

Patryk JĘDROWIAK

University of Wrocław

<https://orcid.org.0000-0003-3846-9499>

DOI : 10.14746/ps.2018.1.30

BRITISH SCIENTIFIC JOURNALS IN THE AREA OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS – 2017 REVIEW

The paper constitutes a review of articles published in 2017 on the pages of British academic journals dealing with international relations. The author has selected texts from issues of: “European Political Science Review,” “The British Journal of Politics and International Relations,” “Politics,” “Cambridge Review of International Relations” and “Political Studies.” The presented articles have been analyzed in the context of thematic groups.

The articles published in 2017 in British journals in the area of international relations have been focused mainly on the Brexit, British elections and the issue of trust in politics. As in 2016, the topic of the potential Brexit was clearly ignored in the researcher’s deliberations; in 2017, plenty of the articles directly refer to the referendum issue. In fact, 2017 was a year of articles focused around the British, based on deliberation about the place of UK in the political system. Also, many of the articles have been devoted to the widely understood “elections issue.” As 2017 was a year of early election, papers have treated about the former ones or the elections issues in other countries.

The rest of the articles have been very diverse. In the recent years, the issues of the Middle East countries, China policy or terrorism were noticeable. These are three repeating groups of articles that every year attract attention and some of them have been mentioned in the review below.

In the beginning, it is needed to start with the Brexit issue and the article that treats about it. The authors of the paper notice that “the leave” majority of English voters was decisive in determining the UK referendum result. In fact, about 84% of UK’s population are people living in England. Therefore, they claim that Brexit was made in England (Henderson, Jeffery, Wincott, Wyn Jones, 2017: 637). In the article, they dispute with the conventional mindset that animates most studies of “British politics” that has shaped research of the public opinion in the United Kingdom. They examine distinctive Eurosceptic views and their connections to English national identity just before the referendum. What may be interesting are the results of research on the National identities and EU membership in England in 2012, 2014 and 2016. In reference to them, already in 2012 in the group of people that identify themselves as a “English not British,” over 70% respondents wanted to leave the EU. In the group that identify themselves as a “more English than British” also almost 60% of people expressed the desire to leave the EU. On the other hand, when the respondents perceived themselves as “more British than English” or “British not English,” they were more likely to stay in the EU (the “Leave” answer in those groups was chosen in 35% and 37%) (Hend-

erson, Jeffery, Wincott, Wyn Jones, 2017: 638). When we compare these results to the data from 2016, we can notice that the desire to leave the EU has increased in the respondents who identified themselves as “English not British (85%) and “more English than British” (67%). On the other hand, the results on the side of another perception about Britishness remained similar and, in this groups, still about 33% and 37% wanted to leave the EU (Henderson, Jeffery, Wincott, Wyn Jones, 2017: 640). Due to this, the authors claims that even if the Brexit had not been made only by the English people, Englishness would play a significant role in it.

For people curious in Brexit analysis, an article written by Daniel Wincott about the Brexit dilemmas should also be interesting. We can find their reflections about the most favorable way of a leaving the EU. The author presents his considerations on the choice between regaining sovereignty mostly by reinforced control of the immigration problem and access to the EU common market which is crucial for the British economy (Wincott, 2017: 689–690). These are the doubts that both “Remainers” and “Brexiters” face. For those who would prefer soft Brexit, the problem completing the process of leaving the EU in such way that would not be harmful on economic grounds and at the same time would not have a detrimental impact on the United Kingdom’s democracy and accountability (Wincott, 2017: 693). Dilemmas of the so-called Brexiters are quite similar. The author believes that for the group of people who want to leave the EU, the most important is to regain the power to restrict the immigration policy. On the other hand, they know the polls that for the majority of the UK population, the immigration policy is a crucial problem (Wincott, 2017: 691–692).

