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**Book Review: Jerzy Jaskiernia, *Dyplomacja Parlamentarna*, Adam Marszałek Publishing House, Toruń 2022, pp. 975.**

The tradition of research on diplomacy by political scientists, lawyers or historians is rich. Many intellectual efforts have resulted in publications portraying diplomacy as one of the most significant mechanisms for influencing, affecting or controlling international relations. Over the centuries, diplomacy has transformed the international environment, and the basic principles determining the relations between its constituent actors have evolved. From this point of view, the transition from the pre-Westphalian to the Westphalian system of international relations was especially ground-breaking. Consequently, diplomacy began to be regarded as one of the essential areas in the functioning of a state.

The dynamic changes in the international environment, which took place notably in the twentieth century and were determined, among other things, by the progressive processes of globalisation, left an increasingly visible mark on how a state functions. Above all, the structure of the late 20<sup>th</sup>-century international environment has changed. States are no longer the only participants in international relations. In international relations, sub- or supra-state actors of various forms are becoming increasingly numerous and influential. In addition, non-state organisations are also marking their presence more and more clearly. It is largely a consequence of the continual growth in the number of issues addressed at the international level. Problems that only a few decades ago remained unknown to us or that were part of the domestic policy of states have acquired international (often global) significance. It is influenced, among other things, by the technological revolution that has been going on for several decades. It has changed (and continues to change) societies. Modern forms of communication facilitate information reaching many people in a short space of time. Spatial constraints in this respect do not exist whatsoever. Consequently, events in a particular country can quickly become an issue of interest to the international community. That, in turn, leads to a blurring of the distinction between a state's internal affairs and those traditionally associated with the performance of its external function.

The increasingly complex subject structure of the international environment and the widening range of issues that constitute the subject of relations between its participants have been reflected in a new approach to diplomacy. Researchers dealing with this issue began to see the need to go beyond the classical view of diplomacy hitherto associated with the state and its executive. New types of diplomacy began to be distinguished in terms of subject and object criteria. As part of these efforts, the concept of parliamentary diplomacy found its place in the lexicon of persons representing the domain of social sciences.

This type of diplomacy became the subject of a publication by Jerzy Jaskiernia, which in 2022 was published by the Adam Marszałek Publishing House. It is not the first study devoted to the subject. English-language literature on the topic is quite rich (Stavridis & Jančić, 2017). Polish researchers have also made this issue a subject of scientific exploration. However, as far as domestic political scientists or lawyers are concerned, they have been presenting the results of their studies and analyses primarily in short scientific forms (articles) (Iwiński, 2010) or collective papers (Surmacz & Kuczyńska-Zonik, 2019). Therefore, Jaskiernia's publication is the first monographic scientific study on the Polish publishing market devoted to the issue of parliamentary diplomacy. The author's long-standing research experience and scientific competence warrant the book's high quality. It is worth noting the author has already dealt with issues related to parliamentary diplomacy in previously published scientific articles (Jaskiernia, 2009; 2013). Therefore, his latest book is the culmination of his research over a long time, which deserves particular emphasis and appreciation.

Although the concept of parliamentary diplomacy has not been given a juridical footing in public international law, nor is it included in the classic catalogue of parliamentary functions applicable to comparative constitutional law, its use demonstrates a careful observation of developments in the international space. Admittedly, parliamentary diplomacy is difficult to categorise unequivocally, but at the same time, failing to acknowledge its existence would be an obvious denial of the facts. These are expressed in the progressive processes of foreign policy parliamentarisation and the parliamentarisation of international organisations. Both processes acquired a unique dynamic in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. They manifest the satisfaction of expectations for democratising decision-making processes or increasing democratic control. It is how they express one of the most popular ways of dealing with the democratic deficit, which has become a challenge facing societies in the age of globalisation.

A reading of *Dyplomacja Parlamentarna* makes it clear that foreign policy, which had been shrouded in secrecy for a long time, has now become firmly established in parliamentary chambers. It has thus become more accessible to the average citizen and has the potential to become more transparent. The interest of individual parliamentarians and official parliamentary bodies, as well as other more or less formalised structures in the parliamentary and interparliamentary space, is thus becoming increasingly intensive. This somewhat new space of increased activity of parliaments and parliamentarians has become a natural field for forming relations fulfilling the characteristics of diplomacy. Therefore, parliamentary

diplomacy is not an invention but a phenomenon that has finally been acknowledged and confirms the value of dynamic approaches in the study of parliaments.

As Jaskiernia repeatedly emphasises, parliament is not predestined to conduct foreign policy. However, it is worth recognising the value of parliamentary diplomacy in terms of its complementary role vis-à-vis classical diplomacy. The author presents and analyses a wide catalogue of activities of national parliaments, parliamentary assemblies of international institutions, as well as international parliamentary associations and parliamentarians themselves, all of which form part and parcel of the said parliamentary diplomacy. At the same time, he cautions that not every manifestation of parliaments' and parliamentarians' international activity exhausts the characteristics of this phenomenon. What parliamentary diplomacy is and what it is not is explained by referring to numerous examples from the field of political practice. In doing so, the author has outlined the multifaceted and multidirectional manifestations of parliamentarians' activity and inter-parliamentary cooperation. It was possible thanks to the collection and appropriate processing of rich factual material. At times the extent of the material is so staggering that it almost overwhelms the reader. However, the numerous examples provided in the book helped present parliamentary diplomacy from its practical side. In addition, the author has devoted considerable space to capturing its multidimensionality. He did not limit himself to the perspective of bilateral relations but also focused his attention on regional and interregional initiatives, as well as on the global dimension of parliamentary diplomacy.

