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Robert Jakimowicz: *Geostrategiczny wybór Rosji u zarania trzeciego tysiąclecia. Polityka Federacji Rosyjskiej wobec regionu Azji i Pacyfiku, Azji Centralnej i Arktyki* ('*The Geostrategic Choice of Russia at the Dawn of the Third Millennium. The Policy of the Russian Federation Towards Asia Pacific, Central Asia and the Arctic*'), [Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego/Jagiellonian University Press, Kraków 2015, 367 pages].

The reviewed monograph was published by the Jagiellonian University Press in Krakow as part of the series: *Geostrategiczny wybór Rosji u zarania trzeciego tysiąclecia* ('The Geostrategic Choice of Russia at the Dawn of the Third Millennium'; all the titles in English contained in this review are own translations), comprised of the following papers: Joachim Diec, Tom I: *Doktryna rosyjskiej polityki zagranicznej. Partnerzy najbliżsi i najdalsi* (Vol. I: 'The Doctrine of Russia's Foreign Policy. The Closest and the Furthest Partners'), Rafał Lisiakiewicz, Tom II, Część I: *Unia Europejska jako partner strategiczny Federacji Rosyjskiej na początku XXI wieku, Aspekt polityczny*, (Vol. II, Part I: 'The European Union as a Strategic Partner of the Russian Federation at the Beginning of the 21st Century. The Political Aspect,');

Karolina Kotulewicz, Tom II, Część II: *Unia Europejska jako partner strategiczny Federacji Rosyjskiej na początku XXI wieku. Aspekt gospodarczy*, (Vol. II, Part II: 'The European Union as a Strategic Partner of the Russian Federation at the Beginning of the 21st Century, Part 2'); and the publication under review: Tom III: *Polityka Federacji Rosyjskiej wobec regionu Azji i Pacyfiku, Azji Centralnej i Arktyki* (Vol. III: 'The Foreign Policy of the Russian Federation Toward the Asia-Pacific Region, Central Asia and the Arctic Area'). The project was co-financed by the National Science Centre (2011/03/B/HS5/00573).

Volume III of the series is a study of the Asian and Arctic orientations in Russia's foreign policy. The monograph analyses the behaviour of the Russian state at the international scene in 2000–2015 with a view to finding an answer to the question whether Russia's foreign policy, in the aforementioned areas of activity, has allowed to attain the fundamental goal of that state, i.e. Russia's status as a superpower in the medium- or long-term. It takes account of strictly political as well as of economic and military considerations in relationships of the Russian Federation with Asian and Arctic actors in international relations.

The Author adopts the hypothesis that Russia's attempts to restore its position as a superpower are bound to be unsuccessful in the decades to come. The use of hard power, i.e. military measures, as in the case of Ukraine, moves Russia away from its desired purpose instead of bringing it closer. The research question is answered and the adopted hypothesis is verified using systems analysis and the comparative method. The study employs an environment model including three values: the environment, actors and their actions. On the basis of that model, the Author examines various source materials using a number of research methods, from empirical techniques, e.g. the observation, description and analysis of phenomena, to theoretical ones such the historical method, abstraction, source and document analysis.

The structure of the paper is determined by its intended purpose. It is divided into six chapters forming a coherent whole, in accordance with the adopted key describing the pursuit of Russia's foreign policy objectives along three vectors: the eastern orientation (the PRC, Japan, both Koreas, the ASEAN and the APEC), southern 'Near Abroad', also including Central Asian countries (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan) and the northern (Arctic) direction, comprising – apart from Russia – the United States, Canada, Norway and Denmark as well as non-Arctic new actors intensifying their policies in the region: China, Japan and South Korea.

Chapter 1, entitled *Chiny jako najważniejszy partner azjatycki Federacji Rosyjskiej w Regionie Azji i Pacyfiku* ('China as

the most important Asian partner of the Russian Federation in the Asia-Pacific Region'), primarily concerns the process of changes in the Russia–China political relations. Further, the chapter presents other aspects of cooperation: the economic, military and cultural areas.

Chapter 2, entitled *Wielowymiarowe znaczenie Azji Centralnej* ('The multidimensional importance of Central Asia'), discusses the evolution and the current status of (political, economic and military) relations between Russia and Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan, with an emphasis on the role of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO). That part of the study also addresses the issue of the process of de-Russification in Central Asian states, taken poorly by Russia.

Chapter 3, entitled *Problem przełomu w stosunkach japońsko-rosyjskich* ('The issue of breakthrough in Japan–Russia relations'), shows the essence of the still unresolved bilateral territorial problem (the 'Northern Territories') and characterises dynamically developing – despite the above – mutual economic, scientific and technical relations.

Chapter 4, entitled *Korea Południowa i Północna w wymiarach politycznym, gospodarczym i militarnym jako partnerzy Federacji Rosyjskiej* ('North Korea and South Korea in the political, economic and military dimensions as partners of the Russian Federation'), presents the findings from the analysis of political and economic relations between Russia and both Korean states. Much attention in Chapter 4 is also given to the depiction of North

Korea's nuclear programme, thus to the Three-, Four- and Six-Party Talks (initiated in 2003 and involving both Koreas, China, Japan, the United States and Russia).

Chapter 5, entitled *Arktyka – współczesny wymiar rywalizacji Rosji na arenie międzynarodowej – wybrane aspekty* ('The Arctic – the present-day dimension of Russia's competing at the international scene'), presents the rising economic importance of the Arctic, resulting from global warming and the related melting of ice in ever-larger areas. Climate change makes the Arctic a field of competition for both the so-called Arctic Five (Denmark, Canada, Norway, Russia and the United States) and new actors increasing their activities in the region: China, Japan and South Korea, which is also reflected upon by the Author in that part of the monograph.

Chapter 6, *Problem obecności Rosji w regionie Azji i Pacyfiku jako ważnego gracza międzynarodowego* ('The issue of Russia's presence in the Asia-Pacific Region as a major international player'), constitutes a certain recapitulation of the content presented in the study. It describes Russia's ambitions to become an important international actor in Asia Pacific. The Author considers the relations of the Russian Federation with the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) and the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation forum (APEC), the latter also including Russia.

Undoubtedly, the paper under review significantly contributes to the discussion on political and economic developments in the modern world. The book is a publication seeking to answer geostrategic

questions inspired by the policy choices of Russia, whose various actions taken in the 21st century have been aimed to regain the superpower position. The Author's original approach to the subject, objectivity and profound knowledge are particularly worthy of notice. Professor Jakimowicz forms his judgements after quoting various statements by politicians and a critical analysis of a number of scientific publications. In doing so, he relies on both Polish and foreign language sources, including many studies published in Russian.

The monograph contains important and topical considerations and successfully attempts to present significant geopolitical problems, of which the part concerning the Arctic is particularly worthy of notice as the subject has not been very frequently addressed in the Polish scientific literature. Simultaneously, the rather minor attention given to the BRICS forum as a platform for pursuing Russia's interests together with its Asian partners – China and India – including for the formation of new financial initiatives on a global scale, seems insufficient. Nevertheless, the book remains very useful for understanding the geopolitical changes observed in the 21st century and has an indisputable merit of being 'compact and transparent'. Certainly, the publication is addressed to political and economic scientists, students of political science, economics, European studies, journalism as well as to politicians, policy makers, journalists and business people to whom I honestly recommend it.

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