On the other hand, the problem of Brexit is not only a case of immigration and economy. Implications for the foreign policy of the UK towards the UN may be significant which Megan Dee and Karen Smith try to prove in their article. For example, the authors claim that UK has many times benefited from being part of the EU, for example in the United Nations Human Rights Council (HRC). They show that UK activity in the HRC has been done mostly through the EU. The reason, due to the authors, is that the EU is a really important actor in the HCR and thanks to that, it had the chance to influence a wider range of countries (Dee, Smith, 2017: 531–534). Even though the UK is a nuclear power, the authors claim that its nuclear diplomacy on UN forum may suffer because of Brexit. They believe that the EU was a crucial component of UK’s strategy in this policy and bolstered its influences on the nuclear debates forum (Dee, Smith, 2017: 534–537).

Although the British have decided to leave the European Union, the issues of this organization were in the field of interest for many scholars. An article published in the *European Political Science Review* about European identity discusses this with an interesting outlook. In the beginning, the authors explain that there are two approaches to European identity. The first is identity built on trust between the citizens of Europe. This helps everyone to feel as a community of citizens within the EU. The second approach is based on institutional trust. Higher trust to European institutions creates more solid common identity (Hooghe, Verhaegen, 2017: 162–163). In their analysis which was based on the results of a survey¹ they points out that trust between

¹ The Survey was carried out in 16 Europeans countries: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Denmark, Estonia, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain and the United Kingdom.

citizens of the European countries has a positive influence on European identity. On the other hand, trust for institutions of the EU has a much bigger impact in the process of building identity that they write of. So, the conclusion is a statement that common trust within European societies is not enough to build European identity in citizens (Hooghe, Verhaegen, 2017: 173–175).

The national elections in UK were equally interesting for scholars in the recent years' publications. As 2017 was a year of early election, the paper presents studies about former ones. An article about research of the Conservative Party members who voted for radical right-wing United Kingdom and Independence Party (UKIP) in 2015 national elections has an interesting outlook. About 30% of Conservative Party members declared that they would consider voting for UKIP in the nearest elections. Even though the popularity of this party eventually grew, only 5% of them actually did that (Bale, Poletti, Webb, 2017: 435). However, Tim Bale, Monica Poletti and Paul Webb decided to take a look at this group. They compared the 30% group mentioned earlier between those who finally voted for the Conservative Party and UKIP. Radically different was the response about supporting David Cameron. The UKIP electorate from Conservative party members agreed in only 50% that he was doing well as Prime Minister. Also, this group stood firm against the EU. Over 90% of them wanted to leave it and over 65% wanted to leave the EU even after re-negotiation of common rights and obligations. There was also a quite big difference (about 20%) in the opinion about gay marriage legislation. However, what was crucial, was probably the feeling of lack of respect for members from party leaders. Almost 90% of members who voted for UKIP agreed with that statement (Bale, Poletti, Webb, 2017: 437). Nevertheless, people from the described group are still members of the Conservative Party and because of that, the authors suggested the party leaders to look closely at the results of these studies (Bale, Poletti, Webb, 2017: 440).

An interesting perspective is also presented by an article about decreasing voting turnout and correlation with educational inequalities. There are two main pillars. First of them is examining if lower turnout has any connection to unequal participation (Dassonneville, Hooghe, 2017: 192). Their research is based on data from six developed countries: Denmark, Germany, Norway, the Netherlands, Sweden and the United States. What they noticed is that in four countries where decrease of turnout was significant, there grew the impact of educational attainment. The increase of this impact can be observed in Germany, the Netherlands, Norway and the United States. On the other hand, there is not such a significant change in the influence on turnout because of the educational attainment in Denmark and Sweden. In this case, it is unsurprising, because the decline in voting turnout has been marginal (Dassonneville, Hooghe, 2017: 193–194).

