp. 87–97.

⁷ D. Kondrakiewicz, *Systemy równowagi sił w stosunkach międzynarodowych*, Lublin 1999.

⁸ J. Symonides, *Sila jako narzędzie polityki zagranicznej*, in: *Co zakłóca współzycie międzynarodowe*, (ed.) L. Pastusiak, Warszawa 1984, pp. 131–150.

⁹ T. Łoś-Nowak, *Stosunki międzynarodowe. Teorie – systemy – uczestnicy*, Wrocław 2000.

¹⁰ M. Sułek, *Paradygmat cyklu siły Charles'a F. Dorana a pozimnowojenny ład międzynarodowy*, in: *Porządek międzynarodowy u progu XXI wieku: wizje – koncepcje – paradygmaty*, (ed.) R. Kuźniar, Warszawa 2005, pp. 572–588.

¹¹ A. Gałganek, *Zmiany w globalnym systemie międzynarodowym. Supercykle i wojna hegemoniczna*, Poznań 1992.

es, not fully or frequently reproductive. The lack of a holistic analytical presentation of the problem was quite pressing, especially one that would include the latest views held in the world in this area. This made Anna Wojciuk's book all the more important. It filled the gap in Polish scholarly achievements in the area of research on the notions of strength and power in international relations.

The analysis of the issue of power was conducted by the author by presenting views of the leading representatives of the individual schools of international relations¹². This is how she divided her book. Single chapters pertain to specific theoretical approaches: realistic, neoliberal, Marxist, post-modern and constructivist. The last, sixth part of the book has a slightly different character, as it is a case study focusing on France. The author analyses the French discussion on foreign policy at the time of Nicolas Sarkozy's presidency. Two documents constitute the basic sources: "The White Book", pertaining to France's defence policy and Hubert Védrine's "France in an age of globalization", prepared specially on the President's request. The analysis was preceded by a description of the French theory of international relations with a special emphasis on the notion of power. In the case study, the author distinctly showed the dominance of classical trends: realistic and neoliberal and the triumph of their concept of power.

However, Anna Wojciuk starts her considerations by discussing two approaches using classical logics of scholarly thinking, i.e. realism and neoliberalism. These are schools virtually wholly derived from the American tradition, despite the fact that also the scholarly contribution of French researchers and, to a lesser extent, Russian ones can be observed. Statistics show that the largest number of publications in both of these paradigms are created in the United States. Presentation of the reasons for this status quo would require a separate discussion.

The political realism is regarded as one of the most important paradigms in international relations science, despite the significantly decreasing numbers of proponents, still is a view researchers are preoccupied with. Especially because it emphasises the separateness of international relations as a scholarly discipline to which specific principles of research of defined reality apply. Also, it uses the achievements of other disciplines quite reluctantly. At times when research on international relations was primarily dominated by studies on the issues of security, it did not actually have a theoretical competitor. There were also various interpretations and classifications. Due to the views collected within one paradigm, often contradictory to each other, some scholars specializing in international relations think that such views should not be reduced to the common denominator or that the distinction between classical, structural or neoclassical realism should not be used. Anna Wojciuk is of a different opinion. She assumes that realism is a tradition which, nevertheless, more joins rather than divides similar view, at least in the category of basic ideas. Hence the disputes which has been taking place in the realistic circles on a continuous basis concern the same reality after all. Power, as the author claims, is a key notion in the realistic approach. It also translates into the number of works on this subject published by realistic researchers. The author thinks that this is a notion that divides realists to a large extent. Unfortunately, the chances to reach an agreement are scant, as not a single aspect can be found in the interpreta-

¹² Unfortunately, the book does not contained any deeper reflection on the definition of a scholarly theory. Hence, part of the existing views on and concepts of international reality are called a scholarly theory by the Author, which certainly is a mental shortcut.

tion of the notion of power on which the environment would agree. The basic conflicts, in the author's opinion, concerned mostly theoretical concepts interpreting the history of international relations and foreign policy strategies. A large number of disputes within the paradigm are abstract, however, which may be surprising, also their practical side is revealed here. "Following realists' investigations is a continuous up and down movement on the abstraction ladder, during which the imprecision of analytical instruments is revealed on the one hand and the necessity to use these imperfect tools on the other".¹³

