

A MULTIDIMENSIONAL ASPECTS OF GREAT POWER STATUS

Marek Mikołajczyk, The European dilemmas of Great Britain – from the Schuman Plan to Brexit

On 23 June 2016 the British in a referendum decided to leave the EU. The decision triggered an enormous wave of commentaries, a majority of which focused on the recently emergent problems of Great Britain and the EU. The author of the article argues that although those issues significantly influenced the referendum result the causes of the decision are more profound. First and foremost it should be emphasized that the British from the very beginning of the process of European integration treated it with reserve and for a long time had no intention of joining it and even tried to restrain it. When in 1973 Great Britain became a member of the European Communities it did not engage in the mainstream of the process of European integration and unlike France and the FR did not become its driving force. The British leaders either failed or did not want to convince British people of the benefits of membership in the European Communities. Successive British governments treated European affairs instrumentally, having the current political game in view. Moreover, European integration was an issue that affected deep internal divisions among the Tories and the Labourites. In consequence, the British society became increasingly convinced that European cooperation jeopardized rather than served their national interests. The policy of PM Cameron, who awkwardly tried to reconcile the interests of the opponents and supporters of EU membership eventually led to the victory of the former.

Tomasz Czapiewski, Reflections on the Scottish context of the end of the British Empire. Between internal and external colonialism

This article aims to analyze the relation between British imperialism and the Scottish question. In the first place, the role played by Scots as a nation in the creation of the empire is described, including different frameworks, i.e. internal colonialism. Secondly, the hypothesis of the indissoluble connection of institutions of the British Empire and the United Kingdom (UK) is verified. The collapse of the British Empire had to undermine the sense of the existence of the UK. In the opinion of the author of this article a significant relation between the two phenomena can be observed, although he stipulates that it had a non-obvious form, and the occurrence of the consequences was not a "historic necessity", but had been reinforced by a number of other reasons, of perhaps greater importance, as e.g. the failure of

the Thatcher government, the weakness of the unionist parties in Scotland and the social and economic transformations. The Empire was perhaps the most apparent symbol of the unity of the UK and a focus of the British loyalty. And most importantly - the Empire strengthened the sense of the Scottish identity, allowing to assign to it the attribute uniqueness and introducing it into a modern frame. It is worth mentioning that the causal description may not be the right perspective here, thinking in terms of the system would be more valuable - every relationship and every variable, which is commonly referred to as being an effect or a cause, in fact, is both: cause and effect, as the relations are never one-way.

Jadwiga Kiwerska, Evolution of the United States' leadership after the Cold War

The world leadership of the United States has recently undergone a significant evolution. At the end of the Cold War the USA was the only superpower, exerting immense influence on the resolution of global and regional problems. In the 1990s America continued to maintain its dominant role in the world. The dynamism of events at the onset of the 21st century, mistakes in American policy and a changing international environment markedly weakened the USA's capacity and readiness to tackle challenges and solve problems. America expected support and greater involvement on the part of its allies/partners in fulfilling its obligations on the international arena. Thus, the future of the American leadership remains an open question.

Paulina Matera, The implications of the nuclear agreement with Iran for U.S. policy in the Broader Middle East

The aim of the article is to demonstrate the effects of the signing on July 14, 2015 of the agreement on the restraint of the Iranian nuclear program – Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action – JCPOA). Supporters of the plan underline its real impact on preventing Teheran's entry into possession of nuclear weapons and the possibility of easing the Iranian-American relations. Opponents do not agree with these assertions, pointing to the fact that Iran would be able to obtain financial resources (after the abolition of economic sanctions) for the development of the nuclear program in the future and for expansion of its influence in the region. The conclusion of the agreement has resulted in anxiety of the American allies in the Broader Middle East (Israel and the countries who are members of the Gulf Cooperation Council). This prompted the United States to change its policy towards this region and began a debate on the adoption of a coherent strategy in the future.

Ewa Cieřlik, China's economic potential and its position in global economy

The article analyzes the level of China's development in the context of its impact on the world order. For this purpose the article presents a review of literature on the concepts and factors of the power of the state, shows the most important macroeconomic indicators describing the level of development in China, presents the Middle Kingdom's participation in global trade and capital and the level of competitiveness of China's economy. This analysis allows the identification of the impact of China on global economy.

Andrzej Szabaciuk, Population policy as a strategy for rebuilding the imperial position of the Russian Federation

The article aims to answer the question to what extent demographic and migrational determinants may influence the geopolitical situation of the Russian Federation. It is no secret that the Kremlin's authorities have for nearly two decades endeavoured to reintegrate the post-soviet area, fortifying Russia's political and economic position in the region and thus attempting to challenge the EU and the US in an effort to modify the present system of international relations. A multi-polar system of international relations is meant to terminate the North America's domination in global politics, restoring an imperial role to Russia. It is not just hollow rhetoric; the Russian authorities have undertaken a number of steps to realise these plans. The war with Georgia, the Ukrainian crisis, the intervention in Syria, but also the creation of the Eurasian Economic Union, are vivid signs of activity and determination of the new Russian elites, consistently executing their neo-imperialist projects. They may, however, be thwarted by economic difficulties and demographic crisis in the Russian Federation. Wanting to secure the neo-imperial course, the Kremlin must find a solution to these two strongly intertwined problems.