On the other hand, also, Gerry Stoker and Colin Hay's article correlates with the problem of negativity towards politics in the United Kingdom. They concentrate on stealth and so-called "sunshine attitudes" towards politics. They claim that the populist character of negativity can be easily predicted by data based on age, newspaper readership or doubts over governing practices (Stoker, Hay, 2017: 12–14). However, their results of research show that for people who represent populist negativity, character is more important to improve the functioning of representative politics rather than any new offer of more deliberative or participating policy (Stoker, Hay, 2017: 20–21).

With regard to research on turnout and attitude towards politics, the readers might also be interested in an article dedicated to the motivation of the youth to participate in national voting. In the article “Parental Example as a Motivation for Turnout among Youths,” the authors tried to verify the results of Bhatti and Hansen’s studies which showed that voters’ turnout would be higher among youths if they lived with their parents (Kudranc, Lyons, 2017: 44–45). The authors carried out their research in the Czech Republic among students between the age of 17 to 19. However, what is important is that they have examined the attitudes towards voting and not actual turnout. As results have shown, in the Czech case study there is a stronger link between parental example attitudes towards turnout rather whether someone lives with or without his parents (Kudranc, Lyons, 2017: 54–56).

Last year, there have been plenty of articles connected to European Union issues. One of them treated about relations of the EU with the contested states, in a case study of Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC) and Palestine. The authors highlighted that their aim was to fill the gap regarding the relation between engagement and influence of the EU and states without international recognition (Bouris, Kyris, 2017: 756). As they have noticed, the key problem of successful engagement is inability to talk with the authorities in these countries and the problem with lack of control over the territories that are under the surveillance of the parent/reference state. On the other hand, Bouris and Kyris emphasized that a chance for the EU to strengthen ties with these states was especially observed in help in the state-building process, development policy and regional integration talks (Bouris, Kyris, 2017: 766–768).

Another interesting article is dedicated to international migrants’ trust in political institutions. The authors try to verify two hypotheses. The first of them reads that confidence will be influenced by trust in political institutions formed during childhood in the country of origin. The second one, that the hosting countries sometimes have different groups of norms and values and because of that, the process of re-socialization may occur (Voicu, Tufis, 2017: 355). In the article, they present multilevel models which show that the context of culture and confidence to political institutions in the hosting country is crucial. When a migrant lives in a country where a norm is trust towards institutions, then he is more likely to accept this norm and adopt it (Voicu, Tufis, 2017: 363). Of course, authors also noticed that political culture in the society of origin is also important. Everything depends on the amount of years of living in both countries, but the effect for the country of origin is weaker. An exception might be the situation when a migrant living in a host country has a strong relation with the culture of origin. This may be the case for close immigrant communities, where the re-socialization process may not be flawless (Voicu, Tufis, 2017: 368).

In 2017, there were also some interesting publications about the Middle East policy. Issues of this region always appear in a British journals about international relations. This time, an article about the perception of Afghanistan gives an interesting outlook. Prepared by Nivi Manchanda from The London School of Economics and Political Science, the paper presented what led the public opinion to generate the discourse of Afghanistan as a “failure state.” It claims that colonial spatializations which have

a strong legacy that shape our experience are mainly responsible (Manchanda, 2017: 387–390). The author understood spatializations mainly as a history of imperial expedience. In the author’s opinion, colonial power could intervene, bomb the country, try to re-build it and leave without any responsibility. The reason was treating the state as a “buffer country,” “theatre of war,” “fragile state” or “failed state” (Manchanda, 2017: 397).

Another group of articles that might be interesting for some readers regarded the weakness of democracy. For international relations scholars, an article about “militant democracy” could be of interest. In fact, the authors prepared a critique of this concept. In their paper, they tried to define it by turning back to Karl Loewenstein and Carl Schmitt theories and also more recent scholars such as Alexander Kirshner and his “A Theory of Militant Democracy” book (Accetti, Zuckerman, 2017: 185–188). They emphasized one main problem with the concept of “militant democracy.” They believe that the theory of this term cannot guarantee that exclusion of public activity will affect only the actors that are a threat to democracy. It is because even by definition, authoritarian power cannot be controlled by a higher norm. In the article, the reader can find examples given by the author both from the beginning of XX century and recent ones (Accetti, Zuckerman, 2017: 190–193).