The neoliberal approach to the issue of power is, as distinguished from the realistic one, more eclectic. First of all, its approach to disciplines whose scope of research overlaps with international relations is different than that of realism. Considerable openness to influences from political science, economics and, above all, sociology. Neoliberalism was created by Robert O. Keohane and Joseph S. Nye, who came from the realistic tradition. They made an attempt at a thorough critique of realism, which was quite risky at the beginning of 1970, contributing a fresh non-state-centric look to international relations. They decided that the changing international reality requires more than just one realistic model describing it. According to Joseph S. Nye, these views are not mutually exclusive, however. The main connecting factor involves, first of all, neo-positivism scientific standards followed by researchers from both traditions. The fact that neo-liberals increase their spectrum of interest to include non-state participants of international relations, such as entities, social groups and businesses is a distinguishing element. Anna Wojciuk also emphasizes the significant role played by the neoliberal view in the interpretation of the notion of power. Most importantly, according to the author, it posed important questions and significantly complemented the realistic views. Therefore, the view contradicting the thesis about the changeability of power resources is of key importance here. Moreover, the representatives of this trend propagated the position that, similarly to states, also non-state participants are "holders" of power. However, the author considers the permanent introduction of the notion of *soft power* to the discussion of power as it: "Despite the fact that it is not devoid of methodological weaknesses, has the potential of shaping American leadership in international relations".¹⁴ This thesis, despite being very popular, may encounter resistance among international relations researchers.

The three following chapters of Anna Wojciuk's book are devoted to traditions characterized by an approach to international reality which is very different from realism and neoliberalism and, consequently, to the notions of strength and power. Marxism, where the notion of power is of key importance, is the first of them. In the opinion of trend representatives, the world is periodically dominated by hegemonic states holding indisputable economic and military resources. The emphasis on economic factors in international relations is characteristic of Marxism. It means that economic relations significantly determine social relations. Thus, international relations do not focus only on relations between individual states but rather between social organizations at various levels. In this way, the interpretation of the safety category changes. It is understood as the safety of specific social groups. The author distinguishes three basic plots characteristic of the Marxist approach to international relations. First of all, Marxism considers the analysis of relations between the power

¹³ A. Wojciuk, *Dylemat potęgi. Praktyczna teoria stosunków międzynarodowych*, Warszawa 2010, p. 76.

¹⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 122.

of states and societies and the power of extra-state participants. Therefore, the power of a state does not depend only on the state itself, but, above all, on international conditions. The relationship between the sources of power, especially the classical source, i.e. the military force and the economic, political and cultural power is another significant issue. Favouring the economic power can be primarily seen, which is a distinctive feature of the Marxist approach. And, finally, the analysis of the power operation, i.e. its formation and fall, is a significant element of this trend.

A chapter devoted to the post-modern approach to the issue of power is one of the most interesting parts of the book. This is Anna Wojciuk's wholly original analysis. This part of the book shows that the author set herself very ambitious goals, which she fulfilled with considerable consistency. From the point of view of the Polish reader, the presentation of the views of international relations theoreticians which are almost completely unknown in Poland is undoubtedly valuable. I think that this chapter may evoke the greatest response on the part of the domestic environment of international relations researchers and constitute an inspiration for broader discussion. The post-modern perspective in international relations is a completely new approach to the international reality on nearly all planes. Changes also apply to the methodological framework of the discipline, which, as a result, meant a thorough critique of positivism. The author presents the diversity of the approaches of the representatives of this trend to the notion of power. Above all, she pays particular attention to its reinterpretation. The post-modern understanding of power does not have anything to do with the classical international power, interpreted as a process of forcing entities to take actions they do not want to take. This also means a change in the understanding of the notion of war which are made at present "against notions or against sets of practices".¹⁵ When describing the post-modern approach, Anna Wojciuk emphasizes that notional categories offered by this trend are not and may not be a sufficient tool to understand specific international reality. Due to the non-scientific character of the approach, considerable deficiencies in the possibility of its practical application in research on international relations can be observed. However, this approach enjoys considerable popularity and it is gaining new proponents on a regular basis. For numerous researchers, who mostly come from the classical trend, it has a negative influence on the condition of the discipline.

An analysis of views on power of constructivism representatives closes Anna Wojciuk's theoretical considerations. And despite being a new approach in international relations, constructivism enjoys growing popularity among researchers. However, there are many critics as proponents of this view. As the author admits, she did not plan on including a description of this trend in the book under review. She only decided to include it in the publication after being persuaded to so by Jacek Czapotowicz. According to the author, however, constructivism, despite being very revealing in itself, is not creative enough in the context of the notion of power: "it builds an artificial compromise between various traditions of power and this compromise cracks quickly already at the level of internal disputes between various trends of constructivism itself".¹⁶ She notices two basic threads in the interpretation of this notion. Historical research showing a change in the power "formation" are the first of these. The other one shows not only the material side of power but also its connection with ideas,

¹⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 195.