Dariusz Wojtaszyn, Sportwunderland DDR - the rise and fall of the great sports power

The German Democratic Republic, despite limited economic and demographic opportunities, achieved an incredible success in sports, becoming in the second half of the 20th century a real sports superpower. Competition at the international level, especially the Olympic Games were arenas for the presentation of the country's supremacy in sport, on account of which it began to be called "Sportwunderland". The article attempts to identify the most important components of the sport success of the GDR - institutional structures and implementation of the achievements of science in sport, together with the pathological use of prohibited pharmacological assistance, as well as methods of acquiring and selecting outstanding sportspersons. In addition, the article provides an analysis of the situation of East German sport after the unification of Germany and discusses ways of dealing with the dark sides of its past.

Krzysztof Siwek, The Polish-German frontier in Poland's relations with the United States from 1956 to 1970

The purpose of this article is to present the role of the Polish-German frontier in relations between Poland and the United States from 1956 to 1970. Due to Poland's dependence upon the Soviet Union the issue of the Oder-Neisse Line was a subject of East-West relations with the primary role of the German question. In the Cold War conditions that obliged the U.S. to maintain allied loyalty to the FRG, Washington refused to accept the Polish-German border officially, since it was perceived more like the western boundary of Soviet influence than like Poland's western frontier. However the U.S. support for the Oder-Neisse Line would contribute to the American objective of weakening Soviet control over Central-Eastern Europe. For that reason since 1956 Polish diplomacy tried to convince the United States not only to confirm the border but also to recognize the legality of the GDR, a measure that would be equivalent to the security of the Oder-Neisse Line. The Polish demands corresponded with the U.S. efforts to improve relations with the Communist Bloc states since early 1960s which also prevented the West German-Soviet alliance. The beginning of détente in East-West relationships allowed the U.S. to come to terms with a division of Europe along the river Elbe while the German question lost its priority in favour of the dialogue of the U.S. with Central-Eastern European states. Despite a continued U.S. refusal to accept the Oder-Neisse Line, Poland was able to conclude a treaty with West Germany in 1970 recognizing the Polish western frontier with the result that it was no longer a subject of the Cold War dispute.

Magdalena Karolak-Michalska, Euromaidan and the Ukrainian crisis of 2013-2014 as challenges to the Polish political elite

The author analyzes the Polish political elite's reactions to the events in Ukraine at the end of 2013 and in 2014. The aim of the analysis is to study the behavior of state authorities, as well as parliamentary groups toward the Euromaidan and the Ukrainian crisis, and also an attempt to answer the question about the role of Poland in the above context on the international arena. Particular sections of the article explore the activity of state authorities, including the president, prime minister, and the head of Polish diplomacy, indicating the successes and failures of their actions. The author draws attention to the attitude of political parties to the socio-political situation in Ukraine. The author concludes that the current Polish-Ukrainian and Polish-Russian relations, as well as the recurring question of the Polish security policy on the European arena pose a challenge to the Polish political elite.

Marian Gorynia, The significance of the Polish economy for the European Union economy in the years 2003-2014

The first aim of this paper is to identify and evaluate major changes and trends in the significance of the Polish economy for the European Union economy in the years 2003-2014. The conducted analysis concerns changes in the gross domestic product, exports, imports, inward foreign direct investment and outward foreign direct investment. The paper's second aim is to forecast what the above mentioned variables under analysis will be in the future and to formulate some recommendations with regard to future economic policy.

Marcin Kleinowski, Monitoring of respect for the Rule of Law in European Union

Changes to Poland's constitutional court implemented by the Polish Law and Justice party government have caused a serious constitutional crisis in Poland. Under the Rule of Law Framework European Commission launched a dialogue with the Polish authorities on the rule of law and media independence in Poland. This "procedure" acts as an early warning tool in addition to article 7 TEU mechanisms. This article describes the intervention tools available to the European Union in the event that one of its member states threatens fundamental principles enshrined in article 2 TEU. It also tries to explain how the EU's rule of law investigation could possibly affect Poland's position in European Union.

Elżbieta Roszko-Wójtowicz, Road safety in the EU – international comparisons

Road accidents are a serious problem in the contemporary world and also a major issue in many countries of the European Union. Statistical data are terrifying. According to the World Health Organization each year nearly 1.25 million people die in road accidents. The object of the article is to assess road safety in the EU in the years 2005-2014 against the backdrop of the current economic and demographic situation in particular member states. The article uses data published by the European Statistical Office – Eurostat (www.ec.europa.eu/eurostat) and OECD. The conducted analysis shows an increase in road safety in the EU. However, the defined goal of reducing the number of fatal accidents by half by 2020 is at risk. The decrease rate of road traffic fatalities has dropped in comparison with previous years.

Agnieszka Kisztelińska-Węgrzyńska, Austrian foreign policy in the 21st century. Continuation and change

When analyzing the foreign policy of Austria in the twenty-first century, it is worth to ask the question about the role of diplomacy in Vienna in the modern world. Following the enlargement of the European Union in 2004, some fixed elements dominant in relations with European countries can be seen. A rapidly evolving situation in the Middle East and Ukraine brought a number of challenges and Austria is trying to find its own solutions to the growing problems. Austria seeks solutions that would meet the needs of a neutral state, lying in the heart of the old continent and having ambitions to be a mediator in international disputes attentive to intercultural dialogue. Among the fixed elements of the Austrian foreign policy, little has changed in the last few years: the principle of permanent neutrality, integration within the EU structures and relations with countries from outside the European area should be mentioned. The change of Viennese diplomacy is observed in the use of soft power, support of the Balkan countries and cooperation with the Russian Federation during the conflict in Ukraine. Another thread connecting the two groups of factors is the issue of the impact of foreign policy on the political life of Austria.