In 2017, *Cambridge Review of International Affairs* presented an article of Tobias Ide about how the issue of terrorism is presented in textbooks. The author compares the results of his study with four countries: the US, Germany, Kenya and India. He analyzed textbooks that had been published from 2003 to 2014. The start year was chosen so that 9/11 attacks could be included (Ide, 2017: 48–49). First of all, a very interesting fact is that in the US and Germany, only half of the textbooks refer to terrorism (57% – the US, 50% – Germany). The results in India (31%) and Kenya (13%) are even worse. What is more, examples presented in them are constructed from a national point of view. Therefore, the main target country for terrorism in American textbooks are the US and one in Kenya and India. Only in German textbooks, the main target country is unspecified (but also the US is in 36% presented as the target). On the other hand, the main terrorist incident mentioned in the books in the US, Germany and India are 9/11 attacks. What is interesting, the World Trade Centre attacks have not been mentioned even once in Kenya textbooks. This is because the main event described in them is the 1998 US Embassy bombing in Kenya. Finally, what may be very interesting for the readers is that in most the textbooks, reasons for terrorism are unspecified (Ide, 2017: 50–51). Furthermore, it was mentioned that the results show a link between national discourses on terrorism and are mainly based on the national point of view on this issue.

Finally, the last proposed article was published by Christoph Steinhard and discussed strategic elite communication in China. The author wondered how authoritarian states such as China respond and try to deal with protests in this country. In the article, we can find an overall analysis of strategic elite communication due to popular mobilizations in 1990–2010 (Steinhard, 2017: 546–549). As Steinhard noticed, the political elite in China has been responding to popular protests since 1990s with increasing, but not unconditional sympathy. He explains that the idea was to safeguard one-party rule by protecting the popular image of the leaders in China (Steinhard, 2017: 550–553).

On the other hand, as he presents, this kind of strategy has probably contributed to proliferation of protests. In fact, as the author claims, although the strategy has changed since 1990s to the favor of the people, the authorities have refused to guarantee rights to the protesters (Steinhard, 2017: 554–555).

In summary, it is worth mentioning that the articles published in 2017 in British journals in the area of international relations have mainly focused on the Brexit and the widely understood election issue. Interesting is the fact, that the so-called British problems have been more visible in publications than they have been a year before. Even special issues of journals have been dedicated to those problems this year. On the other hand, issues related to China, Middle East countries and terrorism are still points of interest.

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ABSTRACT

The text constitutes a review of articles published in 2017 on the pages of British academic journals dealing with international relations. The author has selected texts from issues of: “European Political Science Review”, “The British Journal of Politics and International Relations”, “Politics”, “Cambridge Review of International Relations” and “Political Studies.” The presented articles have been analyzed in the context of thematic groups such as: Brexit, elections, trust in politics, Middle East issues and others.

Keywords: journals review, Brexit, United Kingdom, elections, Middle East, China

BRYTYJSKIE CZASOPISMA NAUKOWE Z OBSZARU STOSUNKÓW MIĘDZYNARODOWYCH – PRZEGLĄD 2017 ROKU

STRESZCZENIE

Tekst stanowi przegląd artykułów opublikowanych w 2017 roku na łamach brytyjskich czasopism naukowych odnoszących się do problematyki stosunków międzynarodowych. Autor wyselekcjonował teksty z następujących czasopism: „European Political Science Review”, „The British Journal of Politics and International Relations”, „Politics”, „Cambridge Review of International Relations” and „Political Studies.” Analiza tekstów została przedstawiona w ramach grup tematycznych takich jak: Brexit, wybory, zaufanie w polityce, kwestie bliskowschodnie oraz pozostałe tematy.

Słowa kluczowe: Brexit, Wielka Brytania, wybory, Bliski Wschód, Chiny, przegląd czasopism