¹⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 232.

culture and knowledge. Undoubtedly, the notion of power is not of key importance for constructivists. It is more a consequence of identity and socialization of entities in the international system.

In the evaluation of Anna Wojciuk's book, it needs to be emphasised again that it is a pioneer attempt to show views on strength and power in theories of international relations. The objectives set by the author were largely fulfilled. Above all, the meticulous analysis of the latest world literature on the theory of international relations and presentation of views of researchers who are less known and popular in Poland deserve particular attention. It is a pity that so much attention in numerous Polish publications was devoted to American concepts, which are not always free from political influences. The author's research techniques and the excellent language are certainly worth noting. The issues brought up in the book are described in a way that is clear and understandable not only for people dealing with international relations. This publication can also be used as a teaching aid in classes devoted to the theory of international relations.

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***The Arab Spring*, ed. Beata Przybylska-Maszner, Wydawnictwo Naukowe WNPiD UAM, Poznań 2011, ss. 295.**

Year 2011 brought unexpected and profound changes in the political outlook of North Africa and Middle East. A wave of social protests, riots and (in some instances) violent confrontations created a situation of existential threat for the region's authoritarian regimes. The Arab world had been considered largely immune to rapid political change. Many leaders in the region ruled their states for decades (this being true for both monarchs and nominally republican leaders like Hosni Mubarak, Ali Abdullah Saleh or Muammar Gaddafi) successfully withstanding many challenges to their authority. However, at the beginning of 2011 self-immolation of a Tunisian street vendor ignited an unprecedented shift in social attitudes and political activism across the Arab world. More than year and a half later political landscape of the region is profoundly altered. Tunisia and Egypt are in the middle of a political transformation leading (hopefully) to the establishment of democracy. Rulers of Morocco and Jordan have initiated reforms in order to satisfy the expectations of their populations. At the same time regimes in Algeria and Bahrain have been able to suppress social "disturbances" and maintain the status quo (for the time being). At the other pole of this process we can see Libya and Syria, where popular dissatisfaction, met with hostility of the governments, led to civil wars. Yemen experienced a mixed fate of both violent conflict and (tentative) political compromise. All those developments, known under the name of "Arab Spring" (with analogy to the Spring of Nations in 1848 and Autumn of Nations in 1989) have become a subject of rich political, media and academic commentary, as well as analyses.

The Arab Spring had become the subject of a research programme initiated at the Faculty of Political Science and Journalism, Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań. In this framework researchers from several Polish academic institutions (Adam Mickiewicz University, Koszalin University of Technology, Poznań University of Economics, Academia Ignatianum in Cracow, University of Warsaw, Pomeranian Academy in Słupsk, Łódź

International Studies Academy, Institute for Western Affairs in Poznań and Higher School of Security in Poznań) conducted an in-depth analyses of events taking place in North Africa and Middle East in year 2011. The book entitled "The Arab Spring", edited by the project's coordinator Beata Przybylska-Maszner, provides the summary of their findings. The goals of the project, as stated in the introduction, were threefold: 1) "to describe and analyse the determinants of the processes which we could observe as part of the Arab Spring [...]"; 2) "to analyse and compare the events taking place in individual countries in the region and changes in the political, economic and social sphere"; 3) "to define and analyse the influence of selected external actors on the course of the Arab Spring, and to analyse the impact of the media".

The structure of the book reflects these main avenues of the research programme. First part deals with the "Determinants of the Arab Spring". Authors of these section's chapters describe and analyse the most important factors shaping the events in North Africa and Middle East. Social and economic problems of the Arab states received considerable attention, as major drivers of the discontent. Chapter authored by Marek Rewizorski provides a broad overview of the factors shaping the development (or lack of thereof) of the Arab economies and creating the social context in which the discontent had risen. Next chapter (by Ida Musiałkowska) is a detailed account of the current economic ties between the European Union and the states of the Mediterranean Basin, showing the extent of the economic interdependency between the regions. Mirosław Łakomy describes the role of "new media" (especially internet social networking tolls) in the events of the Arab Spring. This aspect of political activism has received considerable attention in the West and the author's findings support the view that they had indeed played a considerable role in the process of political change. Political transformations in the Arab world arouse anxiety in the West concerning the role of Islamic extremism and potential implications for terrorist activity. Two chapters of the reviewed book deal with those topics. Artur Wejkszner present jihadi views on democracy, while Aleksandra Zięba analyses the sources of terrorism in the Arab world. First part of the monograph is closed with chapter by Paweł Nieczuja-Ostrowski concerning the political ideas behind the protest movement and comparisons with East European experience of 1989.