The unquestionable merit of the research perspective adopted is that out of the enormous wealth of examples of cooperation between parliamentarians and parliaments, the author has selected those which meet the criteria for parliamentary diplomacy. At the same time, he convincingly justifies which initiatives should be regarded as manifestations of such diplomacy and which do not meet the criteria to be classified as such. Consequently, parliamentary diplomacy has been shown as one of the forms of international activity of legislative bodies and the people who comprise them in the context of multidimensional parliamentary cooperation. At the same time, it should be emphasised that Jaskiernia's book is not an uncritical paean to parliamentary diplomacy, towards which he can maintain a distance. While emphasising its relevance in enriching classical diplomacy (*sensu stricto*), he is not indifferent to its weaknesses.

The range of people to whom the monograph *Dyplomacja Parlamentarna* is worth recommending is wide. It will certainly be of interest to both political scientists and lawyers. It is impossible to unequivocally classify this work to a specific political or legal science sub-discipline. It is worth recommending to those who pursue their scientific interests in international relations in the broad sense, as well as to researchers of political systems or specialists in constitutional law. The book also contains no shortage of topics that may be of interest to researchers into the history of political institutions. It has been made possible by the wide range of research methods used by the author of *Dyplomacja Parlamentarna*. The introduction section contains several such topics (legal-dogmatic, legal-comparative,

systemic, or historical). However, the diligent reader will also find passages that testify, for example, to the benefits provided by the decision-making method. An undoubted advantage of the book is the dynamic treatment of the issues examined. The author does not focus on how things should be but presents parliamentary diplomacy as he sees it, with its advantages and disadvantages. As he summarises in the *Conclusion*, the “analysis draws an incoherent picture of the phenomenon....”. On the one hand, it demonstrates many positive features, while on the other, it is still not a fully crystallised form of shaping international relations. As a consequence, many of the activities that are manifestations of parliamentary diplomacy suffer from their chaotic nature. Therefore, Jaskiernia is right to point out the need to achieve a synergy of activities, which should yield greater efficiency and, consequently, an increasing appreciation of the involvement of parliaments and parliamentarians in diplomatic activity in its broadest sense. Learning parliamentary diplomacy, drawing appropriate conclusions from the mistakes made, and formally institutionalising the concept appear to be the most urgent challenges facing those involved in the activities of parliaments, parliamentary bodies and parliamentarians themselves.

It is also worth devoting a few words to the book's structure. In terms of the division of content, it is logical, which makes it easier to read. The first part provides an exact conceptual analysis of diplomacy. Various types of diplomacy are presented. In order to identify them, the author has referred to three criteria (subjective, objective and the adopted method of action). One might wonder whether it would be possible to identify other types of diplomacy based on these criteria, but given that the main research theme is parliamentary diplomacy, this doubt is of secondary importance. After all, distinguishing and defining more than twenty types of diplomacy deserves recognition. At the same time, it serves as an excellent introduction to the second part of the book dedicated to the topic in question, i.e., parliamentary diplomacy. The author devoted several dozen pages to the concept. He addresses the most important issues, including their essence, forms, and meaning.

The considerations in chapter two provide an introduction to a wide range of examples of activities in parliamentary diplomacy. In chapter three, attention is focused on national parliaments and the wealth of initiatives of a diplomatic nature they undertake. The important aspect of cooperation between national parliaments at different levels has not been overlooked. Chapter four, in turn, presents the diplomatic activities of international parliaments and international parliamentary institutions. The author has cited many examples while maintaining a careful balance between initiatives specific to different regions of the world.

For this reason, the fourth chapter is very extensive (especially compared to the previous three). The concept of the book, however, fully justifies such an approach. Due to the immense wealth of facts, reading chapter four requires much concentration on the reader's part. The discourse can become wearisome at times. Nevertheless, it should be emphasised that Jaskiernia has done a painstaking task collecting, analysing and appropriately presenting numerous facts and information. It has resulted in a compendium of knowledge not only on

parliamentary diplomacy but even more broadly – on international parliamentary cooperation. Researchers tackling these issues will certainly find in Jaskiernia's book an excellent source of material for further research, which the author, in concluding the book, encourages others to pursue. He is aware that, despite its impressive volume, his book does not close the discussion on parliamentary diplomacy. It is an invitation to scientific exploration of this relatively new phenomenon in international relations.

On a final note of encouragement to the prospective reader of *Dyplomacja Parlamentarna*, one more fact needs mentioning. The author has compiled an impressive bibliography spanning a whopping 150 pages, which attests to the enormous amount of work that has gone into the book's preparation.

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