Second part of the book describes the reactions of key external players to the changes in the region. Due to the regions considerable geopolitical significance, it is the object of interest for many important actors of international politics. Thus, the reactions of key outside powers are important factors shaping the dynamic of events in the Arab world. This part of the monograph starts with a chapter by Radosław Fiedler about the policies of Bush and Obama administrations towards democratization in the Middle East. In next chapter Wojciech Nowiak presents the Israeli perspective on the Arab Spring which is considerably more pessimistic than prevailing American and European views. In two subsequent chapters, Beata Przybylska-Maszner and Jarosław Jańczak analyse the EU response to the upheaval, from the perspective of community decision-making and Polish presidency respectively. Łukasz Donaj describes the position of the Russian Federation, which proved to be influential to the development of Libyan and Syrian crises. Swietłana Sydun presents Russian and Ukrainian views on the subject (curiously, in Russian). Two further chapters, authored by Aleksandra Kruk and Magdalena Musiał-Karg summarise the reactions of two European states – Germany and Switzerland respectively. Second part of the book closes with Bartosz Hordecki's chapter concerning the media portrayal of Muammar Gaddafi and especially his death.

The final section of the monographs provides case studies of chosen states in which the Arab Spring has played out. It opens with a chapter by Marta Zobeniak which contains an overview of political situation in Algeria. It is followed by Witold Ostant's text about the circumstances of political transformation in Egypt. Subsequent chapter authored by Piotr Kwiatkiewicz provides interesting analysis of Arab Spring's demographic background with reference to situation in Egypt. Magdalena Lorenc summarizes the course of the Libyan civil war, while Przemysław Osiewicz analyses the complicated situation in Syria. The section concludes with two entries concerning the least known (at least in Poland) cases of upheaval in the Middle East. Jacek Raubo provides detailed overview of situation in Yemen (drawing a comparison with the sad fate of Somalia), while Marta Zobeniak provides overview of situation in Bahrain and its historic roots.

The book under review has several important strengths. First of all, it is an answer to current events, which arouse considerable political, academic and in fact popular interest. Second, it presents a comprehensive approach to the subject. This is reflected in the very structure of the book, taking account of causes and dynamic of the process, its manifestations in different states, as well as reactions of key outside actors. Research benefits from the interdisciplinary nature of the research team. Core political science and international relations analyses is accompanied by the economics, media analyses and social psychology perspectives. It undeniably enriches the understanding of the processes in question. Thirdly, the book can be a useful compendium on the key aspects of the Arab Spring. The authors have taken account of the great majority of key aspects and cases of the analysed process. It can also be argued that this work suffers from two drawbacks. Although the book offers a comprehensive view of the Arab Spring it is not fully complete. The section concerning the causes and dynamics of the Arab Spring could arguably benefit from a deeper analysis of Arab states' political systems, which (diverse as they are) share some common features important for the understanding of political discontent. In the section concerning reactions of key outside players Turkey's omission is visible. This state has undoubtedly played an important role in the events of 2011 (for example as a "role model" for Muslim democracy or in the case of Syria). At the same time Switzerland has been included, while this state can hardly be classified as a "key" player in the region. Finally, some chapters are regarded as offering more of a recollection of key events than their in-depth background and analysis. However, in general "The Arab Spring" is a useful source of knowledge and reflection on one of the key issues in contemporary international relations. It can serve as a starting point for further studies of this subject.

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J. Michalak, *International Security Threats in the Biological Realm*, Scientific Publishers Press Ltd, Łódź 2005, pp. 128.

According to a traditional definition, security is freedom from threats posing a risk to the survival of the state. The broad definition of security threats in turn includes any action or sequence of events that threaten citizens' quality of life in a short period of time or restrict the scope for political choices made by the institutions of the state. Therefore, among others,

it is important to protect political order and the freedom to choose the path of development of society and the state¹. Each state considers the desire to safeguard its security and sovereignty to be the highest good. Until recently, the factor influencing the development of security has been above all military force. Today, recourse to military power cannot go unpunished, because even states with the latest weapons technology cannot use it freely without considering its consequences, which is the risk of retaliation. A number of various factors, in addition to the military factor, should be taken into account: economic, technological, financial, ecological, or modern means of information.² States taking into account these factors shape their security policies, understood as part of the overall government policy regarding projects related to the creation and use of defence capabilities in order to prevent and combat all kinds of threats.³ The condition of any state's security is subject to change proportional to change in the international environment.⁴ The condition and the total security of any and all countries-members of the international community-create the basis for international security. Its foundation is a set of conditions, standards, principles, codes of conduct, and international mechanisms to ensure more or less a sense of unthreatened existence, survival, and freedom of the development of states.⁵

J. Michalak's monograph presents a factor whose impact on international security continues to grow: biological one. The major part of the work includes: an introduction, three chapters, and a conclusion.

Chapter one, *Great Epidemics in Human History*, is devoted to four chosen epidemics that affected (and affect) man: plague, smallpox, malaria, and influenza. This is not only a terse description of the diseases, but also consideration of their impact on international security. As Michalak rightly argues, because of their frequency of occurrence and serious demographic, social, and cultural effects, the international community must be prepared for the diseases, considered in public opinion to be "under control", to be dangerous again.

Part two, *Hazards of the Modern World*, deals mainly with two problems: HIV/AIDS and biological warfare. The author presents data on the development of HIV/AIDS in various regions of the world and repeats (though for some, it is still a novelty) what the most effective ways to combat the epidemic are: the development and strengthening of programmes, policies, and strategies to prevent new infections in all countries (p. 57). No. 1 threat of the modern world seems to be international terrorism, which reaches for newer and newer instruments. One of them may as well be a biological weapon, especially that it is relatively cheap and extremely effective (p. 60).

In the last chapter, *Improved Nature-a Hope or a Threat*, the author tries to consider what consequences genetic engineering (including modification of plants and animals as well as human cloning and "improvement") may have. From a methodological point of

¹ See: J. Czaputowicz, *System czy nieład? Bezpieczeństwo europejskie u progu XXI wieku*, Warszawa 1998, p. 17.

² Cz. Mojsiewicz, *Czynniki wpływające na poczucie bezpieczeństwa i suwerenności państw*, in: *Międzynarodowe stosunki polityczne*, (eds.) W. Malendowski, Cz. Mojsiewicz, Poznań 1996, p. 37.

³ *Słownik terminów z zakresu bezpieczeństwa narodowego*, Akademia Obrony Narodowej, Warszawa 1996, p. 71.

⁴ W. Malendowski, *Polityka bezpieczeństwa RP. Uwarunkowania – strategia – kierunki działania*, Poznań 1998, p. 75.

view, she does so in a completely correct way, citing various, often controversial, opinions in very intense and often simply emotional debate over eugenics.

The monograph's appendices include: a thorough and well-structured *Bibliography* (though it seems that it might have been more appropriate to divide *Magazines* into *Scientific Journals* and *Opinion Journalism*), three appendices (*Universal Declaration on the Human Genome and Human Rights of 1997*, *Timeline of Cloning History*, and *Voices of Society*) and an outline in English, *Summary*. Particularly noteworthy is Appendix 3 (p. 126), where, despite its very condensed nature, Michalak, having presented views on genetic engineering, makes an objective and balanced choice.

The only shortcoming of the work—from a technical point of view—is an inconsistency in the footnotes: when including words from a book for the second time, the author uses “*ibid.*” on some occasions and “*op. cit.*” on others, which is incomprehensible (see p. 27).

The work was written based on the available literature on the subject by outstanding Polish and foreign authors (p. 8). Such a statement may raise the question of who these outstanding authors are and who just authors.

Michalak says in *Conclusion* that the history of mankind is in some sense a history of epidemics and the fight against viruses, bacteria, and diseases caused by them (p. 107). Examples in support of this thesis are given even by events in recent years—bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE), foot-and-mouth disease, or avian influenza are not only diseases that can become individual tragedies but also phenomena that can affect the relative economic and political stability of the current international system.

The publication under review definitely deserves a positive assessment and should be propagated among researchers on the phenomenon of international security, in particular biological threats. It would also be sensible to hope that the author will explore the issues addressed in the book (such as the benefits and risks of scientific and technical progress in the field of genetic engineering) in her further research.

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